

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

MC.JA.5/64(FIN)

WELCOMING ADDRESS BY MR. LIM HO HUP, CHAIRMAN OF MANAGEMENT TRAINING COMMITTEE AND ACTING DIRECTOR OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD, AT THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY OF MANAGEMENT COURSES CERTIFICATES IN THE VICTORIA MEMORIAL HALL AT 5.00 P.M. ON 3RD JANUARY, 1964.

First I would like to welcome you on behalf of the Management Training Committee to this certificate presentation ceremony for the training courses sponsored by the Committee during the past 18 months. I would like to thank the Minister for having so kindly consented to present the certificates. On behalf of the Economic Development Board, I would also like to thank all the members of the Management Training Committee, namely, the Supervisory and Management Training Organisation of Singapore, the Singapore Manufacturers' Association, the Singapore Polytechnic, the Nanyang University, the University of Singapore, the Joint Chambers of Commerce, the Labour Research Unit, and the Adult Education Board, who have co-operated so closely with us in making our programme of Management Training such a success. Last but not least, it is gratifying for those of us who have spent much time in organising these courses to note that there exists in Singapore such a large reservoir of keen minds like yours, ever willing even during after office hours to absorb and expose to new ideas of management and of business economics - even though we have modestly dubbed many of these courses "orientation courses."

The Minister has said in his New Year message that "the building up of a technological infrastructure would take a much longer time than the construction and completion of the Jurong Estate". One of the main functions of the Economic Development Board, over and above that of industrial financing and of helping to create a proper investment climate, etc., is in fact to help develop the necessary technological infrastructure for the successful implementation of our industrialisation programme. If the Jurong Project is impressive that is because this aspect of our work is by its very nature capable of fast development. The work of development of local skills, specifically, in today's context, the development of managerial skills, is inherently a much slower process and, though in many ways less striking and spectacular, is in no way less important than that of physical development of our various industrial facilities.

The story of under-developed countries is very often the story of missed opportunities. In Malaysia today, if we look around us we will be able to witness the case of a potentially rich country in difficult economic straits. In this connection it may be pertinent to say a few words about the role of management in the industrialisation programme of Singapore. The elementary trinity of factors of production, viz., labour, land and capital, are of themselves not capable of full exploitation unless wielded by the proper management. It is for the management to provide the leavening and cementing process without which even the best endowed nation may, as the Chinese saying goes, "go begging with a golden rice bowl".

It has been pointed out to me many times by overseas visitors that it is a misnomer to call Singapore an under-developed country. Your presence here today is testimony to the truth of this statement. Nevertheless, there is need for plenty of hard work ahead as we are now in a state of rapid evolution - or revolution if you like - in which every sector of the population is being affected: the managers and the many investors will be changing from their usual trading activities to industrial undertakings, parents and teachers will have to think in terms of training youths to become factory workers and supervisors, Quite apart from the socio-political considerations even the civil servants have to be made aware of the developmental role, as against the regulatory role of the Government. No longer are we mere enforcers of regulations and dispensers of licences, more and more we have to do promotional work and dream up new projects for further study and implementation if the industrialisation programme is to succeed. Even so, we will have to depend more and more on people like you who are present here today to lead and to help manage the many industrial projects that will be springing up in Jurong and elsewhere, in Singapore and Malaysia.

Singapore is internationally known for its trading and commercial "know-how". The capability of the managers of our commercial organisations is rated as second to none in any part of the world. The urgent task now in front of us is to create a corps of industrial managers of equal calibre. In our industrial promotion policy, EDB always aims at the most modern plants. The reason is that industries established in Singapore have good prospect for export. We must emphasise in the beginning on quality products. But modern plants have to be run by the best managers.

In this important task of training managers, EDB has so far played the role as a catalytic agent. We hope that our programme for management training will eventually be taken up by more specialised agencies, like the Adult Education Board, Singapore Polytechnic, University of Singapore, Nanyang University, and especially the projected Singapore Institute of Management. The Economic Development Board will be prepared to give all forms of assistance to ensure the continuation and expansion of the present programme.

Our training programme has so far been confined primarily to a series of orientation courses. In the current year increasing attention will be given to some of the important specialised subjects in the field of management, such as personnel administration, marketing and distribution, industrial design and packaging, quality control, production planning, management accounting, industrial financing, and contractual arrangement for technical "know-how". These practical courses are designed especially to help a large number of managerial and technical staff who will be shortly assuming important positions in our new industries.

Once again I would like to thank my colleagues in the management training; particularly the representatives of Supervisory and Management Training Association of Singapore and the Singapore Manufacturers' Association for their valuable contribution to our management training programme and to the heartening response shown by all of you here.

JANUARY 3, 1963.

(Time issued: 1645 hours)