

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

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+ EMBARGOED TILL 8.30 A.M. +
+ ON MONDAY, MAY 6, 1968 +

SPEECH BY MR. S. RAMASWAMY PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
TO THE MINISTRY OF LAW, AT SENNETT COMMUNITY CENTRE
AT THE SENDING-OFF PARTY FOR NATIONAL SERVICEMEN ON
MONDAY, MAY 6, AT 8.30 A.M.

This sending-off gathering is only one of the many that have been organised by Management Committees for our National Servicemen. To the non-Singaporeans, particularly those from whose countries where national service is a long and accepted way of life for most of their citizens, they might have reasons to doubt the necessity of this arrangement. Yet to our own citizens, this too was never done in the past. This is because during the colonial days, national service meant the mobilisation of manpower resources to serve a purposeless course. National service then was completely impersonal and indifferent.

But Singapore is too small a community for us to be impersonal, and too valuable a place to be indifferent.

I was told that most of you are graduates from our institutions of higher learning. There is nothing more appropriate than this occasion to prove our common aspiration that: from the community which provided the means with which you have acquired additional knowledge, for the community which you are now to serve as national servicemen, and then back to the community with which you work and thrive to make it better when you return to your civilian life after your two years training.

Generation emerges and retires, but our society must continue to survive as a State. I therefore call upon you to undertake seriously the training in the months ahead. For you, this will be a proud and purposeful period of your life. In the context of our society, national service must be taken in its widest aspects, one of which is the training of our next generation citizenry. I should also like to think that when your basic training ends, your real service to the nation begins. You will then put into practice and apply to civilian life all the social virtues that your training will attempt to inculcate. Qualities such as tolerance, civic consciousness, team spirit and collective endeavours, national pride and discipline must be brought into focus by our national servicemen.

Such qualities ...

the progress of the nation. It is through understanding of and cooperation with the people that are to be led that they, the future leaders of the Republic, can lead the nation to progress and prosperity.

Since the P.A.P. Government came into power, it has been providing additional services to kampong residents in the rural areas, and during the past 7 years, a sum of more than \$24 million was spent on the making up of roads, extension of water and electricity supplies to the kampong areas, lighting up the roads, etc. A rural electrification programme was also drawn up in March 1963, and to-date electrification schemes have been implemented in 346 kampong areas. The cost to implement these schemes is about \$5.3 million and the schemes benefit an additional of 15,000 houses in the Republic. More schemes are being planned in other kampong areas and they will be implemented in stages. In the Nee Soon constituency alone, for the past two years, about \$350,000 was spent to implement 34 projects for the benefit of the residents.

The Polytechnic students who take part in this campaign are noteworthy and I sincerely hope that the residents will render their assistance to make this campaign a success.
