

SPEECH BY MR. LIM GUAN HOO, POLITICAL SECRETARY  
TO THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR & DEFENCE, AT  
THE DISTRICT PARADE OF THE NATIONAL CADET CORPS  
AT POLICE RESERVE UNIT (11) ON SATURDAY, 5TH JULY,  
1969 AT 4.30 P.M.

The impressiveness of this Parade and the smartness shown by the Cadets have deeper meanings than the external expression of a regimented group, for they represent vigour and dynamism of our growing Republic and the character of our tightly organised society. I am pleased to say that the establishment and development of the National Cadet Corps have contributed tremendously to nation-building. It is also clear that the National Cadet Corps is an expression of the grit and determination of our people and their will to survive.

Every large organisation has to strengthen its foundation before it can develop to any significant degree. When the organisation expands and its members increase, there is an increasing need for proper co-ordination and co-operation and for the development of a sense of unity of purpose. In this way, there will be effectiveness in quality-performance.

The first Cadet Corps was formed in Raffles Institution in 1902. The movement continued to flounder for the next 35 years, during which period the second and the third Corps were formed in St. Joseph Institution and St. Patrick's School. In the early 40s as a result of war breaking out there was a good response from young men who volunteered to join the Armed Forces, and the School Cadet Corps movement was considerably modified. In the next 10 years or so, there was considerable development of the sea, air and the police cadet units, and this marked a new chapter in the history of the uniform movement.

The proudest and most moving chapter in the history of the development of this uniform movement is the post-independence period.

Much of the strength of nation-building is derived from youth organisations which have expanded considerably. Among the 105 secondary schools, there are now 231 units many of which started almost at the same time. Now, all these cadet units have been organised under the National Cadet Corps and together they strengthen the Nation's dynamic character.

Singapore has developed from a place like to a fishing village with only hundred odd inhabitants to a thriving and throbbing Republic with two million people today. Our youth organisations have also experienced a similar accelerated rate of growth during the last 50 years. The Cadet Corps movement has grown from just a few units to a large and well-organised movement comprising sea, land, air and police units. There is one point you must not forget: the growth of the Cadet Corps is a reflection of the 150 years of history of the Republic, and what impressed one most is the fact that the development during the three years after independence is much greater than what had gone on during the last century.

We are living in a world of tension and strife, a world divided by political conflicts and power struggle. Some of the disturbances and uncertainties are due largely to the kind of youth a nation has. In Singapore more than half of our population consists of young people. How we progress and what sort of society we are going to have depends upon the character, the discipline and the sense of loyalty of our youths. When we say that half of Singapore's population consist of young people we are also saying that they should shoulder no less responsibility than the other portion of the population who are less young. And our young people must realise that service comes before self. They must understand that the individual and the society are an inseparable entity and they complement each other. Young people must therefore show forth this spirit to help build our nation and move it forward.

Schools are very much part of the larger community which forms our society. All members of the National Cadet Corps should realise this: Service to the society begins in school. The drills you go through and the words of command are similar to those of the Singapore Armed Forces. This shows that we are all moving along the same road of nation-building, and we must have the same unity of spirit. Thus more importantly, we must learn to live together in a disciplined and organised way. And to have a sense of social discipline we must have disciplined organisations like the National Cadet Corps. Finally I wish the National Cadet Corps all the best for the future and may it grow from strength to strength.