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SPEECH BY MR. LIM GUAN HOO, POLITICAL SECRETARY,
MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR AND DEFENCE, AT THE
OPENING CEREMONY OF THE FORCES EXHIBITION AT BEACH
ROAD CAMP ON SATURDAY, 5TH JULY, 1969 AT 11.00 A.M.

I am very pleased to be here this morning to officiate at the Opening Ceremony of the Forces Exhibition. The past weeks have been busy, exciting and time-consuming for members of the Armed Forces and the Police in preparation for the Parades, the Police/Military Display and this Exhibition, for considerable effort and thinking have been put into the organisation of all these activities.

We have little time and resources to fritter away on ceremonies, parades and on pomp and show. But we have to get the public to know more about our forces and to see for themselves what really is involved in developing and strengthening our security system.

Our security forces are essential citizens' forces and all along there has been a link with the citizens from the earliest days of the history of Singapore. There has been citizen participation in security all the time. The spirit of volunteering whether in the Special Constabulary, the Vigilante Corps, the Singapore Volunteer Corps or the People's Defence Force shows the deep concern of our people for their own security and that of their fellow men. Thus the build-up of our security forces has very practical ends. Life has to be secure before it can be improved. Food, shelter from the weather, and a refuge from danger are basic in any man's thinking.

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Singapore is justly proud of her security forces. This pride born of solid achievement, hard work, and sacrifice is reflected in the dignity and colour of the Exhibition. In building up our own security, we have to our advantage a young and energetic population to provide the sinews for our Citizens' Forces. The Exhibition reflects the determination of our people who have taken on their shoulders fully the weight of true nationhood.

The Exhibition which is to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Founding of Singapore, will also give much information on the development of the forces in historical perspective. Singapore has changed considerably during these 150 years. It has grown from a mud-flat of a fishing village to a metropolis of over two million people with the second highest standard of living in Asia. Although 150 years is a short time in the history of a people, the political and security situation has changed drastically. Our people have gone through different phases of history, and at each phase our security forces have made their distinctive contribution.

We have overcome numerous difficulties of the past and we have emerged with greater determination and strength. We have been confronted with a number of important decisions from which we did not flinch even though we knew that such decisions might well alter the destiny of our people. One of these decisions is the introduction of National Service.

Today, we are making progress on all fronts, and it shows that our people are meeting the challenges confronting us with firm determination and unbending will. But we must anticipate the future. It is with this spirit that the Exhibition is organised. The outlook of the Exhibition is towards the future. It gives us an understanding of the role of youth in nation-building through service in the Armed Forces and the Police now, but it also points the way to greater contribution by our youth in the future. And it shows how our security forces are to develop in a society which is reaching out towards new frontiers not only in industrialization and commerce, but in the security sphere as well. The keynote is: Our future is what we make of it.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the Organisers of this Exhibition for their effort and initiative in making the Exhibition possible. In particular, I would also like to thank the British Government for their co-operation and assistance in this project. I now declare the Exhibition open. Thank you.
