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SPEECH BY MR. TANG SEE CHIH, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
TO THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND APO DIRECTOR FOR
SINGAPORE, AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE "SEMINAR ON
QUALITY CONTROL" HELD AT THE HILTON HOTEL ON 16TH JUNE,
1970 AT 10.30 A.M.

I have great pleasure to welcome you all to this Seminar which, in the next three days, will discuss the very important subject of quality control. Our objectives are two-fold. One, to show Singapore managers how quality control can increase productivity and ensure quality consistency, thereby leading to higher profits. Two, to enable participants to grasp thoroughly the concept of quality control, its administration and its application to industries.

I think the timing of this seminar could not have been more opportune. We have organised it this year to commemorate the Asian Productivity Year 1970 which has as its theme, "Quality Reliability", and to mark the first decade of successful industrialisation in Singapore. We have reached a stage in our industrialisation programme where the subject of quality control must be given very serious consideration and be made a permanent feature in our industries. The subject of quality control is of such great importance that Singapore manufacturers can only disregard it to their cost. Quality control is a vital tool in sound production management practice and therefore its adoption can contribute tremendously to the success of organisational objectives as a whole.

I shall not dwell upon a discussion on the concept of quality control, its importance, or its benefits. These will be dealt with in great detail by the respective experts during the course of the seminar. But, I should like to examine briefly the factors which are essential for the success of a quality control programme. To my mind, the most important factor is the human element, a consideration which is unfortunately often overlooked by some managements. Machines, materials and production processes are only as good as the men handling them. Systematic training schemes can create quality and proficient workers. Properly trained personnel show interest in their work and thus contribute to higher productivity. But, it is also essential that one must create a positive worker attitude in order that one can draw his full and willing cooperation. Without his willing cooperation, no amount of motivation or modern production techniques can succeed.

Creating positive worker attitude calls for sound personnel relations practices by which we can organize a team of workers who are

efficient, cooperative and loyal. This means one must satisfy not only his basic economic needs but also his psychological and social needs. As well as fair wages for a day's work, a worker needs companionship on the shop floor, a sense of participation, recognition for his efforts, advancement in the organization, adequate welfare services and bright, healthy working conditions. In other words, a worker wants to be treated as a human being and not as a machine with no feelings or ambition. To the worker, the work-place is a second home. He spends most of his time there. Most of his friends are there.

Managers in Singapore must be aware of this, and they have a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that the workers' human needs are satisfied. We have a duty to ensure that the work-place is as comfortable as possible so that the worker will have a positive attitude towards his work and his company. It is in our own interest to do so. Any company that disregards this important factor will fail from the outset.

We are fortunate to have distinguished experts on quality control from the United States, Japan, Taiwan and Singapore, to guide us in our discussions of this subject. To them, I express my thanks for making this seminar possible. I am confident that under their capable hands, we would, at the end of the seminar have gained a deep insight into the importance of maintaining quality in our products, and into the problems, human and otherwise, that are associated with it.

I wish also to thank the participants for their support of this seminar, and those companies who have kindly agreed to place at our disposal their production operations to provide us with actual case studies. All this reflects the great interest which Singapore industries are showing to the subject of quality control.

Last but not least, I wish to thank the Minister for Labour, Mr. S. Rajaratnam, for having kindly consented to inaugurate the seminar.

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