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SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

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EMBARGOED TILL 5.30 P.M. ON
SATURDAY, 3RD OCTOBER 1970

SPEECH BY PROF. WONG LIN KEN, MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS,
AT THE ANNUAL PARADE OF THE SPECIAL CONSTABULARY AT THE
POLICE ACADEMY, THOMSON ROAD, ON SATURDAY, 3RD OCTOBER,
1970 AT 5.30 P.M.

I have great pleasure to be here to-day to review your Annual Parade.

I am saying nothing new when I say that there can be no civilization if there are no law and order. But, it is useful, to remind ourselves, now and then, that law and order are as old as civilization itself. The great symbol of insurance that law and order will prevail is the police.

If law and order are as old as civilization, so are crimes. There are no crime-free nations in the world. As a civilized nation, we have our share of criminals. Crime, organised or isolated, is nothing new in Singapore. Wide publicity is. This is because newspapers, radios and televisions have drawn attention to crimes in a way that we have never known before.

There is no agreed measure of standard by which we can say how successful a country has dealt with its state of crime. Yet, we can say, with some satisfaction, that our crime rate per 1,000 of population has remained at about the same level in the last decade, fluctuating between 9.09 to 11.38 offences per 1,000 persons. So far this year, the figure is 9.76. This is many times better than many cities with comparative population figures in other parts of the world. This is because we are not only a settled community but also an essentially law-abiding population. Ideally, we should strive for a society in which the work of the police is finally reduced to prevent crime rather than suppress it. But, we can take some comfort that no nation on earth has reached this stage of development.

The successful reduction of crime is a collective effort. The public must support the Police in being more forthcoming in providing information and the climate of opinion that the Police has public backing that crime does not pay.

In this collective effort, the Special Constabulary deserves special mention. It is a citizen's police force, because its members in private lives are professional men, teachers, clerks, technicians, and other civilians. By your work, you demonstrate that you are both the friend and protector of our people.

There is a volunteer component in the Special Constabulary. Many have served in it for more than 20 years. Their sense of duty to the community was awakened during the Marie Hertogh riots. It has burnt with the same spirit of dedication ever since. I think there are many people in our community who share the same sense of duty to our country. It is proper, therefore, that they should be given an opportunity to volunteer their services to maintain law and order. It is my pleasure to announce that this volunteer component of the Special Constabulary will be enlarged to 1,200 men.

There has been a popular demand by the Special Constabulary to discard the old uniforms for the blue uniforms of the regular Police. The differentiation of uniforms has led to the feeling that the Special Constabulary is a third class police. This is not true. The Special Constabulary is ^{second or} ~~is~~ third class police. It is a distinctive force with a separate identity, and should develop its traditions of service, pride and honour. It can develop these traditions only if it has pride and confidence in itself. These traditions are within your capacity to develop. One of my pleasures to-day is to be able to announce that the Special Constabulary will now be having the same blue uniform as the regulars.

Finally, let me on behalf of the Ministry of Home Affairs, and all those present here, congratulate the trophy winners, and wish the Special Constabulary every success in the years ahead.

Date: 3rd Oct., 1970.

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