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SPEECH BY MR CHAN CHEE SENG, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY (SOCIAL AFFAIRS), AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF HITACHI ELEVATOR ENGINEERING (SINGAPORE) PTE LTD AT 10 BENOI SECTOR, JURONG, ON THURSDAY, 6 DECEMBER 1979 AT 3.00 PM

It is my pleasure today to welcome yet another member to the growing Hitachi manufacturing family in Singapore. This \$2.3 million factory follows other ventures by the Hitachi Group in the consumer electrical wire and cable, foundry product and colour picture tube industries. The technological content of this elevator plant and the products it makes are certainly no less impressive than other Hitachi plants in Singapore and I am confident that it will also be just as successful.

Hitachi Elevator Engineering established a sales and servicing office here as early as 1972. This step now to upgrade it into the manufacturing of elevators and escalators reflects the growth of the market in Singapore and the region as well as Hitachi's success in it. As more Singaporeans demand, and are able to afford better housing and as more new offices, commercial and shopping centres are opened, the demand for better and more efficient elevators and escalators will increase. Hitachi, well-known for its quality and expertise in this field, can be expected to serve this need competently and competitively.

This project also brings along with it a level of technology in elevator design and fabrication that is highly welcome in the Republic. I have been told that one of the reasons for the company taking this step into manufacturing has been the ready availability of a skilled workforce to support the production operation. It employs seven graduates from the various institutes of the Vocational and Industrial Training Board, including one from the VITB's school of Elevator Engineering. This number of skilled personnel will be quickly increased as the operations expand.

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I take this to be a heartening example of the successful interaction between industry and Government in developing the skills suitable for manufacturing industries. The Government recognises that trained manpower at all levels, from engineers to skilled production operators, is a key to our continued success in the next phase of our industrialisation and all possible steps are being taken to increase both the quantity and quality of such manpower.

The VITEB as one of the institutions dedicated to the manpower training task provides for this need at the artisan and junior technician levels. To be successful in this function, however, VITEB needs the advice and support of companies which will use its graduates.

Training not relevant to industry needs results in wasted effort and expense. The VITEB has, therefore, organised trade advisory committees to consult with representatives of commerce and industry on the structure and curriculum of courses and detailed skills to be imparted. This feature must continue.

New areas of training institution-industry cooperation are constantly being explored. The EIB successfully manages three such ventures. VITEB is working closely with oilfield equipment companies to train workers for their specific needs. It is my hope that such excellent collaboration and cooperation to enhance the manpower potential of Singapore will continue.

It is now my pleasure to declare Hitachi Elevator Engineering (Singapore) Pte Ltd open. I wish it all success.

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