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SPEECH BY MR HO KAH LEONG, PARLIAMENTARY
SECRETARY (EDUCATION), AT THE OFFICIAL
OPENING OF THE CAREERS 83 EXHIBITION AT THE
WORLD TRADE CENTRE ON TUES, 7 JUN 83 AT 10.00 AM

Choosing a career is one of the vital steps facing our students and young people when they complete their studies. The task of choosing a job twenty years ago was easier as there were fewer jobs and even fewer varieties. The same task, however, is made more complex today by the expansion in number and variety of job opportunities in the labour market. Even parents now face the difficulty of advising their children on the kind of jobs they should take up and the type of training they should pursue. In this respect, an exhibition on career opportunities, is a useful reminder for our students to give some thoughts to this serious subject of making a career choice.

Our school leavers and young people will have to make a decision sooner or later regarding the types of job they are going to take up when they finish their studies. Public opinion, friends, relatives and parents may influence the young people to choose a particular career path which they think could offer better salaries and job prospects. Employment prospects and salary scales are, undoubtedly, two very crucial factors governing our choice of a job. However, we must not forget that our educational performance, personal interests, aptitudes and job satisfaction are equally important factors too. It must also be a job in which we can perform well as good work performance enhances an individual's self-esteem.

Self-knowledge of our own interests, abilities, personality and values, play an important part in our choice of a career. This self-knowledge could be enhanced through making full use of our educational opportunities. Acquiring information on the world of occupations, is also needed as the career which we finally choose will depend on our self-knowledge and discovery of the world of occupations.

"Careers 83" is, therefore, a timely event aimed at providing our students and young people a useful mine of information to delve and evaluate the different career opportunities available before making a career choice. The organisers should be congratulated for their fine effort in gathering so many participants under one roof to give a comprehensive picture of the different career development avenues open to our young people who will be entering the labour market soon. Job-seekers should avail themselves of this opportunity to visit the various exhibits, listen to the talks, watch the slide presentations and ask questions. The information and knowledge gained will guide and help them in their choice of a career.

This exhibition is not an end but only a means to increase our curiosity in finding out more information on careers before we make our career choice. Schools can organise career talks and visits to firms and factories for their students in order to widen their knowledge of the world of occupations. Having discussions with friends and relatives who are already working can also help us in making our career choice.

Our young people must also not forget the importance of self-improvement in the job especially when our economy is greatly dependent on the quality of our workforce. Skills training and professional development are, therefore, necessary factors to enhance the quality of our nation's workforce. Added to these factors of self-improvement in

the job, is the requirement of correct work attitudes. Attitudes to work, whether dedicated or indifferent, can be reinforced or changed by training and retraining.

Our students are, indeed fortunate to be given this opportunity to visit "Careers 83" during their school vacation and be exposed to the wealth of information on the various occupations and career development avenues available in Singapore. It is worthwhile for us to spend some of our vacation hours at this exhibition and I hope you will not miss this opportunity.

I have great pleasure in declaring the "Careers 83" Exhibition open.
