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SPEECH BY MR. LIM CHEE ONN, MP FOR BUKIT MERAH, AT THE
NATIONAL DAY OBSERVANCE HELD AT AMERICAN MARINE (S) PTE
LTD. ON WEDNESDAY 10 AUGUST 1977 AT 0730 HOURS

A CONCERTED EFFORT TOWARDS GROWTH AND PROSPERITY OF SINGAPORE

I am pleased to be able to join you this morning to celebrate our 12th National Day. While we gather here to celebrate this happy occasion, it is appropriate to remind ourselves of the part played by each one of us in the further development of our nation.

One of the development priorities in our economic plan has been to transform the structure of our economy. We aim to develop our capacity to serve as a centre for technical consultancy and management services of all kinds. In addition, our investment promotion efforts in the industrial sector have been directed towards attracting new medium and high technology manufacturing industries as well as promoting expansion of existing facilities.

A concerted effort by labour, management and government is necessary to ensure that these objectives are met. Each of these three bodies has its separate role and responsibility as we strive for continued economic growth and prosperity.

Government on its part has provided the infra-structural development necessary to support the kind of economy we are striving to achieve. The development expenditure over the past 5 years for the public sector amounted to \$4,800m. This is a clear indication of the importance government has placed on the need to stimulate existing institutions and manufacturers towards greater modernisation.

The expansion of the infrastructure was supported by sound economic development programmes. Plans were also implemented to promote the training and development of employees and to provide improved housing, education and health services for the workers and their families.

Labour and Management on their part should respond to the Government's lead in an enlightened and responsible manner to ensure success in our industrialisation programme.

Our dependence on human skills for continued progress and prosperity cannot be over emphasised. Members of the labour force have a singularly important role to play in ensuring that we prepare and galvanise ourselves to meet the period of uncertainty ahead and the stiff competition for markets we expect to meet.

One of the best responses labour can give is to further upgrade its skills and strive to cultivate a responsible attitude to work. It is only by so doing continually that we can achieve higher labour productivity which is so essential for the success of our export promotion drive. I would urge everyone, both labour and management, to make full use of the industrial training schemes which have been introduced.

The responsibility of management is equally clear. Apart from better working conditions and welfare services for the workers, it is imperative that management techniques and practices are improved. Obsolete industrial processes and technology should be phased out so as to reduce production costs. An increase in labour productivity can result not only from better training, more responsible attitudes and better health amongst the workers, but also from an improvement in management, introduction of modern machinery or a different production and marketing programme.

At the same time, wages should be linked to productivity. Productivity incentive schemes should be implemented where possible. This will enable labour to contribute more to raising productivity and further reduce unit production costs. We must do all we can to enhance the competitive position of our exports if we want to succeed.

One important fact of which we should constantly remind ourselves, is that we are ultimately co-owners of our society and are therefore responsible for its welfare and its future. It is only through the coordinated effort of labour, management and government working hand-in-hand, that we can achieve progress and prosperity. And it is only when there is growth and prosperity in our nation that

we can share in its benefits.

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