

TEXT OF SPEECH BY THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
TO THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS, MR.LIM GUAN HOO,
AT THE 11TH INTAKE V.C. PASSING-OUT PARADE AT PRU
BASE II QUEENSWAY ON SATURDAY, DEC.22, 1973 AT 5 P.M.

This passing-out parade marks the happy conclusion of the six months of basic training for 2,123 part-time national servicemen. During this period, the 11th intake of national servicemen in the vigilante corps have gone through the introductory chapter of their training programme and have thus laid a sound foundation essential for further advancement both in training and service in a disciplined uniformed organisation. Further training will be given to enable these national servicemen to service Civil Defence, Auxilliary Fire Fighting or community security policing.

The vigilante corps is continually receiving men with better educational background. In the initial years, as high as 80 per cent of the corps members received only primary education. As for this intake, more than 50 per cent have received at least secondary school education. The availability of better leadership qualities will help in no small measure to develop the corps into a more cohesive and effective organisation.

National servicemen with better educational background and leadership qualities have been selected to undergo a special leadership training course and on being deployed into the various operational districts and units will become unit leaders, group leaders or section leaders responsible for guiding their subordinates in their duties and functions. We have now a new plan in mind to give more responsibilities to the national service officers in the vigilante corps, in order that their professional knowledge, where applicable, may be more effectively and constructively utilised through national service towards national progress. Many of them who are lawyers have recently taken an active part in organising the Seminar on the Limited Policing Scheme. A speakers' panel will be set up with qualified national service officers including lecturers from institutions of higher learning, accountants and doctors to assist in publicising and implementing the policing scheme. Further plans are being contemplated for them to conduct or receive special training to ensure satisfactory development and progress of the corps.

The VC2/-

The vigilante corps with the consistent influx of part-time national servicemen has become a gigantic organisation with members from all walks of life, ranging from those who live from hand to mouth to various categories of professional men. For those who have not been able to complete their school education at a higher level, a great variety of specialised training provided by the VC will enable them to find themselves a quid pro quo in national service. It is therefore my hope that they will take the opportunity of being absorbed into the big family of VC to have themselves well equipped to become more useful citizens of Singapore.

Over the past few months, the vigilante corps under the leadership of the Assistant Commissioner of Police (Police National Service) and its new Commandant as well as other senior officers including the three Deputy Commandants, have made remarkable progress in the adjustment of its organisational structure, the preparation for the implementation of a new in-camp training development project, the publication of the VC official organ, the review of training programmes for civil defence and other fields of service, the setting-up of a specialised cultural unit, etc. All these serve not only to create a new atmosphere conducive for more constructive and meaningful services by the corps members, but have helped to boost up the morale of all officers and men in the corps.

The reestablishment of the Community Security Force (民众保安部隊) is yet another hallmark of the enhanced enthusiasm and spirit of dedication displayed by thousands of our young citizens in the corps. This scheme will be implemented in a week's time and for this purpose, 2,400 men have already been selected from national servicemen who are still within the first phase of their part-time service. It is my sincere hope that with the special training they have received, they will be able to further develop their knowledge and versatility, while on the job, to perform their duties more effectively. More important, they should assist members of the public when approached and treat them as their friends.

The vigilante3/-

The VC has now prepared a comprehensive Work Plan for 1974, listing out a wide spectrum of training and service schemes in chronological order. When implemented, this work plan will probably necessitate further adjustment of training programmes and slight increase of training/duty hours. As a disciplined force consisting of hundreds of thousands of young citizens, the vigilante corps should continue to make more constructive contributions towards social progress. It should reflect the precious qualities of willingness to serve and tenacity of Singaporeans who have, through thick and thin, made Singapore a successful independent nation. The manpower available in the corps is part and parcel of our most important national asset. Where possible and necessary, we should not hesitate to extend the scope of service to prove our worth as a useful national service organisation. In this context, the VC has now decided to set up, amongst other things, a lifeguard corps for deployment along the beaches to provide safety protection to those who prefer to have a day by the beach. Reports have it that quite a number of fatal drowning cases occurred during the past few years. These incidents could have been prevented had necessary precautions been taken in advance. It is the intention of the vigilante corps to assist in this direction. In February 1974, the first batch of about 40 VC members who are qualified lifeguards will be deployed for this special field of national service. This will be followed by the service of a second batch of lifeguards who are currently undergoing sea training. Though the results of this service may not be tangible, we hope that through the efforts of our national servicemen, the number of fatal cases by the beach will be reduced and minimized.

I would like now to congratulate you for your excellent performance today. All of you should put in every effort to enhance the image of the corps.

DECEMBER 22, 1973.

(Time issued: 1430 hours)
