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**SPEECH BY MR LEE YIOK SENG, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT) AT THE GRADUATION PRESENTATION
CEREMONY OF 31ST INTAKE OF FULL-TIME POLICE NATIONAL SERVICE
SPECIAL CONSTABLES AND VIGILANTE CORPS MEMBERS AT THE POLICE
ACADEMY ON THURSDAY, 9 JUNE 83 AT 5.45 PM**

This is an auspicious occasion for the 165 Special Constables and 169 Vigilantes who are graduating today upon successful completion of their basic training at the Police Academy. Let me therefore offer each and everyone of you my warmest congratulations and best wishes.

During your three months of arduous training, you have not only been equipped with the required skills and knowledge of law enforcement but have also been put through a very tough regiment of training which helps to build up your character and sense of discipline. Indeed, modern police work requires the officer to be more than a law enforcer. He has also to be a good citizen, of high moral values and strong character, ever ready to serve the community and always willing to lead by his personal example.

After today's ceremony, you will be posted to the various operational units of our Police Force. The policing strategy and practice have been changing in recent years to enable the Force to cope better with the demands of the nation. It is therefore most gratifying for me to note that the Police Force is now changing its policing strategy from one that is biased towards law enforcement to one that is community-based and oriented to the welfare of the community, i.e. the Neighbourhood Policing System (NPS).

This system acknowledges the fact that maintenance of law and order, preservation of peace and harmony amongst the members of the community cannot be shouldered effectively by the Police Force alone. Cooperation of the community is vital if policing is to have some measure of success. To gain the support and cooperation of the community, the Police Force must first of all gain their respect and confidence. This trust must be built up quickly through a concerted programme of community involvement comprising the following elements:

- a) eradication of the notion that Police officers are employed solely to do police work in the community;
- b) abolition of any fears, real or perceived of police brutality, or abuse of police powers;
- c) active participation in community functions and projects to gain the confidence, respect and affection of the people.

In this programme of community involvement, there is no room for indifference, irresponsibility, rudeness or loss of temper. You must, as Police and the Vigilante Corps officers at all times carry yourselves with exemplary conduct and impeccable discipline so that we may all be proud of your performance and achievements. You must always be kind and sympathetic to those who need it, never failing to lend a hand to the weak, the old, the young and the distressed. In upholding the law, you must always be fair, understanding and firm.

The Police Force's effectiveness in serving the nation is to be measured not by the achievements of your OC or the Commissioner but that of yourselves. It is through you that the public see and feel about the Police Force. Your deportment and bearing in the most trying of circumstances will create impressions in the minds of the public that may last a life-time. It is by these impressions that they judge not only you but your fellow officers as well.

In conclusion, I would like to add that I am extremely confident that your sense of dedication and enthusiasm that you have displayed during your training will stand you in good stead in the performance of your tasks ahead. I have no doubt that you will use these qualities to win the respect, confidence and affection of our community. Together with the community in which you serve, we shall all make Singapore congenial and safe.

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