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SPEECH BY MR PHUA BAH LEE, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY,
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AT THE AETI 2ND TECHNICIANS & 4TH
MECHANICS COMBINED GRADUATION PARADE HELD AT AETI PARADE
SQUARE, CHANGI AIR BASE ON FRIDAY, 27 JAN 78 AT 5.00 PM

Today's parade is to mark the passing out of aircraft maintenance personnel.

In the sophisticated services of present day requirements, the various components of a service are so interdependent that the efficiency of a service depends on each and every component. In the air-force which uses highly technical equipment, this is more true than any other service.

Maintenance men on the ground may not be seen as often in the fore-front as pilots. They may not also enjoy the same glamour, but they are performing a no less important role than the men that fly. They are the ones that ensures that equipment and machines are maintained in a constant state of readiness to perform what they are intended to do. Having the most skilled pilots would be useless if the planes cannot fly. It is you who have to ensure that the planes will fly. Yours is a very important and responsible role.

The courses which you have completed will provide you with the initial technical knowledge and skill. More technical knowledge and skill will have to be acquired as you go along not only for advancement in the service, but also to make yourself more and more highly skilled technicians or mechanics as the case may be. Being just adequate for the job is not good enough. You should aim to be good at the job.

The pace of development in the fields of electronics and aerospace have been fastest in the past few decades and will continue to be so. Those involved in these fields will have to upgrade their knowledge and acquire new skills to keep up with the latest advancements, or they will find themselves obsolete in no time.

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The need to advance your technical knowledge and skills is more true and urgent in our case. Our air force is a relatively young one. We have to start with air-planes and equipment that were out of date by the standards of the advanced countries, until we have the skills to fly and maintain planes that are more modern and sophisticated. We still have quite a lot of ground to catch up. More sophisticated and modern planes and equipment are being acquired. You will have to service and maintain them. You should get yourselves ready with the necessary skills to meet the challenge when these arrive.

Your jobs will be both interesting and challenging. For those who are dedicated and good at their jobs, their prospects of advancement are bright. Your future is in your own hands. I wish you all a successful career in the Singapore Air Force.
