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PRESS RELEASE

Information Division, Ministry of Culture, City Hall, Singapore 0617 - TEL: 3378191 ext. 352, 353, 354 / 3362207 / 3362271

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**SPEECH BY MR PHUA BAH LEE, SR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(DEFENCE) AT THE NATIONAL SERVICE SEND-OFF PARTY AT THE
KRETA AYER PEOPLE'S THEATRE ON TUESDAY,
19 JUNE 1984 AT 9.00 AM**

For the enlistees, today's send-off party signifies the beginning of an important phase in your life. It is the beginning of a transformation that will change you from a civilian into a soldier.

The training that you are about to receive will be the cause for that transformation. The equipment that we have would be of no account if we do not have the men with the necessary skills to use them effectively. No amount of sophistication can replace that vital human factor. For this reason, necessarily high standards have been set. Much is expected of you.

Experience, discipline and courage are crucial elements that the SAF seeks to imbue in you via the training that you will undergo. With each exercise you complete, you will gain discipline, courage and experience. These characteristics gained will reinforce and improve your skills. You will be able to achieve set tasks more quickly and efficiently than before. This process of learning and reinforcement of learnt skills will enable you to meet the required performance standards expected of you. I therefore urge you to undertake the training seriously and diligently. For a responsibility as important as the defence of our country, the attitude towards your national service stint should be no less than one of commitment and diligence.

To train a large number of soldiers to master their individual skills and to wield the instruments of war in swift, deadly combat to defend the nation is no mean task. The safety of servicemen is not compromised even as the SAF undertakes the training of its men. Rest assured that every precaution is taken to ensure that the lives of our men are not endangered and that no unnecessary risks are taken in the process of training. The SAF will play its part in ensuring that every precautionary measure is taken during training. It can only do that much. You who are to be the nation's defenders must play your part. Apart from putting maximal effort and determination into everything you are asked to do, observing safety procedures and regulations constitutes part of your overall duty to the nation. You owe it to yourself, your family, the SAF and the nation to preserve your own life.

The SAF would like to see every serviceman function as a healthy person, well-adjusted and committed to his work. As you enter the SAF to begin your full-time service, you will have to adjust from the civilian life that you have been so used to. Learning to be a soldier will not be easy. The officers and NCOs who instruct you can help you adjust to the military way of life. You should approach them should you face any training, family or personal problems. This phase of life that you are about to enter will prove a most enriching one --- if you enter it with an open mind.

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