

PRESS RELEASE

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SPEECH BY BG (RES) GEORGE YONG-BOON YEO,
MINISTER OF STATE (FINANCE) AND (FOREIGN AFFAIRS),
AT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE STUDENTS' UNION BALL .
AT MANDARIN HOTEL ON FRIDAY, 11 AUGUST 1989 AT 7.10 PM

Your Vice-Chancellor advised me not to give a serious speech this evening. I didn't want to speak at all, but was persuaded that I should sing for my dinner. Actually, my wife and I are here to enjoy ourselves.

Three weeks ago, the PAP held a fund-raising dinner. Dress was black-tie. I didn't own a tuxedo, so I went to my tailor at Katong to make one. My tailor told me that there were three others he was making tuxedos for, all for the same dinner. The PAP was giving him good business. I also had a friend who thought black tie meant a black-colour tie. Luckily, he found out in time and got one on a rush order.

Formal dinners are becoming more common in Singapore. I see most of you are very well-dressed tonight. It is nice to dress up from time to time and have some fun. Life cannot just be exams and hard work.

We should pass exams and work hard of course, don't get me wrong, but we must also learn how to relax and when not to take ourselves too seriously. There is a time to put on lounge suits and tuxedos. And there is also a time to wear T-shirts and blue jeans. There is a time for protocol and formality. And there is also a time for fooling around. In this way, we set life in perspective.

I look forward to a very non-serious programme this evening.

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