

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH OF THE MINISTER FOR FINANCE,  
MR. LIM KIM SAN, AT THE MAGSA AWARD PRESEN-  
TATION CEREMONY IN MANILA ON 31ST AUGUST 1965.

There is a saying in Malay, the national language of my country, which goes like this, "Lembu punya minyak sapi punya nama". Translated, it means "The oil is from the cow but the buffalo gets the credit". So it is with me here today. The great honour which has been conferred on me today should rightly belong to a group of young, very dedicated, dynamic and unselfish men and women of my country, who by their hard work, foresight and devotion to duty, have made it possible for Singapore to complete successfully its first five-year low-cost housing programme.

It was my good fortune and privilege to be in a position to give them the opportunity to prove their worth, and the Ramon Ma. Paysay 1965 Award for community leadership to me is actually a tribute to the young officers who worked with me and discharged well the responsibility that was assigned to them. The award will undoubtedly spur all of us in Singapore towards fulfilling our aim in bringing about a more just and equal society, wherein every citizen will have the right to live in liberty and happiness and be given equal opportunities and expectation of a better life.

Those of us who have emerged from colonial rule to become free and independent nations sometimes do not have enough confidence in the capacity and ability of our own people. My own rather limited experience in the last few years has convinced me that solutions to the problem of nation building lie mainly in our own hands. Reliance on foreign expert advice will bring us far, but not far enough to satisfy the aspirations and desires of our people. The hard and often tiresome work must be done by us and us alone. For it is only the citizens of the country that can get the feel of the situation which is essential in the solution of any vexatious problem. Singapore's Housing

and Development Board has only one expatriate officer among a staff of more than 300 monthly paid, and I hope that its record in the field of low-cost housing will convince other emerging countries that there are young men and women among their citizens who, given the opportunity, will show that they not only have the dedication, the determination and the will, but also the capacity and ability to solve their own problems difficult though they may be.

The Ramon Magsaysay Award, founded in memory of an outstanding leader of our time, keeps alive the spirit of international brotherhood. The high principles for which your great president had lived, worked and died for are continued for in making its Award, the Trustees have shown a spirit which transcends national boundaries and have made no distinction of race and creed. It is a beacon for the future of mankind and, if it spreads, and spread it must, we can look forward confidently to the time when freedom can be enjoyed by all and man can live with man in honour and peace.

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