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TEXT OF SPEECH BY THE ACTING PRESIDENT, DR.
YEOW GHIM SENG, AT THE ANNUAL DINNER OF THE
SOCIETY OF PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS AT THE HILTON
HOTEL ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 23, 1972, AT 7.30 P.M.

As a member of the profession, I have watched with interest the growth of your society. I remember your founder chairman, the late Dr. Gopal Haridas, for whom your society, before it changed its name from the Society of General Practitioners to the Society of Private Practitioners, had a great appreciation for his valuable contribution to the community and whose memory I still cherish with great respect.

The society was formed with the main objective of looking after the interests of private practitioners. I think this objective was an excellent one. However, I have in the course of many years' practice noticed that the private practitioners did not and do not have much say in such an important body as the Medical Council. The practitioners in both the Government and University Medical Services are already represented by nominees. One would have expected the elected places to be filled by private practitioners who form the bulk of registered names in the medical register. I am afraid one is sadly disappointed in such an expectation. Most of the elected members of the Medical Council are from the Government and University Medical Services. The result is that the private practitioners have practically no say in such a useful body. It may be a good idea if the members of your society will consider what I have just said so that in time the Medical Council would be more of a representative body than what it has been up to now. In this way, the Government would be more in touch with the opinions of medical practitioners in Singapore on matters of medical training of students and post-graduates, medical ethics and of course registration of graduates from dubious medical schools.

The major challenge that faces the medical profession today is the demand from an increasingly knowledgeable population for a more sophisticated medical care. This demand must be the concern

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of the profession as a whole, whether in the public service or in the private practice. To this end, the members of your society must keep abreast with the latest in medical science, and in so doing upgrade their clinical skills. The extension of membership to specialists in private practice is certainly a step forward in this direction. The pooling of resources will strengthen your organisation in many ways.

Our Government is also constantly reviewing its health and medical programmes. It would be an added advantage if members in the private practice co-ordinate and integrate their activities within these schemes so that the skills of the profession at all levels are utilised for the benefit and welfare of our society. Together we can then provide an excellent, a more sophisticated and specialised medical service to meet the demands not only of a fast growing industry and economy in our Republic, but also of the surrounding countries.

It is now my pleasure to toast to the continuing activities and success of your society.

JANUARY 23, 1972.

(Time issued: 1600 hours)
