

29 JUN 1982 Acc. No.

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Singapore Government

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PRESS RELEASE

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04-2/82/06/13

SPEECH BY MR FONG SIP CHEE, MINISTER OF STATE (CULTURE),
AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE CHAI CHEE GOOD NEIGHBOUR
DAY CAMPAIGN AT THE CHAI CHEE COMMUNITY CENTRE
ON SUNDAY, 13 JUNE 1982 AT 7.30 PM

May I, on behalf of the various constituency functional groups, all residents of Chai Chee and on my own behalf, extend to my senior colleague, Mr Goh Chok Tong, Minister of Defence and Second Minister for Health, our warmest welcome. We are greatly honoured by his presence to grace this occasion. We are grateful too for his interest in our work and the concern he has always shown for the people of Chai Chee.

Mr Goh is no stranger to Chai Chee. He knows the place well. Nor is he a stranger to the new problems associated with high-rise living, as he too has to look after the similarly high-rise Marine Parade Estate. We both share the same concern for the need to rekindle the spirit of community living, community action and community endeavour. His personal involvement in our work in Chai Chee will certainly add impetus to our efforts to reach the objective we set out to achieve.

I have spoken at length at the opening ceremony and during the course of the past week. I do not propose to offer further discourse on the subject. It remains for me tonight to thank each and everyone of those who have worked so hard to make this first Good Neighbour Day campaign a real success. Our residents' response has been wonderful too. It will be invidious for me to single out any person for mention, suffice it to say that we all benefited much from their efforts.

The conclusion of the campaign is by no means the end of our work. We will have constantly to bear in mind the message which our Friendly Neighbourhood Spirit MICOS tells us: "Be a good neighbour". Let this be our motto.

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I have asked the Steering Committee, under the leadership of Mr Toh Weng Cheong, who is also the CCC Chairman, to conduct a post-mortem to identify our shortcomings in this exercise so that we can organise future campaigns better and more effectively.

Meanwhile, I have also discussed with Weng Cheong a number of proposals. There was a congruence of our views. We will put it to the committee to consider the feasibility of incorporating the following proposals for the next Good Neighbour Day:

- (1) A Neighbourhood Policeman contest - to be held jointly by the RCs and the Divisional Police;
- (2) A contest on the preservation and improvement of the environment by local (residents') initiative. Beautification projects for which grants have been given by the CCC to each block must be implemented;
- (3) To institute a system of awards for good neighbourly deeds, probably to be called MICOS Award;
- (4) A 'Community Activities Participation Award' based on credit points to be given to participants of the various activities organised by the functional groups - the CCC, MC, RCs, WSC, YEC, sports club. Awards can be made on individual and/or family basis. The criteria must be carefully worked out before implementation;
- (5) A seminar be held in conjunction with the next Good Neighbour Day to gather views and suggestion from the residents.

In the meantime, a number of decisions can be implemented immediately:

- (1) Scholarships or bursaries to be awarded by the four neighbourhood RCs annually with full financial grants from the CCC. This is a recommendation by Toh Weng Cheong, our CCC Chairman. A meaningful proposal, it will certainly further entrench the spirit of cooperation between the CCC and the RCs which we have enjoyed all along. I fully support this proposal;
- (2) A cartoon stripe contest featuring our mascot 'MICOS' in his good neighbourly adventures;

- (3) A lyrics contest for the nine compositions written especially for our Good Neighbour Day campaign. One of these will be adopted as the theme song. The others will be retained as our community songs to be sung at gatherings of residents and other functions; and
- (4) As already been announced, the changing of the names of the four RCs.

May I, in conclusion, be allowed to make an addition to the description which I made some years ago on the profile of an average Singaporean. I said then that he was, and still is, one who aspires to have "One wife, two children, three-room HDB apartment, four-wheeled vehicle, and a five-figured annual income." May I hasten to add that he should now also acquire "a sixth sense for good neighbourliness."

I wish you all good health and happiness.
