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SPEECH BY MR HO CHENG CHOON, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT) AND CHAIRMAN, URBAN & RURAL
SERVICES COMMITTEE ON SUNDAY, 24 APRIL 1977 AT 8.30 AM
AT THE METALLING OF LATERITE TRACK BETWEEN NEO TIEW ROAD
AND KRANJI CAUSEWAY BY GOTONG ROYONG

I am glad to be here with you this morning to witness a Gotong Royong project to metal the laterite track between Neo Tiew Road and Kranji Causeway. It is indeed commendable for all of you to sacrifice yet another Sunday to devote your time for a community service project.

The existing laterite track measuring 2,000 metres links the metalled portion of Neo Tiew Road and the Kranji Causeway. Presently the track is bumpy, dusty and undulating. During wet weather it also becomes soggy. Metalling of the track will not only minimise inconvenience to the residents living in the area but will also serve as a short cut for motorists travelling from Woodlands Road (at 22 km) to Lim Chu Kang Road and vice versa. Residents of New Tiew Road who wish to go to Woodlands will thus use the newly metalled track at all times instead of the longer route via Lim Chu Kang Road and Chua Chu Kang Road. The distance saved in travel is approximately 6 km.

In 1976 10 Gotong Royong projects were approved by URSC at a cost of \$707,750 as compared to 4 in 1975 costing \$259,255. The 10 Gotong Royong projects carried out in 1976 involved 18 roads in six constituencies namely Chua Chu Kang, Jurong, Kampong Chai Chee, Nee Soon, Punggol and Tampines.

Last year Chua Chu Kang constituency alone had organised 3 similar Gotong Royong projects costing \$286,786 to make up 9 rural and dusty laterite tracks. The increase in Gotong Royong projects is encouraging and I can assure you that projects of such nature will constantly be encouraged by the Government not so much as to save government funds but even more important, to instil in the constituents as well as the younger Singaporeans the essence and significance of community service and self-help.

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Before the Gotong Royong, preliminary works had to be carried out on the existing track. These preliminary works include the grading, levelling and compacting of the existing subgrade. Also the PWD has to deploy its plants and machineries and workmen after the Gotong Royong for the compaction of the metalling and other finishing touches.

It is therefore important that Gotong Royong should be co-ordinated with well organised volunteered labour.

I am pleased to see the large number of National Servicemen, school children and teachers, members of the Chua Chu Kang CCC and residents today ready to start making up the earth track between New Tiew Road and Kranji Causeway, measuring about 2,000 metres long. I would however like to see more residents participate in such community service projects as these projects are meant to benefit them directly.

The Government has always been concerned about the welfare of the rural people. This is evidenced by the steady increase of URSC funds over the last few years and the allocation of more funds to the rural areas. I am pleased to inform you that the URSC has a plan to upgrade the existing street lightings in kampong roads. It is proposed to convert the existing lamps to Mercury Vapour 125 W HPMV Lamps which will provide better and brighter lights for the convenience of the rural people. However, it will not be possible to effect the conversion of all Kampong Lightings in one exercise. It will be carried out in stages over a period of 4-5 years.

I congratulate the Chua Chu Kang CCC for having successfully organised this Gotong Royong project and would like to thank all of you present today for your efforts and contribution in making this community service project a success.
