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MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
FOR GEYLANG EAST AT THE CLOSING CUM PRIZE-GIVING CEREMONY
FOR NATIONAL SCHOOLS TABLE-TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS 1977
ORGANISED BY THE SINGAPORE SCHOOLS' SPORTS COUNCIL ON
28.4.77 AT 4.30 PM AT CHUNG CHENG HIGH SCHOOL, SINGAPORE.

I am very happy to be here today to officiate at the closing cum prize-giving ceremony of the "National Schools Table-Tennis Championships 1977". It is a well known fact that the Singapore Schools' Sports Council has worked very hard over the past years. I wish to take this opportunity to thank them for their contributions.

As far as I can see, there are many familiar players of both sexes taking part in this tournament. Among all participants representing their respective schools to take part in the tournament, some are national players. In fact, this does not surprise me as table-tennis is one of the most popular sports in our Republic.

In the past, we were all of the opinion that if a player had good performance and was often placed first in tournaments, he must be a good sportsman, but today, the definition we give to an excellent table tennis player has been changed tremendously. He or she must not only possess good skills but must also have a strong sense of awareness. All school representatives must have the awareness of loyalty to their schools while national representatives must possess national consciousness. I wish to give a simple explanation here. If you are a school representative, you must win glory for the school. Similarly, if you are a national representative, you must win glory for the country. Even if you are not a player of the tournament but only a student or a citizen of the country, you

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will naturally share the joys if your school or country has excellent achievements or performance in any other aspects. This is the awareness that we should have.

The abovementioned school and country are only two examples. We have ever said that we do not want to cultivate "Star Sportsman" or "Individualist Heroism". However, at present, such phenomenon is still prevailing in some of the sports. We must take immediate action to prevent the spread of such undesirable phenomenon.

So I am of the view that being a good sportsman, he or she must observe discipline, possess team spirit, sport morality, athletic potentiality and be physically fit. Coaches must always pay attention to the players' balanced development in all aspects. Apart from this, they must also take note of their attendance, behaviour and attitudes in tournaments, ages and the development of their skills. The collection of these data will help upgrade the quality of sportsmen and promote the development of sports activities in a more effective way. I hope the relevant sports organisation will further review these problems so as to draw up a more comprehensive programme.

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