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**SPEECH BY MR MAH BOW TAN,
MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND
MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS,
AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF CLEAN AND GREEN WEEK 1994
AT THE EAST COAST PARK
ON SATURDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 1994 AT 9.30 AM**

We have come to the end of another "Clean & Green Week".

This year we have taken a practical and down-to-earth approach in promoting environmental awareness. We have brought the campaign back to basics, and deliberately kept the issues simple, easy to relate to and easy to act on.

The theme, 'A Better Living Environment', gives Singaporeans an objective to work towards. A better living environment is more than just something "nice to have". We are a compact yet fast-paced society growing by leaps and bounds. If we do not take extra care to safeguard our living environment, life can become quite intolerable.

Our message is a simple one: Care for our environment starts with each one of us. It is our responsibility, not our neighbours, not the Town Councils, not the Government's responsibility to:

- * keep our public places litter-free
- * reduce the amount of waste generated
- * keep the air clean
- * refrain from creating unnecessary noise
- * care for nature.

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The theme we have chosen, 'A Better Living Environment' does not mean that we do not care what happens outside Singapore. We firmly believe that we live in an interdependent world, that what we do may affect our neighbours just as what our neighbours do may affect us. This principle of interdependence is now well-accepted by the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), which has decided to declare 1995 as ASEAN Environment Year.

If we understand the environmental problems of our neighbours and if our neighbours understand our problems, the chances of us doing anything that is detrimental to the environment will be considerably reduced. This, too, will contribute to a better living environment.

On our part, Singapore will continue to promote environmental awareness among its citizens. We will invite citizens, corporations, professionals and green groups to help spread the green message.

I am encouraged to see many scientists and professionals come forward to share their ideas and expertise in the fields of biodiversity, eco architecture and noise management. One lesson to be learnt from all this is that as long as we are open to new ideas and are willing to exercise our imagination, we will always find ways to improve the quality of our environment.

This year, I am especially heartened to see so many organisations from the private sector take the initiative to organise seminars, contests and other activities over the past week. Their invaluable contributions have helped make Clean and Green Week (CGW) '94 a success.

I would like to extend a special thanks to all our sponsors. Their generosity have helped make this year's programme more ambitious. I look forward to their continued support in helping to promote environmental awareness to the community in the years to come.

A word of thanks also to the members of the organising committee from the National Council on the Environment and the Ministry of the Environment.

The CGW closing ceremony does not signal the end of our efforts in working towards a better living environment. This is an on-going process which will take years, not weeks. If we value the quality of life in the years to come, we must press on. Let us resolve today to do our part, no matter how modest our contribution may appear. Let us bear in mind that the quality of our living environment will depend not only on grand future decisions but on many modest decisions we take each day. Let us look after Singapore.

I now declare Clean & Green Week 1994 closed.

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