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SPEECH BY MR ONG TENG CHEONG, MINISTER
FOR COMMUNICATIONS AT SPEECH DAY CEREMONY
AT TOH TUCK SECONDARY SCHOOL ON SUN 5 AUG
1979 @ 4.00 P.M.

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Toh Tuck Secondary School is 14 years old today.

From its humble beginnings in 1965 it now has classrooms catering for the normal school curricula as well as technical workshops and science laboratories. It is set in well-kept, clean and spacious surroundings and its students have not only been successful in the academic field but have also done well in art, music and a host of other extra curricula activities. These achievements bear testimony to the capable leadership and hardwork of the school principal and staff. It also attests to the diligence and enthusiasm of the students and the co-operation between staff and students which have made their endeavours a success. It therefore gives me great pleasure to congratulate all of you today on your achievements.

One of the objectives of our education system is to ensure that our children acquire the necessary skills to enable them to be gainfully employed to secure their independence in the future. But it is also equally important that they develop into loyal, useful and patriotic citizens, who show concern for others, are thrifty and industrious, honest and courageous.

Without such qualities, we may degenerate into selfish individuals whom no one will want to associate with. This can only undermine the fabric of our society and lead to its deterioration. The teaching of moral education in our schools today is therefore as important as the teaching of science, mathematics and other subjects. Although the home is the place where moral education is first taught, the school can provide a conducive environment to exert a strong moral influence on the child through its programme of moral education and its philosophy and through the behaviour and attitudes of its teachers. We must also remember that moral education does not stop in the home and the school. Once taught it must be practised during interaction with fellow students, neighbours and friends. Only in this way can our society be upgraded and be conducive to the moral development of others who have not had the benefit of such education.

I am very heartened to note that Toh Tuck School does not concentrate on achieving academic success alone. It aims to produce students who are not only academically capable and physically fit but also appreciate art and music. This has been achieved through the various activities it encourages amongst which are the choral group, a school orchestra and a brass band. Those of

you who are musically inclined will be particularly interested to know that the Ministry of Culture has started a pilot scheme to allocate block seats to various schools by rotation, for their musical concerts. We hope you will take advantage of this when your turn comes so that the organisers will be encouraged to develop a full cultural programme specially for you students.

Besides music and cultural activities, I am told that Toh Tuck School also organises other activities for its students such as a Drama Society and a Chess Club. The activities provided by these groups and other school societies involving social ethics can have a positive impact on the character development of our children. We should therefore strongly encourage students to participate in such activities and where possible to have it formalised, so that it can enhance the school's moral education programme.

The school is a place where children spend a greater part of the day away from home. School days are also the most carefree; one has little responsibility except to ensure that one does not fall back on his lessons. It is therefore a place where children spend

the happiest time of their life. With your school being put in the competent hands of a hardworking principal and staff, I have no doubt that all of you will look back with fond memories and be proud that you have attended Toh Tuck Secondary School when it is your turn to leave to make your mark in society and the world. I therefore urge all of you students to give of your best, work hard and cherish every moment that you spend in your school career.
