

PRESS RELEASE

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91 - 07c - 5

Release No.: 02/MAR
16-0/91/03/02

**SPEECH BY MR ONG TENG CHEONG, DY PRIME MINISTER,
AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF NTUC RADIO HEART
AT SINGAPORE LABOUR FOUNDATION (SLF) BUILDING
ON SATURDAY, 2 MARCH 1991 AT 10.00 AM**

When the US-led Allied Forces began their military campaign against Iraq six weeks ago, many people in Singapore scrambled for radios to find out the latest developments. The sale of radios in Singapore in the first few weeks following the outbreak of the Gulf war was reported to be brisk.

Despite television, radio remains popular because of its many advantages. Radio is not expensive. A \$10 portable radio set can provide one with many hours of entertainment. Many people listen to the radio when they walk, cycle, drive or ride buses. Many housewives listen to the radio when they do their housework.

Important news can be despatched quickly and conveniently over the radio. We first got the news of Singapore's independence from radio 25 years ago. We also first got the news of the outbreak of the Gulf war from the BBC radio on the morning of 17 Jan this year.

There were more than ten FM radio channels on the air before NTUC Radio Heart first started test transmissions on 28 Jan '91. Some people say that NTUC is crazy to start a radio station because they thought that it could not be a viable proposition. The competition is so keen and the advertising revenue on radio is small in comparison with the total advertising revenue on TV, newspapers and periodicals. But these facts have not deterred NTUC

from launching its own radio station. Our objective is a social one. Our radio station is to serve our fellow workers and Singaporeans as a whole. NTUC radio is set up to inform and entertain. NTUC radio hopes to reflect warmth and care. It is not going to be just a juke box with only music or a bulletin box with only news and commentaries. It is going to be a station with a feeling and a heart, with songs, music and chit-chat shows. NTUC Radio Heart is a station that can express the voices of workers better. It is a station where listeners can have heart-to-heart talks with DJs. NTUC also hopes to use the radio as a means to reach out to its members.

NTUC Club will spend more than \$100,000 in the next one year to provide radio entertainment to its members. The station will also try their best to explain labour policies and other Government policies in a way that is easy for workers and their families to understand.

Profit-making is not an object of the station. But if it does make money, it will be a bonus. The profit will be used to further improve programmes for its listeners.

I understand that the listenership of Radio Heart for the first month has been very encouraging. I would like to commend all the staff of NTUC Radio Heart for a job well done so far. It is nice to have a successful beginning. But, as with all business ventures, you must continue to upgrade yourself, or you will lose your listeners to other stations.

I wish Radio Heart every success. I now declare the Radio Station open.

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