

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

10/MAR/8/77(S.A.)

EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER DELIVERY

12 MAR 1977
Acc. No. NARC
77 0060 18-

SPEECH BY ENCIK OTHMAN WOK, MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS AT
A PARTY FOR THE AGED ON SATURDAY, 5 MAR 77 AT 4.15 PM AT
THE ZEHNDER ROAD COMMUNITY CENTRE

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1 This party, I am told, has been specially organised for the benefit of the needy senior citizens in our constituency. As it is still the Chinese New Year season, each and everyone of them will receive an "ang paw". The holding of this party signifies a gesture on our part as showing concern and care for our less fortunate fellow senior citizens.

2 There has been some publicity about the problems and needs of the aged. The Government recognises that more has to be done for the aged particularly those who are destitute and have no families or close relatives. Public assistance allowances are given by the Social Welfare Department to the needy old people. Those not able to manage on their own and requiring institutional care are admitted to the Woodlands Home for the Aged, an old people's home administered by the Social Welfare Department, or to old people's homes run by voluntary organisations. The present thinking is that

as far as possible old people should live in the community rather than be admitted into an institution. Therefore every effort should be made to encourage the old people to continue living within the community.

3 I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to the various youth groups and voluntary organisations in this constituency as well as to the community at large to come forward and help in one way or another in making the lives of the aged more pleasant. If organised groups could make it a point to go round and search out those who are in need, reach out, befriend and assist them, then the lot of the needy aged can be improved tremendously. Amidst the obvious manifestations of clean and green are still those who are too poor or forgotten to partake of our good life. We must reach out to these people and bring them a share of the joys of living.

4 Several organisations already are in the process of setting up homes for the destitute old people in the community. It is hoped that more organisations or interested groups would do likewise or set up some kind of services for the aged. This could be the community project to be adopted for those organisations which are

not sure of what they can do as far as social and community services are concerned.

5 As more is being done for the aged we must be on guard that the aged will not be rejected or abandoned by their children and families. There is a need to instil filial piety in our children and youth. To achieve this, parents and families will have to play their part in the upbringing of their children. Filial piety cannot be developed overnight. It is a long process of education and emulation. Children should be able to see that their own parents are filial to their grandparents. This example would encourage them to be filial to their parents. This is one set of values which we must try to preserve especially in our highly urbanised society.

6 In conclusion I would like to thank the donors and organisers in making this party a success.