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Press
release

SINGAPORE METRICATION BOARD
1, Anson Road, Singapore, 2. Tel:79595

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TEXT OF SPEECH BY MR CHAN KAI YAU, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, AT THE FINALS
OF THE INTER-SCHOOL METRIC DRAMA COMPETITION (CHINESE SECTION) ON 4TH
JULY, 1976

Singapore is a country which largely depends on thriving exports and its role as a regional trade and service centre for its prosperity. Due to her geographical position, international changes and trends will directly or indirectly influence us. Ninety percent of the people who live in this world are in countries which are already metric or are changing to the use of metric system. Very soon, the metric system will become the international language for weights and measures.

More and more non-metric countries which have trade relation with us have decided to adopt the metric system. We adopt the metric system not because it is easier to use, but, more importantly, it has direct effect in our national progress and prosperity.

It has been six years since our government's declaration to adopt the metric system. All of our government departments are completing their metric **conversion** programmes within the given period of time.

The Ministry of Education has adopted the use of metric system since 1971. In classroom teaching, except for certain subjects such as the map work in Geography, where the Ministry cannot make decision alone, almost 100 per cent use of metric system is being achieved. There has been no problem at all for the students to use metric units.

The problem now is how to introduce the metric system to the ordinary citizens. There will be unavoidable confusion and grumblings during the switchover. According to a survey conducted by the Singapore Metrication Board, 52 percent of the housewives are unaware or ignorant about the metric units. Under such condition, cheatings from unscrupulous traders will be expected, and it, therefore, delays the full implementation of metrication. Through the use of mass media, the advantage of the metric system can be introduced to the general public so that they will know roughly what metric units are and are prepared to accept them.

But it is a very difficult task indeed to teach the adults to accept and use the metric system and give up the old and familiar units in a short period of time. Old habits are difficult to forget. The younger people can do their share of duty by transferring the metric knowledge which they learned in school to their parents and relatives at home. In this way, metric information will reach all people in the society.

Since the Metrication Board's inception in 1971, much has been achieved through the use of mass media, national campaigns, seminars, metric competitions, exhibitions and periodical publications. To-night's metric drama competition is one of such major activities of the Board. This is a new and interesting project. The idea is to introduce to students the metric units used in the retail trade and the importance of teaching their parents the knowledge of the metric units. And at the same time, to introduce to the general public the advantages of the metric units.

What makes me feel excited and happy is the fact that many schools have participated in this metric drama competition, indicating that teachers and students value the meaningful contest. These short dramas should prove useful and educational to those people who are not very familiar with the metric units. Do not forget that the competition is also very helpful to the students as far as the training of performing skill is concerned.

/wam

新加坡教育部提学司陈启祐先生
在一九七六年七月四日校际公制
戏剧比赛(华文组)大决赛中之献词

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新加坡是一个依赖国际贸易而繁荣的国家；由於地理关系，许多国际上的变动和趋势，都直接或间接地影响到我们。现在世界上超过九十巴仙的人口是生活在应用公制或正将全面应用公制的国度里，公制将很快地成为度量衡的国际语言；和我们贸易的国家，亦越来越多应用公制了。因此，推行公制不只是由於它的容易计算，而更重要的是由於我们的进步与繁荣和它有着莫大的关系。

我国推行公制已有六年的历史了。全国各政府部门皆预定在一定的期间内全面实行公制。教育部从一九七一年开始推行公制，现在在教学上，除了某些科目中的一些特别课题，例如地理科的地图，不能单由教育部来决定外，其他几乎一百巴仙已采用公制。学生在应用公制方面，完全没有问题。

当前的一项重大任务是如何有效地灌输公制概念给一般市民。当公制要取代英制的阶段，可说是混乱与多怨言的时期。根据公制局在一项调查中显示，新加坡有五十二巴仙的家庭主妇对公制毫不知情，或一窍不通。在这种情形下，往往就会发生一些乘机欺骗的事情，因而对於推行全面应用公制的工作有所阻碍。应用大众媒介，宣传公制的优点，可让人民广泛地了解公制粗枝大叶的内容，以及在心理上接受公制的准备。然而，要在短时间内教育所有

的成人完全放弃旧有的制度概念而接受並灵活地应用公制，是一件很不简单的事情。旧的习惯毕竟是难以消除的。年青的一代，在帮助彻底改革的工作上，可负起一部的责任。他们应该把学校学到有关公制的知识，在日常生活中传给父母以及亲友，从而推广到社会的每一份子。

公制局在一九七一年成立以来，不断地积极推动各项有关活动：包括通过大众媒介介绍公制；开研讨会讨论及研究公制的推行问题；举行公开有关公制的比赛；出版定期读物，等等。今晚这个公制短剧比赛也是公制局在今年几项大活动之一。这是一项新鲜而有趣的活动，其目的在通过短小有趣的戏剧，使学生们明了在零售方面应用公制的好处，和将公制传授予他们的父母和亲友的重要性，並且希望通过娱乐方式，将零售时应用公制的好处，转达给一般民众。

使我感到很兴奋和快慰的是在这次比赛中，有多间学校参加，表示师生重视这个有意义的比赛。这些短剧，对於一些对公制尚未了解的民众，是一项很好和很合时宜的教育，同时我们也不要忘了这比赛对於促进学生表演技术的训练与培养，是有很大的帮助的。

陈启祐

一九七六年七月四日