

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

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SPEECH BY HAJI SHA'ARI TADIN, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY  
SECRETARY (CULTURE) AND MP FOR KG. CHAI CHEE, AT A  
GET-TOGETHER DINNER AND PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS  
TO MEMBERS OF KG. CHAI CHEE CCC, KG. CHAI CHEE  
COMMUNITY MC AND THE NEWLY-FORMED YOUTH EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRE AT CHAI CHEE MARKET CAR PARK,  
CHAI CHEE ESTATE, ON SAT., FEBRUARY 22, 1975 AT 8 P.M.

It is my pleasure to say a few words on this occasion to the newly appointed and reappointed members of Kampong Chai Chee CCC and the MC, Kampong Chai Chee and to the members of the newly-formed Youth Executive Committee.

It is customary that every year, the new, as well as the reappointed members of Kampong Chai Chee and the MCs are presented with their credentials.

I do not propose to speak on the role of CCC and MC as most of you are quite familiar by now. The contribution made by the community leaders towards this constituency is reflected in the multifarious activities and functions that the CCC members have to perform. It is suffice to say that their selfless devotion and hard work has made the constituency what it is today - a peaceful, progressive, trouble-free and a happy constituency.

Tonight, however, I would like to focus my thoughts on the newly elected youth committee and their responsibilities.

With the breakdown of traditional society, there can be no doubt that young people have greater opportunities and therefore greater responsibilities than ever before. It is sometimes possible that young people will misuse their new opportunities and create problems for society.

The problems related to youth are, I think, basically of two different origins. On one hand, it may originate from a consciousness that they have a role to play as opinion makers. As such they try to mobilize public opinion to their standpoint which is often divergent to that of the status quo, and may even be destructive to society. Youth can assume a destruction stance particularly when they countenance violence and even consider it as a tool to be used for achieving their ends. However, it would be a mistake to

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consider all youthful criticism as destructive or to conclude that all youths resort to violence as a means.

Criticism from youth can sometimes be constructive but often the drawbacks to their criticism arise from an overflow of youthful idealism. Youths often address themselves to specific and isolated problems with vigour, but often, due to their enthusiasm, they fail to see these problems in the perspective of a larger context. It is true that nearly every society has its problems. But sometimes these problems are the necessary evils that have to be tolerated for a greater good. Hence, young people should moderate their idealism with facts and a proper perspective of the situation.

The other problem related to youth has its origin in the rejection of traditional modes of life and their accompanying values. As a result young people succumb to the ephemeral values of the new society. They become drug-addicts, resort to thefts, robbery and general indiscipline. This is a fate from which young people should be saved, for in the final analysis, any loss of youthful talents is a loss to the nation.

Hence the primary responsibility of young people is related to the opportunities they have been provided by the changing society. They are:

- (i) They should adopt a critical stance that takes cognizance of the problems and needs of their nation.
- (ii) They should avoid any allegiance to values or norms that are irrelevant and harmful to the Singapore context.

While the above may constitute the major responsibilities of young people, it does not cover completely the areas in which young people can play a constructive role. I would particularly like to bring your attention to the immense possibilities for doing good in the area of community and social welfare. You may involve yourself in voluntary work for the aged and less fortunate in society.

It is equally important for young people to make full use of the opportunities available to better themselves academically and in the area of sports. You can be of lasting service to the nation, only,  
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if in the first place, you do justice to your innate talents by taking advantage of the available opportunities to develop them to the fullest.

It is my sincere hope that our young will work closely with their elders in this constituency and should not hesitate to seek their advice if they are faced with problems which they are unable to solve.

In conclusion, may I wish all of you a happy Chap Goh Meh.

FEBRUARY 22, 1975.

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