

Speech by Encik Othman Wok, Minister for Social Affairs, at the opening of the Physical Education Seminar held on Friday, 1 August 1975 at the National Stadium Restaurant at 9.00 am

With the successful launching of inter and intra constituency games, we have reached the next stage in the development of sports which is to create conditions for the raising of physical fitness of the population. This implies a totally new and comprehensive approach in the planning of sports activities. An all-out effort will have to be made to instil sports consciousness and the love for physical exercise.

Participation in physical activities for recreation and leisure must become a habit. There must also be greater emphasis on knowledge about physical education and on keep-fit techniques. A systematic programme of physical education will have to be introduced at all levels, and community participation in this should be realised within the shortest possible period of time.

2 In schools, we must actively encourage pupils to participate in extra-curricular activities to ensure their all-round development. We must instil in them the love for sports and physical exercise. Schools sports organisers and physical

educationists should constantly bear this in mind in the planning of their activities. They must endeavour to build a broad base of participation in sports, keep-fit exercises, and other physical activities including hiking, programmes for sporting holidays, cycling contests, gymnastics and other activities which are also attractive to the non-sportive type.

3 Last year, a most successful Physical Education Seminar was held during which many useful ideas were exchanged in the various workshop sessions. Arising out of the recommendations made at these workshops, there was a suggestion to form a physical education association. I am happy that the Singapore Physical Education Association, with the objective of encouraging and campaigning for higher standards of physical education, has been formed. I am sure the Association will play an important role in furthering the cause of physical education in the years to come.

4 In a world characterised by rapid changes, the field of physical education is experiencing new trends, shifts in programme emphasis, a greater body of knowledge and application

of scientific evidence. It is, therefore, most opportune that this year's seminar should bear the theme: "New perspectives in school physical education curriculum".

5 There is a need to take a fresh look at our physical education curriculum and examine its objectives, substance and design.

6 The body of knowledge of physical education is increasing at an accelerated pace. However, not all aspects of this body of knowledge are worthy of retention. The physical education curriculum must, like other curricula, rid itself of meaningless repetition and trivia so that a lean and purposeful curriculum would emerge. Many fields of learning have already undergone systematic re-examination while physical education has not. In my opinion, there is no better time for re-examination than now when our whole educational system itself is undergoing changes.

7 In this meeting of minds of physical educators, I am confident the ideas presented will be a major contribution to curriculum change and of immense practical value. I hope this Seminar will be a spring-board to more seminars and workshops in the future and will stimulate those involved in physical

education to think in terms of higher standards of administration, training and performance.

8 I conclude by extending a warm welcome to all participants of the Seminar and the Pesta Sukan and would like to compliment the Organising Committee for its excellent work. I also wish to thank our distinguished visitor, Professor Peter McIntosh who has gone out of his way to accept our invitation to speak at the Seminar. I now have pleasure in declaring this Seminar open.

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