

20 NOV 1985

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

Information Division, Ministry of Communications & Information, City Hall, Singapore 0617 - Tel. 3307269 / 3307270 / 3307271

85-BCW-1

Release No: 07/NOV
13-1/85/11/01

SPEECH BY MR E W BARKER, MINISTER FOR LAW, ON THE OCCASION
OF THE FOUNDATION CEREMONY FOR THE NEW ST JOSEPH'S
INSTITUTION AT MALCOLM ROAD/WHITLEY ROAD ON FRIDAY.
1 NOVEMBER 1985 AT 9.00 AM

This is certainly a proud day for all of you who have been closely associated with the Christian Brothers Schools whether as teachers, old boys, pupils or parents.

It was only in May last year that my Cabinet colleague, Dr Tony Tan, who is an old boy, launched your ambitious campaign to raise \$5.2 million in voluntary donations for the building of the New School, this being the amount required to augment the Government's capital grant of approximately \$12 million based on 80 per cent of the cost of building a standard Government Secondary School.

I am pleasantly surprised to learn from your School Chairman, Mr Goh Sin Tub, that within the short time to date \$4 million have already been raised and there is only another \$1.2 million needed to reach your target. This is surely a record for speed and response to an appeal and speaks very well for all of you - old boys, pupils, parents and other well-wishers.

This also goes to show that despite the current economic down-turn Singaporeans remain generous and will do their bit for good causes.

Much of the success of your appeal has been due to your inspired scheme to rally support. I refer to the New SJI Founders Scheme by which the honour of becoming a Founder of the newschool is conferred on all those who donate a total of \$1,000 or more.

As a result there is a marked difference between the original foundation ceremony for the existing SJI which took place in 1855 and the ceremony today, 130 years later. In 1855 there was only one Founder, the Reverend Father J M Beurel who must have worked hard and literally moved heaven and earth to set up SJI. Today there are 1,337 Founders with more to be registered.

For the Founders of the New SJI the ceremony today marks a supreme moment of pride which crystallizes their involvement in the future history of one of our Republic's cherished institutions and heritage.

For the Christian Brothers and their lay-teacher colleagues, and for SJI pupils and parents, this is the beginning of a cherished dream about to come true.

For the rest of us Singaporeans, this is the time to extend our hand of warmest congratulations, though not without a tinge of envy. For it does not come to everyone, this rare opportunity to become part of a country's heritage, part of the re-birth of a great institution and one's Alma Mater - this opportunity to join in a truly worthwhile mission, the building of the new SJI.

As MP for Tanglin, I heartily welcome the New SJI into our constituency. You bring with you colour and tradition. And you bring with you the promise of many great moments which we will share with you as you scale the heights of scholarship and athletic prowess with exemplary endeavour, courage, honour - all those things which together constitute the legend that is SJI, indeed as your banners proudly proclaim: "A tradition worth keeping."

God willing, may the New SJI fulfil the dearest aspirations of the Christian Brothers and their old boys and other supporters to carry on with renewed vigour and zeal

the task of providing the best in moral, intellectual and physical education for the future citizens of our country.

It is therefore with great pleasure that I now declare the New SJI well and truly founded.

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