

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

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TEXT OF SPEECH BY THE SUPERVISOR, SOCIAL WELFARE CHILDREN CRECHES AND CENTRES, MRS. GOH KENG SWEE AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE SECOND BASIC TRAINING COURSE FOR KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS ORGANISED BY THE PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION AT THE QUEENSTREET COMMUNITY CENTRE ON APRIL 27TH, 1964 AT 9 A.M.

Children of kindergarten ages are little people whose learning capacities are very often under-estimated, whose needs of self-expression are seldom understood, and whose, seemingly boundless physical energies, are usually considered to be of nuisance value.

In Singapore to-day, there is a growing appreciation of the fact that special aptitudes, special skills and special methods are required of those who wish to guide our very young children. For, it is now recognised that the seeds for the growth of responsible citizenship are contained in their training and education.

The service to children of kindergarten ages in Singapore has been in the number of very well patronised privately operated Kindergarten schools, and in the children's centres and creches of the Social Welfare Department. Nearly all these are concentrated in urban areas.

In March this year, the People's Association brought the service to children in rural areas through kindergarten classes in 41 community centres. This was done as it should have been done. There was no haphazard drafting of staff who had nothing else to do and can, therefore, be asked to wipe the noses of little children and whack them on the bottoms if they do not behalf themselves. There was first the carefully thought out scheme of training for staff and a careful selection of staff. And then there was a training course that began in January this year which produced the teachers for the 41 kindergarten groups in rural community centres.

This is the second basic training course and it is an indication of the People's Association's resolve to extend the service to all rural areas hitherto unprovided for. It is clear that the People's Association intends to maintain the highest standards possible and that this systematic continuous training scheme for the staff, will ensure such standards.

Miss P.K. Mah, Inspector of Kindergartens, is to be congratulated in undertaking the many arduous tasks in organising the first training course. She is here again to continue her good work for this second course. Miss Kwik and Mrs. Smith, who have been working with her throughout the first course; are also here. With such well qualified and experienced trainers, the training scheme is in good hands and our people will be confident of the highest standards of service in our kindergartens.

To all those, who are taking the training course, may I say that you are in good hands. The rest is up to you. Only you, through dedication and hard work, can prove that specially trained staff are better teachers of kindergartens, than those who think "anyone will do" for dealing with children. I shall continue to watch, with high hopes, the results of your achievements.

As a professional in this field of work, I am glad to be here with you to wish you a happy and successful training session that shall mark the beginning of a new phase in your professional activities.

I have great pleasure, therefore, in declaring the Second Basic Training Course for Kindergarten Teachers, open.

APRIL 27, 1964.

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