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SPEECH BY MR CHAI CHONG YII, MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION, AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF JURONG VOCATIONAL INSTITUTE ON WEDNESDAY, 14 FEB 1973 AT 7.30 P.M. AT THE INSTITUTE'S PREMISES.

Your Excellency, Ladies & Gentlemen,

1 I am greatly honoured to have been invited to officially declare this magnificent institute open today. You have waited a long time for this auspicious event, since the modest beginnings of Jurong Vocational Institute with 80 students in Toh Tuck Vocational School in 1968.

2 The training of school-leavers and the upgrading of industrial workers are essential components of industrial development. The Jurong Vocational Institute is one of eight industrial training institutions developed by the Government in the last four years to provide the institutional infrastructure for our industrial manpower programme. In 1967, we had only one vocational institute which produced 213 graduates that year. Last year, there were over 4,000 full-time graduates from all our vocational institutes. In addition, over 1,700 persons employed in industrial occupations were admitted to regular part-time and ad hoc courses at these institutions for upgrading or for specialised training. The Jurong Vocational Institute, as one of the four major multi-trade engineering institutes, has played its part fully in these achievements.

3 There are a number of features in the development of your institute which it is appropriate for me to highlight on this occasion. The first and most outstanding of these has been the scheme of technical assistance extended to this institute under the Colombo Plan by the Australian Government. The establishment of engineering training institutions is a complex and expensive affair and any assistance given has to be well-planned and integrated to be effective. When the Australian Government was approached some years ago to assist in the development of this institution on a comprehensive basis, they readily responded, realising our great need for industrial training. (As you have heard) the Australian Government has since 1969 contributed much-needed equipment and books amounting to the tidy sum of S\$1.7 m. Complementarily, they have sent 29 members of your staff to Australia for technical training. Further they provided the services of 3 expert advisers who were working and teaching with you until last year to help consolidate the programme. Without this substantial aid, the institution would not have achieved its present state. May I say that the Australian Government can take equal satisfaction as ourselves in the successful establishment of this institute. May I also say that we know of no better way of appreciating the generosity of our Australian friends than by demonstrating the value of their contribution towards our industrial growth in the use we put it to. In our customary form, I would like here on behalf of the Government and people of Singapore to express our heartfelt thanks to the Government and people of Australia for their assistance towards the establishment of this Jurong Vocational Institute.

4 The second significant feature of this institute is the encouraging support that it has received from the industries in Jurong. Our policy has been to make each of our vocational institutes as an accepted feature of each industrial area, to

which industries can rely upon for their needs. In Jurong, we have succeeded. This institute is one of the two which has a very active Industrial Training Promotion Committee comprising representatives from surrounding industrial firms. This Committee has been most active in mustering interests in the institute and has devised an in-plant training programme for trainees to gain practical experience. It is only by the direct participation of industrialists in this way can our institutions serve them with the right kind of training and benefit from their practical experience.

5 I would like today to extend the Government's thanks to the many public-spirited industrialists from both local and overseas firms who are helping this institute. I would also issue today a special call to industry to recognise the integral function of our vocational institutes in the industrial build-up and to follow the excellent example set by their colleagues in Jurong. The fruits of this co-operation can also be seen here. The institute for its part has progressively developed programmes specially tailored to meet the needs of firms. For instance, one major firm here has had no less than 200 of its employees trained here. With more direct contact, industrialists will find increasing need for the use of the facilities of our vocational institutes.

6 I would also like to mention that our first Joint Training School, with Tata of India, is in the process of being established here. Under the scheme, the Government and Tata share in the development and operating costs of the School. In return, the firm will train twice its required number of precision workers releasing half to Government for deployment to attract other industries. The direct investment by international corporations in industrial training institutions demonstrates convincingly that our institutional development programme has achieved its aim to meet

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the needs of modern industry.

7 Jurong Vocational Institute has an important role for the future under the Industrial Training Board, when formed in a few months time, in extending for Jurong the training services already initiated. I wish the institute, its teachers and students and associated industrialists every success. Your success is Singapore's success.

8 Ladies and gentlemen, I now have great pleasure in declaring the Jurong Vocational Institute open.