

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

MC/MAR/23/77 (ISTAN) Doc. No.

NARC

(Embargoed Till After Delivery - Please Check Against Delivery)

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SPEECH BY PRESIDENT B H SHEARES AT THE OPENING OF
THE 42ND DISTRICT CONFERENCE OF DISTRICT 330 OF
ROTARY INTERNATIONAL ON SATURDAY, 19 MARCH 1977
AT THE SHANGRI-LA HOTEL AT 9.45 A.M.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I was pleased to have received the invitation to this function - the opening of the 42nd Annual Conference of District 330 of Rotary International. The Rotary International with its long history and tradition of service to the community doubtless continues to play an important role in improving the quality of life of our people through community service projects. Many people in different areas of the world have derived the insights and inspiration from rotarians inspiring them to take part in community affairs.

The Rotary movement, with its emphasis on "Service Before Self", has through the years undertaken many projects to complement Government's efforts to create a more equitable and just society. The role of your movement is therefore vital to community welfare. Indeed, it has contributed in no small measure to improving the quality of life for all.

It is not always easy to find an absolute answer to all the social problems which beset our societies today. Countries in South-East Asia and other parts of the world are fast developing into modern societies and we should learn from the experience of others to be mindful of the likely problems that might be created in our societies. In modern Singapore, life has become increasingly complex. Very often a community approach is required to deal with social problems and other issues which develop with increasing industrialisation and urbanisation of our society. We need more charitable organisations which are willing to reach out in order to help meet the social, cultural, recreational and charitable needs of the community in which they function. Service clubs like the Rotary movement can through their enlightened members help promote this concern.

This conference, its theme being "Service With A Smile", provides an excellent opportunity for the pooling of knowledge and resources among rotarians in their common concern for the improvement of life for all. On this occasion, I take the opportunity to say that for a community organisation to be socially relevant and successful, it must constantly reassess its role and review its programmes so that its aim and activities can respond to the needs and requirements of the time. Our society is not static and neither are the causes of social problems. Therefore, social action programmes adopted years ago may have been relevant then, but they need not necessarily continue to be so now. I think this conference provides an excellent opportunity for rotarians to re-examine their roles and action programmes so that they can be constantly assured that their programmes are socially relevant to the community.

I wish you every success in your deliberations during this conference. Now, it gives me great pleasure to declare this conference open.

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National Archives and
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26 MAR 1977