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SPEECH BY MR CHAN CHEE SENG, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY,
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, AT THE BALLOTING OF HAWKER STALLS
HELD AT THE KALLANG JUNCTION FOOD CENTRE ON 8/12/77 AT 3.00 PM

17 DEC 1977

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I am pleased to officiate at this balloting ceremony of hawker stalls, and I am sure you are all looking forward to this important function. The Government has spent a large amount of funds to set up hawker centres in all the housing estates, as it is recognised that hawkers perform a useful service to the people. The hawker centre is the most convenient solution for the average Singaporeans who do not have the time to cook their own meals. For many people, it is too expensive to eat at restaurants where they have to pay for the comfort and extra service that is provided. The hawkers give such people an ideal alternative. All kinds of food are available at the hawker centre, and they can be obtained at a much lower cost compared to the food that is served in posh restaurants.

Hawkers should never forget their social role in the society. They must endeavour to keep their prices low and to maintain the quality of their food at a high level, if they wish to enjoy good patronage from the people. There are instances in Singapore where hawkers charge unreasonable prices because they are fortunate enough to get a stall at a popular hawker centre. This should not be the case. Our people are not foolish, and very soon they will avoid the hawkers who over-charge their customers. There are now numerous hawker centres where people can go to, and naturally they will patronise the stalls that can serve the best food at minimal cost. Hawkets should therefore strive to give their customers good value for their money, and in doing so, they will ensure the success of their own business.

Another point which you must also remember is to maintain a high standard of hygiene in your preparation of food. It is necessary for you to observe the various measures recommended by

the Ministry of the Environment to ensure that the food you sell is not contaminated. Every hawker must cultivate good habits of cleanliness so that a high standard of hygiene can be maintained at our hawker centres. Indeed, this is something which the public has a right to expect and demand from the hawker stalls, and enforcement action would be taken against any hawker who does not comply with the requirements of the law in the handling of food for public consumption. I am sure you are aware of these requirements and would do your best to comply with them.

I would now like to wish you luck in this balloting, and every success in your business.

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