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SPEECH BY MR CHAN CHEE SENG, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY
SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, AT A CEREMONY
TO LAUNCH THE VOLUNTEER SOCIAL SERVICE SCHEME AT
THE ARTS LECTURE HALL 1, NANYANG UNIVERSITY
ON TUESDAY, 28 MARCH 78 AT 10.30 A.M.

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Appreciation

I am pleased that so many Nanyang University students have registered as volunteers with the Volunteer Social Service Bureau. These first 270 volunteers are setting the lead for other like-minded students in this University. They are an example to other university students and to persons in other walks of life. I hope that through these few, many others will follow.

Need for Volunteers

There is a need for many more volunteers to help in the numerous social service schemes, for the problems are many. Some are intractable and will always be with us. The list is well-known. It includes, for example, drug-taking, delinquency, destitute persons, disabled and the mentally deranged, abandoned children and the abandoned aged.

There is a host of organisations providing for the care of the numerous numbers of disadvantaged persons. The Ministry of Social Affairs and its various welfare departments, voluntary social service organisations such as the Council of Social Services and its many affiliate societies; the Community Centres; religious groups and many others. All need persons who care enough to promote the welfare of our fellow citizens.

The Reasons for Community Service

There are, of course, many reasons why persons volunteer for welfare work. Some because they have a compassion for their fellow human beings. Others, perhaps like you, because this is a means of repaying society for the benefits each has got from society, and it becomes a

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privilege to serve society in return. And for others, there may be a bit of self interest. For this is an opportunity to widen one's experience, develop qualities of unselfishness and gain some self-satisfaction in the process.

A Caring Society

Whatever the motivation, the reasons are laudable. The more persons who have a sense of service and social concern, the more caring the society. Conversely, the more selfish and materialistic persons are, the harsher the society. It is therefore important that we develop a feeling for individuals and the well-being of the community; that there is a sense of kindness and dedication to the interests of others and the common welfare.

Encouraging Response

It has been most encouraging to note the good response for volunteers since the launching of the Volunteer Social Service Bureau about 15 months ago. The volunteers are a good cross-section of the population. There are the young and the old, representatives of all races, creeds, occupations and professions. The appeal seems to be universal. It will be necessary that this well of goodwill is properly tapped.

The Sociology and Psychology Society has shown a commendable awareness of the importance and relevance of this Volunteer Social Service Scheme which it has organised. I hope it will be able to achieve its objectives, that it will provide members and other university students an opportunity to serve; that in participating in welfare projects they will also benefit from the experience.

I understand that a lot of hard work has been put in to organise this scheme. I would like to congratulate the organisers and dedicated officials of the Society for their efforts.

It gives me great pleasure to declare the Voluntary Social Service Scheme open.
