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Singapore Government

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SPEECH BY MR CHIN HARN TONG, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(HOME AFFAIRS), AT THE OPENING OF MARINE PARADE
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE POST AT BLOCK 74 MARINE DRIVE
ON SUNDAY, 6 MARCH 1988 AT 10.00 AM

I am delighted to be here this morning to officiate at the opening of Marine Parade Neighbourhood Police Post.

The Neighbourhood Police Post (NPP) system is an institution that is now familiar to Singaporeans. Since it was first introduced in Toa Payoh Police Division in 1983, NPPs have become an accepted feature of our society. To date, there are 62 NPPs (including Marine Parade) serving 60 constituencies in Singapore. There are plans to establish at least one NPP in every constituency by early 1989. The Police experience in the NPP system has shown that it helps to build up closer police-public rapport and win over the community's trust and co-operation.

Marine Parade NPP, like all other NPPs, is manned by a permanent team of 24 police officers headed by Inspector Chan Heng Seng. The NPP is open round-the-clock to facilitate the lodging of police reports and the carrying out of police work. It also provides a variety of community services to the residents, such as change of address in NRIC, road and address guidance, dealing with lost and found articles, counselling domestic disputes, registration of death, and keeping an eye on vacant premises when the residents are away. I am pleased to know that about 3,000 residents of Marine Parade Constituency have made use of the

various services offered by the NPP since it started operation in November last year. The residents have clearly accepted the NPP system through their increased reliance on NPPs for police services. In so doing they also show their support for the police's community policing strategy.

To further strengthen the close bonds between the NPP officers and residents, plans are in hand for NPP officers to provide more community services in the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, police-youth activities, Boys' Clubs and crime prevention education. Each NPP will devote more resources to apprise the community of the crime situation, crime prevention measures, and other community-based police activities.

In order to establish closer rapport between police and public, NPP officers will soon be visiting every household and premises in Marine Parade Constituency as part of their duties. The NPP officers will disseminate relevant advice on crime prevention and road safety to the residents. More importantly, the house visits will enable the police to obtain first-hand information from residents on crime and police performance so that they could upgrade their services all the time. As the NPP officers are still not known personally by residents, it is hoped that members of grassroots organisations such as Residents' Committees, Citizens' Consultative Committee, Community Centre Management Committee and Neighbourhood Watch Group could initially render their assistance and co-operation by introducing the NPP officers to the residents.

For a community-oriented policing system like the NPP system to succeed, I must stress that support and co-operation from the public is very crucial. It is very encouraging to note that our residents have shown much

enthusiasm in helping the police to detect and prevent crime. For instance, in December last year, a resident informed the NPP that a male person was seen behaving suspiciously at the car park of Block 67. The NPP officers responded by arresting the male person for theft of petrol from vehicle. In January this year, another resident informed our NPP officers who were on foot patrol at Marine Parade Central that he could recognise the male person who stole some money from a stall at Block 59 Marine Terrace earlier in the evening. The suspect was promptly arrested by police. These incidents show how important public information and assistance can be in helping the police to solve crime.

Modern technology and innovation in crime detection can and do help the police to combat crime. But crimes are committed by people. It is the vast majority of the people who are not criminals who can best help the police to solve crime. To gain the help of the people, the police must first gain the trust and co-operation of the people by being helpful. The setting up of this NPP should go a long way towards promoting greater interaction between the police and the residents in this area and more mutual assistance and closer co-operation between them. I hope that our residents will continue to extend a helping hand, in whatever way they can, to the NPP officers in making Marine Parade Constituency a safer and more congenial place to live in.

It is now my pleasure to officially declare open this Marine Parade Neighbourhood Police Post.

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