

Singapore Government **PRESS RELEASE**

Information Division, Ministry of Culture, City Hall, Singapore 0617 - TEL 3378191 ext 352 353 354 / 3362207 / 3362271

Archives & Oral History Department
Singapore

25 MAY 1983

ACC. No. NARS

83	0052	10
----	------	----

Release NO.: 18/May
11-1/83/05/15

**SPEECH BY MR CHUA SIAN CHIN, MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS,
AT THE PRESENTATION OF PRIZES TO WINNERS OF
THE CRIME PREVENTION QUIZ '82 AND THE MACPHERSON CCC
BURSARY AWARDS '83 AT THE MACPHERSON COMMUNITY CENTRE
ON SUNDAY, 15 MAY 1983 AT 10.00 AM**

Today's function is for a dual purpose, which is the presentation of prizes to winners of the Crime Prevention Quiz '82 and the MacPherson CCC Bursary Awards '83. Although the two are concerned with apparently separate matters: one relating to crime prevention and the other the education of our young, they are in fact connected with one of the most important recent developments in our society. They are the outcome of the development of a greater sense of community based on mutual co-operation and self-help among the residents of our HDB neighbourhoods.

The Crime Prevention Quiz was organised for the Neighbourhood Watch Group (NWG) members. Its objective was to encourage NWG members to help generate interest and spread the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme (NWS) to the other residents who still have not formed NWG. The response to the Quiz was very good.

Since the NWS was launched in 1981, all 69 constituencies with RCs have started the scheme within their constituencies. There are now more than 33,000 NWG members from over 7,000 NWGs covering over 350,000 public housing units. Out of a total of 244 RC zones now in existence, 220 have NWGs in operation. The target is for the remaining 24 RC zones with no NWGs to start forming them by the end of July this year. We hope that by 1985 all the remaining public housing units which are not yet covered by the NWS will have all formed NWGs.

We have achieved much progress in implementing the NWS within the space of two years. This was mainly due to the commendable efforts of our RCs and police officers residing in public housing estates who spearheaded the formation of NWGs in their residential zones. In the next phase of our programme of expanding the NWS we will also be asking members of the auxiliary police such as CISCO, PSA, Police, Special Constabulary Volunteers, as well as Police National Service and Civil Defence reservists to initiate the formation of NWGs in the housing estates where they reside.

Another important group whom we are planning to involve in expanding the NWS is our National Police Cadet Corps (NPCC). They comprise a group of some 18,000 boys and girls in our secondary schools. The NPCC has already introduced a Crime Prevention Proficiency Badge in 1982. It is now planning to introduce the Neighbourhood Watch Proficiency Badge. To win the award of the badge, cadets must participate actively in the NWS by, among other things, persuading their parents and neighbours to form and/or join NWGs and they themselves to join a NWG as junior members. This will certainly make NPCC activities more interesting and meaningful to the cadets by relating them to real-life situation. We will also be bringing the message of crime prevention to our citizens at a young age and what is even more important inculcate in them the qualities of self-reliance and good citizenship.

The MacPherson CCC Bursary Scheme was started in 1975. It has been a great help to the needy and deserving students residing in the constituency for them to continue with their education. What is even more significant is that it is part of the community effort of the residents of MacPherson to help fellow residents who are less well-off than them. It is a form of community welfare based on mutual self-help which should be commended and

encouraged. It manifests the care and concern of residents for one another. It is therefore quite different from the usual bursaries and scholarships awarded by the government or some charitable foundations.

Since the launching of the RC Scheme and the NWS the residents of our HDB neighbourhoods have not only begun to actively interact and become closer to their neighbours but they are also fast developing the quality of self-reliance. Participation in the RCs and the NWGs have shown the residents that through mutual cooperation and self-help among themselves they can achieve much more in improving the living environment of their neighbourhood than if they were to depend entirely upon the authorities, whether the HDB or the police.

This has given them a sense of pride in their capability of working as a group and a new identity of purpose to safeguard and improve their neighbourhood. This is clearly manifested by the tremendous response we had from residents to the call for volunteers for our Civil Defence in the first 15 constituencies in the pilot scheme. What is even more encouraging was the tremendous response we had from housewives here in MacPherson who came out to participate in a training-cum-demonstration session in fire-fighting last month. The massive turn out of 3,000 women volunteers that afternoon could be considered unprecedented. This augurs well not only for our Civil Defence build-up but also for the future of Singapore as a nation.

I hope our grassroot community leaders will continue with their good work in promoting greater self-reliance and dependability among our residents. This is crucial to our capability as a people to meet emergencies in the future and to survive. It now gives me great pleasure to present prizes to the winners of the Crime Prevention Quiz '82 and the MacPherson CCC Bursary Awards '83.