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SPEECH BY THE HON. MR. FRANCIS THOMAS, MINISTER  
FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS, AT THE OPENING OF  
THE THOMSON ROAD POST OFFICE ON WEDNESDAY, 27TH  
AUGUST, 1958

Mr. Nair, Che Ahmad, Mr. Postmaster-General, Ladies and Gentlemen - that is the proper formal opening. A shorter way, which I prefer, is just to say "Friends".

I like to think that we are all good friends here and I am very happy that so many of you have been able to come for this occasion.

The Postmaster-General has already mentioned and thanked all the different officials who have helped to produce this Post Office and make arrangements for its opening.

And the people who live in this district have also expressed their thanks by showing that they welcome the Post Office. I have opened a number of post offices in my three years as Minister but this is the first time that residents have helped to arrange a lion dance for the occasion.

It is a most important thing that the people should understand the work which is being done by their elected Government and should also know something about the public servants who carry out the instructions given by the Government on behalf of the people.

When the Government and the people understand each other and there is real co-operation and goodwill we have the really democratic way of life. Democracy is not an easy thing but it is very important because it means freedom for the people within the framework and protection of law.

In a democracy you must not shoot your Government and your Government is not to shoot you. The people make their choice by voting for one Party or another and by that means make it possible to change the Government when necessary without violence and even without getting angry.

I hope you will remember whenever you come to use this post office or get letters delivered to you from it, that it comes to you as part of the benefits of a democratic system. I hope it will be very useful to you and I am sure it meets a real need in this developing rural district.

After translation of these remarks I shall formally declare the Post Office open for the service of the people of Thomson Road and of all Singapore. After the Post Office has been opened the first business transactions will be made by your representatives, one of whom will purchase the first stamp, another buy the first postal order, a third will open the first Savings Bank Account and the fourth will purchase the first stamped envelope.

After that we shall give you a cold drink and you can see a fire-fighting display by the volunteers from Hylam Sua Village and then there will be a film show telling you about postal work.

AUGUST 27, 1958.

(Time issued 1200 hours.)