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**SPEECH BY MR HO KAH LEONG, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY (EDUCATION)
AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SCHOOL HALL OF
THE HOLY INNOCENTS' HIGH SCHOOL
ON FRIDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 1983 AT 6.00 PM**

Holy Innocents' High School is one of the Catholic Mission Schools in Singapore. The school had a humble beginning. In those days, education was informal with emphasis on religious studies. However, with the increase in population in the Hougang district, it gradually developed into a formal school - the Holy Innocents' School. In 1958, to meet the demand of the residents in the district and with the support of the local people, the school flourished and shifted to its new buildings at this present site. It was then renamed Holy Innocents' High School. Between 1958 and 1967, the school underwent two phases in its development. The number of classrooms was increased to over twenty. In addition, science laboratories, a library, an AVA room and a few special rooms were included in its facilities.

Education is the fundamental issue in the building of a society. Teachers not only play a very important role in school in imparting knowledge, but also in inculcating good moral values and instilling correct human philosophy in students. This is in line with the school motto: 'Humility, Honesty, Harmony and Charity'. The school accepted students from every aspect of society regardless of their racial, social or cultural background. Besides academic work, extra curricular activities play an important role in the school curriculum. I am glad to note that the St John Ambulance group of the school has won the National First Aid and Foot-drill competitions twice.

In recent years, however, the Hougang district has undergone tremendous changes. Punggol has been developed into a pig farming area and Hougang is now developing into a new housing estate. The population shift has resulted in a drop in the school's enrolment for a moment. However, with the partial completion of the new town, the population is moving in and settling in this district. The school enrolment is picking up. The intake for this year has increased. I trust that the school will continue to flourish and progress along with the general development of the district.

The Ministry of Education recognises that the Holy Innocents' High School is one of the schools which has potential for further development. So, when the principal of the school proposed the building of a school hall cum special rooms, my Ministry has not the least hesitation in giving the necessary encouragement and support to the school. In fact we provided various kinds of support including inviting the PWD as consultants for the project and giving a capital grant of \$980,000 towards the building fund. Following the government's policy of granting more finances to schools with potential for development, this grant was increased from 50 per cent to 80 per cent. Consequently, the capital grant was increased to \$1.45 million.

The hall is officially open today. I sincerely hope that the teachers and students will make full use of the facilities and I further hope that the management committee, staff and students will work and continue to co-operate with each other to further develop this school.

It is now my pleasure in declaring the Kong Chian Hall open.

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