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SPEECH BY MR LEE YOCK SUAN, MINISTER FOR LABOUR,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING CEREMONY OF
THE PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION IN-HOUSE PRODUCTIVITY CAMPAIGN
AT THE PA AUDITORIUM ON TUESDAY, 10 NOVEMBER '87 AT 3.00 PM

Productivity consciousness should always be with us. We should constantly ask ourselves this question: Do we have new ideas and new methods to achieve greater productivity? Hence, the theme for our in-house productivity campaign "Towards Excellence in the People's Association" is appropriate. This is because thinking "excellence" all the time would enhance productivity in the PA.

Since I last spoke to you on this subject last year, we have taken steps to increase productivity in the PA. Sixty-four modern community centres have been open daily from 8.30 am to 10.30 pm since 1 September 1987. They will also be open from 8.30 am to 5.00 pm on some public holidays namely New Year's Day, Good Friday, Labour Day, Vesak Day and Hari Raya Haji. This will better serve the residents and optimise the use of our resources. With the extended opening hours, more housewives, senior citizens, students and shift workers will be able to use the facilities at the modern community centres in the mornings and early afternoons and on the public holidays mentioned. This extended service is provided without additional staff. It is achieved by deploying our staff more efficiently, thereby raising productivity.

The People's Association Youth Movement has also increased its productivity. It achieved its target of recruiting 100,000 members in May 1987. This is the result

of a systematic and concerted membership recruitment campaign mounted since the Youth Division was formed in October 1982. A Mammoth Dinner & Dance known as "Celebrations 100K" was held on 18 July 1987 for 5,000 youths and supporters. It was a success, and a reflection of the ability of the staff and youth leaders to organise large-scale functions.

I am also pleased to see that the membership of the the Social Development Section (SDS) has forged ahead from about 7,000 in 1986 to 26,000 in September 1987. The SDS is confident that the total membership will reach 30,000 by the end of 1987. This leap in SDS membership is the result of a recruitment drive implemented at the headquarters and through community centre SDS Clubs. By reaching out to the youth groups at the community centres, we have amplified our efforts and enhanced our productivity.

The Continuing Education Section has also taken steps to upgrade its services. It has completed its year-long project of compiling the syllabus for its sixty courses. Community centre course participants can now be given full course details when they register for a course. It is part of our continuing effort to achieve higher quality and professionalism in our work.

Another visible demonstration of the staff's determination to achieve excellence is seen in the achievements of the People's Association Cultural Troupe. Its new "Showtime" series and several outstanding concerts, including "Next Step" have been well received by the public and professional critics. The 'Next Step' symbolizes a transformation of PA staff's work attitudes. It is an encouraging confirmation that when we apply our minds to the pursuit of excellence, we can attain it.

Another project that will significantly enhance our productivity over the next few years is computerisation.

Five application systems for Personnel & Payroll Management, Community Centre Profile, Activities Management, Project Accounts Management and Membership Management have been developed and are being tested. The new pay slips which you have received in a beautifully designed sealed computer form are only a foretaste of what the computer can do.

Computerisation is a painstaking process as many staff who are involved in the project have learnt by now. With the continued co-operation and dedication of the staff, we can complete our computerisation programme by June 1988.

The PA will continue to modernize its office equipment. Whenever new office equipment are available that can enhance the productivity of the PA and are cost-effective, we will purchase them. Ultimately, however, it is not machines but men that determine the viability and survival of an organisation. Hence, as staff of the PA, we must press on inexorably towards excellence in the PA. We must make productivity the PA's work culture. For that is the only way we can face the challenges of the next decade and beyond.

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