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Singapore Government

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**SPEECH BY MR LEE YIOK SENG, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
(NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT) AND MP FOR BUKIT PANJANG AT THE
PRIZE-GIVING CEREMONY FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN
ORATORICAL CONTEST AT THE CHESTNUT DRIVE SECONDARY SCHOOL
ON SATURDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 1981 AT 11.00 AM**

At a time when there is world-wide shortage of energy resources and wide turbulence in international politics and economy associated with it, the need to conserve energy is obvious. The organisation of this Energy Conservation Campaign Oratorical Contest is therefore very significant, as they help to instil in the minds of our young the importance of energy conservation. The need to save energy must become a habit, since the problem of energy shortage will remain with us and will become more pressing in the years to come. Individually and collectively, we must make an effort to conserve energy, whether we are property owners, workers, students in schools or housewives. In other words, energy conservation must permeate every level of society if it were to succeed.

As you are aware, oil is a very important source of energy and is always in great demand the world over. When too much of it is needed, oil prices will soar and this has great impact on the world economy. Prices of goods and services will rise steeply in line with the oil prices. Inflationary pressure mounts greatly and the repercussions are felt by everyone. Ever since 1973 with the first jump in oil price, our purchasing power has been reduced considerably and very rapidly. Hopefully, if all countries could educate the people to conserve energy and reduce wastage, there will be greater stability in oil prices and even a reduction in prices.

If we want the Republic to save energy, the great energy consumers like the factories, offices, companies, shopping complexes and hotels must realise the national need to reduce wastage.

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A large majority of commercial buildings in Singapore were built during the period when energy conservation did not command the urgency it does today. Typically, these buildings were designed and constructed primarily with initial costs in mind. Many such buildings are considered by today's standards to be energy wasteful. For this reason, the Ministry of National Development in conjunction with other ministries had implemented energy conservation requirements for buildings. These requirements, known as OTTV requirements are now stipulated for all commercial buildings. OTTV or Overall Thermal Transfer Value, is used as an energy saving code and the Building Control Division has prescribed a maximum OTTV of 45 watts per square metre as the standard. Owners of existing air-conditioned buildings have been given up to 1 January 1982 to carry out the necessary renovations to comply with the OTTV standard of 45 watts per square metre. For those who fail to achieve the prescribed OTTV standard, a 20 per cent surcharge on the PUB bills will be imposed. Expenditure incurred for the renovations of the buildings to comply with OTTV standards will be allowed for tax deduction purposes. Claims for tax deduction will have to be lodged with the Comptroller of Income Tax or the Comptroller of Property Tax not later than one year after the completion of renovations.

Much more important, in both the public and private sectors, there must be concerted efforts to plan for energy conservation. I would like to see the setting up of "Save Energy Committees" in every Government departments and private organisations. The committees should ensure the proper utilisation of energy as well as to report and monitor energy consumption regularly.

As students in school, you must be conscious of this national problem of energy conservation. Your teachers have explained to you how you can save electricity at home and even in school. We must cultivate this good habit and make it a common feature in our lives. The Public Utilities Board has also issued booklets and pamphlets explaining to users how they can save gas and electricity. If in the homes, everyone makes it his business to conserve energy, I am sure not only you will pay less for your PUB bills, but you will also get the satisfaction that you are making an important contribution towards solving this urgent national problem of energy shortage. We must in our small way help to save energy, and if everyone in our Republic is disciplined enough, I am confident that our efforts will be rewarded.

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