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Misc - Speaker

Presentation of Certificates by N. Govindasamy,  
M.P. for Telok Blangah to the participants of  
Co-operative Education and Training Programme  
on 12th November, 1971 at 6 p.m. at  
Conference Hall.

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When I was first asked to serve as an Adviser to the Co-operative Education and Training Committee, I was a little reluctant to accept the honour for a number of reasons. Having been persuaded, I am glad that I accepted the honour and hope to be of some service to the Co-operative Movement.

Having been a teacher all my working life and also having been devoted to adult, workers and trade union education for the past 6 years I am convinced of the need for co-operative education.

I firmly believe that co-operative education has to be carefully planned not only for members but also for officials and general public. I also believe that representatives from trade unions should form part of the planning committee.

Trade unions and Co-operatives can only thrive with a well-informed membership. If properly organised, the education of the members of the movement should be jointly undertaken. As it is in Singapore as in many other countries, the Co-operative Movement has its own co-operative education programme and so does the trade union movement. A better set up, in my opinion, is for the co-operators to also know at least a basic concept of trade unionism so that the members would have a better grasp of the objectives of the trade union movement. In this respect, I am particularly pleased to note that in your past 2 trade union programmes, the topic on Co-operatives and Trade Unions has found a rightful place, and the speaker on this topic has been Mr. Mak Kam Heng a veteran in both movements. On the other hand, the trade union movement too should include in its training programme the various types of co-operatives as a means of obtaining better living conditions for the workers. Towards this end, the NTUC in our education programme in the past 2 years have included the following courses:-

Seminar on Trade Union and Co-operatives,

3 courses on Trade Union and Co-operative Management, and before the end of this year, we will be organising an Advanced course on Trade Union and Co-operative Management.

In Singapore as in elsewhere, Co-operatives and trade unions will not be able to play effectively their vital role in improving the social and economic conditions of the workers unless a provision for a planned, concerted and sustained co-operative and trade union education programme is made available as an integral part of their overall activities. There should be proper co-ordination in the planning, formulation and implementation of educational courses by both movements, and I foresee this objective being attained with your setting up of your Co-operative Education and Training Committee.

I have no doubts that, with further collaboration between the 2 movements in educational field we should be able to plan for a more enlightened membership working towards the common goal of obtaining better social and economic justice for our working class members.

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