

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT

10/MAR/15/77 (S.A.)

**EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER DELIVERY**

18 MAR 1977	
Acc. No.	NARC
77	0060 19.

Speech by Encik Othman Wok, Minister for Social Affairs, at the Opening Ceremony of the Arc Welding Section of the Singapore Boys' Home held on Saturday, 12 Mar 77 at 10 am at the Singapore Boys' Home, Clementi Road

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Ladies and Gentlemen

1 The opening of the Arc Welding Workshop this morning heralds the progressive changes made to the vocational training programme of Singapore Boys' Home. The main aim of the Home is to provide rehabilitative training for the boys so that they can become useful, productive and contributing members of the society.

2 To achieve this, the rehabilitative training and treatment has to be constantly reviewed and regularly revised in the light of changing times and situations.

3 The recreational programme in the Home provides for healthy pursuits of leisure time and is aimed towards the development of healthy bodies and sound minds.

4 Rehabilitation through character building, and the inculcation of acceptable modes of conduct and behaviour, and proper values and attitudes in social living are of great importance too. Therefore, lectures and discussions in civics and ethics and participation in community service projects are provided for the boys. In particular, the community service projects are significant. They involve the boys in manual job assignments and the giving of assistance at regular intervals to other institutions caring for

children, aged or disabled. The objective of these community service projects is to instil in the boys a sense of civic duty, concern and care for the weaker members in society and an appreciation of the value and dignity of labour.

5 In the area of vocational and work training, the programmes should provide the boys with the necessary discipline, experience, knowledge and skills for employment. The aim is to enable the boys to acquire good work habits and discipline; and at the same time to gain trade knowledge and skills.

6 The opening of the Workshop today marks a significant achievement in the history of the Home. This project represents the concerted effort of the staff and of members of the community who take an interest in the rehabilitation of delinquents.

7 The Singapore Chinese Engineering Merchants Association assisted us in planning the arc welding workshop. The Association has also undertaken to employ one arc welding instructor to train the boys for one year with a possible extension for another year. The Industrial Training Board has given us invaluable advice and guidance on this project. Many public-spirited organisations have donated money for the project. Without this type of assistance from the community, it would have been difficult to establish the Arc Welding Workshop.

8 The Workshop will be used to train about 20 boys at a time. I hope that the boys of Singapore Boys' Home will make maximum use

and take full advantage of their stay in the Home to learn as much as they can so that when they leave, they will be able to obtain gainful employment not only to support themselves and their families, but also to stay away from further trouble and contribute to the development of our economy.

9 In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Singapore Chinese Engineering Merchants Association for their co-operation and assistance, the various public bodies for their donations, members of the Board of Visitors (Youth and Boys) for their useful advice and guidance, and voluntary workers for their valuable time and dedication. They have all helped, in one way or another, our attempts to make the vocational and rehabilitation programme in Singapore Boys' Home an effective and constructive one.

Thank you.

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