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PRESS
STATEMENT

SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT.

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SPEECH BY H.E. THE GOVERNOR, SIR ROBERT BLACK, AT THE
CAMP FIRE AT JURONG PARK ON SATURDAY, JULY 20, 1957.

(23)

Scouts and Scouters of all ranks,

I am delighted to have been able to come out here this evening to be present at the Camp Fire which you are holding in honour of the retiring Chief Commissioner, Mr. Ince, and to initiate your new Chief Commissioner, Mr. Woodford. When I hinted that I would like to be present on this occasion, I wondered whether Scouts would have in mind some fierce initiation ceremonies so that the old Brave, before his departure into the forest and the dark night, might have an opportunity of seeing his successor the new Brave possibly roasting gently on a barbecue to test his stamina. However, we are clearly a group of very civilized Scouts and are sitting round this Camp Fire treating the departing Brave and his successor with all the conventional courtesies and giving the best possible indications of our own good breeding. On the whole, it is probably just as well to do it this way.

Mr. Ince came to Malaya very nearly thirty years ago. I myself first met him when I was serving in Larut and Matang as the Lord Mayor of Taiping, at which time he was a master at the King Edward VII School there. From the beginning of his service with Government in Malaya he has served the Scout Movement. For eight years he was a District Commissioner in Perak, thereafter he served in the same post in Penang, Johore and Pahang and when he came to Singapore in 1951, he became the Deputy Commissioner here, being elevated to Chief Commissioner four years ago. It is during his period as Chief Commissioner that the Jurong Park Training Camp has been established. We are all most grateful to Mr. Ince for his devoted service to the cause of Scouting and to the way he has maintained the highest traditions of a Scout's Promises. I know you will all wish to associate yourselves with me in expressing our grateful appreciation to Mr. Ince for his fine work and to wish him and his wife all possible happiness in retirement.

And now we come to his successor. Mr. Woodford's association with the Boy Scout Movement goes back thirty-nine years to 1918. That is a very long association indeed, and it is very fitting that Mr. Woodford, who has served the Movement so loyally and so enthusiastically for such a long time, should be the first Malayan to become Chief Commissioner of Scouts in Singapore. Mr. Woodford in fact comes from across the Causeway, but he has clearly realised that it is a good place to stay and he has been with us in Singapore for a very long time now. When I visited St. Anthony's Boys School the other day, and received a Guard of Honour from the Fifth Troop, it occurred to me immediately that this must be a child of Mr. Woodford's. He was a master there as long ago as 1924 and was of course at that school until fairly recently, when he transferred to St. Joseph's Institution. Mr. Woodford's task as Chief Commissioner is that of an inspirer and a co-ordinator. It will be his duty to be accessible to all Scouts and Scouters who will know that he will approach their difficulties without fear or favour and they will be able to come to him knowing that his experience and integrity can help them in times of uncertainty. There will be occasions when he will make unpopular decisions because his is a final responsibility which carries with it the necessity for taking a firm line and facing temporary odium with courage. I know that Mr. Woodford will accept that

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responsibility without flinching. I am sure once more that you will all wish to join with me in congratulating Mr. Woodford on his appointment to a most responsible post in Singapore, carrying with it great opportunities for the young people of our Island. We hope that he will have a happy and successful period as Chief Commissioner. And now, in handing you your Warrant, Mr. Woodford, I offer you personally my own best wishes. Good luck and congratulations.

JULY 20, 1957.

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