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Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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SPEECH BY DR SEET AI MEE, MINISTER OF STATE
(COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT) AND (EDUCATION),
AT THE OPENING OF THE THOMSON CHARITY FAIR
AT THE THOMSON COMMUNITY CENTRE
ON SUNDAY, 19 MARCH 1989 AT 11.00 AM

Firstly, I would like to thank the Thomson CCMC (Community Centre Management Committee) and the Singapore Carnegians for inviting me to officiate at this Charity Fair to raise funds for the Singapore Children's Society Convalescent Home at Keramat Road.

I would like to congratulate the organisers, especially the Women's Executive Committee and the Youth Executive Committee of this constituency for making this project possible. I am happy that the other grassroots organisations in the Thomson Constituency were also actively involved in this project. It would have been extremely difficult to organise a food and fun fair on this scale if all of you had not pooled your resources. I am sure in working for this project you have established closer rapport with one another and further strengthened the network of grassroots organisations in Thomson Constituency. I hope that other constituencies will follow your example by organising projects such as this through joint participation of their grassroots organisations.

Not only is fund-raising for charity a laudable effort, it also serves to inculcate in the residents in this constituency a sense of charity and understanding of the needs of the underprivileged.

I believe that the responsibility for the well-being of the underprivileged should not only be the concern of a few dedicated individuals or Government or trust funds but

also one shared by every Singaporean. The Government has provided Singaporeans with proper housing, good health care, abundant education and job opportunities. It has also worked closely and is working with voluntary and community organisations to alleviate the needs and distress of the less fortunate among us. The objective is to help them, economically and socially, to be as independent as possible. At the same time, we also want to inculcate a caring and sharing attitude in every Singaporean towards the needy and towards each other. Hence, the Government actively encourages more voluntary welfare groups and individuals to play a greater role in providing assistance to the needy.

Food and fun fairs are but one-time projects and do not provide a continuous flow of funds. Voluntary welfare organisations like the Singapore Children's Society depends on a regular and continuous flow of funds to meet their needs. These can be adequately met if able Singaporeans would come forward and lend a helping hand. One simple yet effective way of doing this is through the Community Chest SHARE programme. If every working Singaporean can contribute just \$1/- of his monthly income to the Chest, there will be about *\$15 million available each year for distribution to the needy.

I thank all of you here for your support for this worthy project. I would also like to urge more people to come forward to render their help and support to the less fortunate. In this way, we will build a more caring and compassionate society.

It is now my pleasure to declare this Charity Fair open.

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* Based on work force of about 1.24 million given the 1988 economic survey.