

Singapore Government **PRESS RELEASE**

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**SPEECH BY MR TEO CHONG TEE, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY (SOCIAL AFFAIRS)
AT THE DINNER AND "FASHION FUSION WITH SPECIAL GUEST APPEARANCE BY
MR YAM TAT WAH" HELD AT MANDARIN BALLROOM, MANDARIN HOTEL
ON MONDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 1981 AT 7.30 PM**

My wife and I are happy to be present at tonight's Dinner Show, the proceeds of which will be used to fund the activities of the Spastic Children's Association of Singapore.

On an occasion such as this, it is not inappropriate for us to take a look at the services provided by the Association for the spastic children of Singapore. The Association has come a long way since 1957. It has the proud record of being the only association in Singapore which provides a comprehensive and specialised package of services to cater to the needs of spastic children. From a class of 10 spastic children in 1957, today it caters to 289 with a full complement of specialised rehabilitative services - education, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech therapy, social work and medical services. It boasts 16 classes ranging from kindergarten classes for pre-school spastic children to special classes for the more severely disabled children.

The Association also runs a rehabilitation centre. Early treatment and individualised programmes are emphasized at the centre. Here professional occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech therapists render their expertise jointly in rehabilitating the spastic child. Special mention must be made of the two polytherapy groups which help the more severely disabled children and adults who, because of their disabilities, cannot cope with a school curriculum, and those who had no opportunity to have any therapy or education due to parental ignorance of services available.

A spastic child is not a child with only one disability. More often than not, he is afflicted with multiple disabilities. His speech may be affected, hearing or vision may be impaired and

hands or legs /2.

hands or legs deformed with poor muscular coordination. Rehabilitation of such a child requires a range of specialised services and is a costly affair. Last year, it cost the Association \$343 per year to educate a spastic child, \$658 to treat him at the Rehabilitation Centre, and \$200 to provide him with welfare services. I believe that rehabilitation is not without economic gains when viewed from a long term perspective. I am sure that the Association shares this conviction too.

Without the generous support of members of the public, like all of you here tonight, through fund raising projects such as this, the Spastic Children's Association would not have been able to continue its valuable rehabilitation work for the spastic children. I am indeed happy to note the tremendous support for tonight's function. By your very presence here, you have demonstrated your concern for the spastic children in our community. I am sure that there are many others who, though unable to attend this dinner, have shown their support by contributing either in money or in kind.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the organisers for their effort in organising this function and to thank you for the warm reception you have given me and my wife. I wish you all a delightful and pleasant evening.

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