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**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT WEE KIM WEE
AT THE COMMUNITY CHEST OF SINGAPORE AWARDS
PRESENTATION CEREMONY AT THE ISTANA
ON SATURDAY, 27 JUNE 1987 AT 10.30 AM**

It gives me extraordinary pleasure to welcome you here this morning because you represent two special groups of people - one who have given so generously to the Community Chest, the other, who helped to make others give. In either category, you are special. Without you, the Community Chest might not have been a chest filled with \$11 million last year, needed to give succour and comfort to 63,000 of our less-fortunate Singaporeans, who are aged, sick or handicapped in one form or other.

What the Community Chest stands for; what it has done in the past three years and will strive to do unceasingly is well-known. It needs no repetition.

I am told that some 2,000 volunteers have made great sacrifices in terms of time, labour and effort, to keep donations and subscriptions rolling into the Chest every day of the year. They make up the Community Chest Army of Samaritans. They can be found in every nook and corner of our island state. They all have a common mission - to serve the community in the spirit of sharing and caring.

I was fortunate to observe the true spirit of voluntary service at work when I recently visited several centres set up to offer a variety of assistance schemes to those in real need. At one such centre, I was impressed by the enthusiasm and genuine concern of a group of very

young people, who were providing a meal service for senior citizens living in the neighbourhood estate. Most of the senior citizens who were benefiting from this service, by reason of being destitute, in poor health or suffering some disability, would otherwise have had great difficulty fending for themselves.

At another centre, volunteers gave tuition to children, whose parents were either too busy working or not earning enough to be able to afford paid tuition. As in the first example, there were Singaporeans who realized the need for such a service and got together fellow Singaporeans to run after-school tuition classes at a nominal charge.

One of the greatest satisfactions of a volunteer service worker is the joy and comfort he brings to those in need of help. I know for many of you this is sufficient reward. Not every one of us is well off. However, you have not allowed the lack of financial means stop you from helping in other ways. I know personally of one altruistic individual, who might only just manage to scrape a living, having to look after himself and a growing family, but who thinks nothing of helping a handicapped, bedridden neighbour daily with his meals and washing.

We cannot thank enough all the volunteers in our midst. On the other hand, we can always appeal to and depend on the basic goodness in every human being to come to the aid of those in need. Every poor, sick, and hungry child, man and woman is a challenge to our sense of social responsibility. I am glad that Singaporeans, our many expatriate friends resident here, and a growing number of our corporate citizens have risen to the challenge. I sincerely hope more will come forward. There can never be enough.

The Awards Ceremony today also marks the launch of the 1987 fund-raising campaign. The Chest needs \$11.6 million to support 26 charities.

In launching Volunteers' Week, I would like to commend all volunteers in community service for the excellent example you have set and express the hope that many more will come forward to join your ranks.

I also congratulate all those who are receiving awards today and thank them for their contributions and support to the Community Chest.

To conclude, I cannot possibly end my address without referring to Dr Ee Peng Liang, whose name is synonymous with the Community Chest and charity. The Community Chest, like all charitable organisations, has to be a community effort, but strong and dynamic leadership is equally vital. Dr Ee provides this in its fullest measure. I shall not stop complimenting and thanking him for what he is doing - nothing less than a national service.

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