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**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT WEE KIM WEE
AT THE LAUNCHING OF CARE & SHARE MONTH '89
AT THE NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY BOARD (NPB) AUDITORIUM
ON WEDNESDAY, 30 AUGUST 1989 AT 7.30 PM**

Once again we need to launch the CARE and SHARE campaign.

This ringing slogan, I believe, has penetrated the hearts of many Singaporeans just as the national song STAND UP FOR SINGAPORE has captured the hearts and minds of our people, old and young, male and female, of all races and religions.

Why then is it necessary to repeat this campaign year after year? The Community Chest's officials tell me there is "the need for public commitment."

In the past four years I have attended many functions and events at which monies were raised for the Community Chest. At each of them I have never found the spirit of caring and sharing lacking. What was significantly lacking, to me at least, were new faces among the familiar, loyal and small band of volunteers and donors.

Like all organisations the Community Chest too needs strengthening and rejuvenation. Just as Singapore vitally needs youthful Singaporeans of 18 years old to join the colours for National Service, the Community Chest needs new blood to sustain and increase its capacity to raise funds.

Why the Community Chest needs to raise funds and more each year is easy to perceive. When I made my first speech for the Chest, the sum needed was for nearly 50,000 of our less-fortunate Singaporeans. Today, the Chest is catering for 73,000 people, an almost 50 per cent increase in four years. This year \$15 million is required.

I asked Dr Ee Peng Liang whether his band of volunteers and donors had increased by 50 per cent in the past four years. I am sad to say this has not been the case.

Why is this so?

Are Singaporeans not sufficiently imbued with the spirit of caring and sharing? On the contrary, I believe our people are second to none when it comes to helping fellow human beings, especially our own compatriots, who are in distress.

Is the Community Chest perhaps demanding too much? Dr Ee assures me he is NOT asking for something beyond the means of the average working Singaporean. In real terms, what does this mean? I am told that more than 80 per cent of the working population of Singapore surveyed by the Community Chest in January this year had indicated that they would be willing to donate one dollar a month through their payroll.

Current statistics show that there are 1.3 million working Singaporeans today. At twelve dollars per person a year the Community Chest will have \$15.6 million coming into its coffers for a start, without taking into consideration the various fund-raising events including lucky draws, charity golf, charity dinners, ikebana demonstrations, walkathons and jogathons.

I realise that it is impossible to evolve a system to get every single Singaporean worker to donate \$12 a year. This target is easier envisioned than reached. I am only consoled by Dr Ee that the Community Chest is continuing to explore the feasibility of achieving this target, through the Central Provident Fund, which means making it easy for employers to help the Chest collect the \$12 annually from their employees, who are willing to donate this sum. I sincerely hope that by the time I am called to officiate the next big event of the Community Chest this target will be achieved. And, when this comes about, a very large proportion of the companies in Singapore will join the scheme to help not only the Community Chest but also their employees and, more importantly, the large numbers of less-fortunate Singaporeans in our society.

Even before the target of centralised collection through the CPF is achieved, I hope that more companies will implement the current SHARE programme at their workplace.

The Chest cannot wait for one scheme or system to be implemented to raise the money needed. The 33 charities and homes looking after 73,000 people need the funds to keep their charges fed, warm and comfortable. You and I must see to it that the Community Chest machinery keeps churning hard to raise the targeted sum.

In short, this is the main reason why we need to be here this evening to repeat the CARE and SHARE campaign, which I have the greatest pleasure in launching.

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