

CHUK YUEN SCHOOL AND CENTRE OPENED

Government's Concern With The Expansion of Primary Education In The Colony

Colonial Secretary At Opening Ceremony

The Colonial Secretary, the Hon. E. B. David, C.M.G., in his address at the formal opening of the Chuk Yuen Primary School and community centre in the Chuk Yuen Resettlement Area, Kowloon, last Friday, said that the new school was an example of what can be done and the speed with which it can be done.

He praised the fruitful partnership between Government and the Churches in the work of education and expressed the hope that under the new seven-year programme of the Director of Education, many more buildings like the Chuk Yuen Primary School would be erected.

Present at the formal opening ceremony were His Lordship Bishop Lawrence Bianchi, the Director of Education, the Hon. D. J. S. Crozier, the Chairman of the Diocesan Committee for Church and School Extension, Mr. A. E. Perry, the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Anthony Riganti, P.I.M.E., the Chief Resettlement Officer, Mr. J. M. Rowlands, the Senior Education Officer, Mr. P. Donohue, the Acting Social Welfare Officer, Mr. C. G. M. Morrison and more than two hundred guests.

As Mr. David and Bishop Bianchi arrived at the new school, they passed through a guard of honour formed by the 17th Kowloon Scout Group and were given a rousing welcome by some eight hundred school children.

Government's Generosity

Msgr. Riganti in welcoming the guests paid tribute to all who had helped to make this school and centre possible and expressed particular thanks to His Eminence Cardinal Spellman who interested himself in this project during his last visit to Hong Kong. He thanked the Government and its various Departments for the grant of the land on which the school and centre have been erected as well as for its generous subsidy. The confidence, he said, that Government places in the co-operation of the Church and the readiness in offering assistance in so many ways is a most encouraging factor.

Need of Schools

Mr. A. E. Perry then spoke. He said that only a little over five months ago, he stood almost on the same spot and watched His Lordship laying the foundation stone of the school. "We stood around a hole in the ground," Mr. Perry said, "nothing having been built except the tiny wall which held the foundation stone which His Lordship blessed. That blessing seems to have been effective for here in an incredibly short period of time the whole school has been finished." Speaking of the need for schools like the Chuk Yuen Primary School, Mr. Perry said that the Resettlement Area had nearly two thousand children, who would be school children if there were schools to which they could go. He said that thanks to the generosity of the Government and the co-operation and encouragement of the Education Department, the majority of these children will now be catered for.

"As Chairman of the Diocesan



The Colonial Secretary, the Hon. E. B. David, C.M.G., and His Lordship Bishop Lawrence Bianchi passing the guard of honour formed by the 17th Kowloon Scout Group.

ties which have to be overcome before funds are available for projects like this, but if people continue to be as generous as in the past, and if newcomers to this Colony show their appreciation of its advantages by helping us according to their means, then there is no reason to believe that at least the problem of housing our school children cannot be overcome."

Government's Concern

Following Mr. Perry's speech, Mr. David said:

"I am very glad to have been accorded the privilege of opening this school to-day, not least if it will help to show the Government's concern with the expansion of primary education in the Colony. There have been of late several fires through which the numbers of our homeless have been increased, and the problem which we are trying to solve by the provision of accommodation in these resettlement

and contain them, to prevent them spreading and to put them out. But there is one fire which we are doing our best to spread, one flame which we are striving to keep alight — that is the torch of education. To bring that light into every home in Hong Kong is an ideal for which many people are working together and combining the contributions which each can make — the Government, the Churches and many voluntary organizations."

Noble Purpose

"It is a noble purpose but its realisation presents formidable difficulties. If the present population remained static, we should have enough — and more than enough — to do. It would still take years before we could sit back and say that the task is completed. But during those years children are being born and with an estimated natural increase in the population of 60,000 a year we have got to plan ahead

"That is the basis of the seven-year programme which the Director of Education has drawn up for the expansion of primary education and which the Government has accepted as a target. The plan is based on continuing — and deriving the fullest benefit from — the present fruitful partnership between Government and other bodies which are striving in the same field."

Joint Target

"Jointly we have accepted an ambitious target and there are many difficulties to be overcome and problems to be solved. Not only have buildings like this one to be erected and paid for, but land has to be found — no easy task in a territory where industry, housing and many other needs are competing for very limited space — teachers have to be trained, and trained in sufficient numbers to keep pace with our expansion. It is my earnest hope that we shall