Leonard Cheshire Resonate Project

File Title: AV-S 510 Side 1 Part 3 Recording of several events during a tour of New Zealand and Australia. Oct-Nov 1974.

Duration: 8 mins 47 secs

Transcription date: 24/11/20

Archive Number: AV-S 510

Start of Transcription

00:00: Leonard Cheshire: November 23rd, Jakarta, opening of a new home, opening of the new home.

00:07 [applause] to 00:14

00:15 [no speech] to 00:23

00:24: LC: Madam Chairman, Mrs Rosea Sarjano, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. On my side I would like to say what a tremendous pleasure and privilege it is both for me and for my wife behind me to be here with you on this occasion. It’s the first time we’ve had the opportunity of visiting Indonesia and experiencing at first hand the warmth of Indonesian hospitality and welcome, not to mention the beauty of your country. And I would assure you that today is a moment that both of us will always remember. It’s a great privilege to take part in the opening of a new home for the physically disabled. And I think I know something of all the hard work that has gone into the preparation for this moment. Starting from unknown and small beginnings in a new country is always difficult. And every country has many, many works and many, many charities, many homes of every sort and kind, and to start a new one inevitably is difficult. And I know that it would never have been possible but for the generosity in this city from so many people. For instance, I know it’s not for me to mention names, but had it not been for the most generous help of Mrs [Unclear 02:16], both in the early stages and later, had it not been for the gift by the Fatmawati Foundation and the help of the doctors and so many others, this would not have come about. I only wish that I could mention everybody by name, but be assured that in my heart I do, insofar as I know you. As you’ve heard, our little homes, of which this is the newest, the second newest was started just the week before in a faraway distant land. This is our newest. They look after as best they can those who are disabled for life, and particularly the younger age group. In many places you find homes for the old and homes for children, but not so much I think I’m safe in saying, whether in the richer countries or the poorer countries, is done for the younger age group. And those who either through accident, diving into a pool that’s too shallow and breaking your neck or in a motor car accident or through some disease become physically disabled - they are still young and normal in heart. And what they want, as I think you can see today, is to be looked upon as normal. To have the opportunities of making something out of their life, to be creative and to feel at home. And for me to come here yesterday morning for the first time and now today to see this new home so beautifully done, simple yet comfortable, with all the amenities that are needed to begin with, to see the lovely location, to see that you have a physiotherapist, that the residents are working and making things, in other words entering upon a new life, is I assure you a great inspiration to me. And I shall go away with many happy memories indeed. Of course I know that we must see ourselves in our perspective, that we are just one tiny little unit amongst a whole field, a whole world of people working in different ways to improve society in the field of social welfare, of medicine, of economic development and so on. And we are privileged to have this little opportunity. As you see, it’s begun from small beginnings, very small beginnings. And I think in a way that this is perhaps the best way of starting from small beginnings. I find travelling round the world one sees so many problems, and they look so big, and you think what can I do, and one is put off. It’s more constructive I think just to look at what one can do oneself, however little it is and do it. Because none of us, whoever we are, whatever our position in life will ever achieve a great deal, because we’re human and limited. And I think that we should be satisfied with knowing that we’ve done at least a little, as long as each of does what we can in our own field. And today we are gathered together because of the 4, the 5 disabled residents who are here on the platform in front position with us. They are the ones who have brought us together and given my wife and myself the opportunity and privilege of meeting you. And I would like to pay my tribute to them. Because although it is you and others who’ve given them the home and it’s Matron Sere who’s looking after them with her staff, they in their turn are giving something to us. They are showing us how the human spirit can triumph over disaster and adversity. And this I think is one of the greatest examples of all, to lose all your mobility and freedom and yet forget what you’ve lost and concentrate on what you still have. And I think I can say that this is what you four have done. Sadly, I don’t speak Indonesian and so you don’t understand me. But I hope that afterwards somebody will tell you how much I respect and admire you and how it is you who gives me and Sue my wife the inspiration to go on. So, with all my heart I do say thank you to everybody who has worked and given to bring this home into being. I would like to thank our chairman Mrs Suteatro [?] and Peggy Cody who did all that work in the beginning. She refuses to be mentioned and I refuse not to mention her. You are truly a team and I think it is this that has struck both of us coming here. You are a team who’ve brought it about and made us feel so welcome. So, with all my heart I do say thank you. And may God bless this home, those who live in it and all who in one way or another work to develop it because there is so many needs. Thank you ever so much.

08:39 [applause] to 08:47

08:47: Speech ends

08:47: End of recording

End of transcription