

*Prime Minister  
Singapore*

30 August 2010

Mdm Chandramohan Nirmala  
6A Sian Tuan Avenue  
Singapore 588275

Dear *Mdm Chandramohan Nirmala,*

I am deeply saddened by the passing of your husband, Mr Chandramohan.

2 Mr Chandramohan was a long time veteran of the broadcasting industry. He was a professional with a fine political sense, a good understanding of the issues of the day as well as keen insight into the medium, of what would work on TV. He produced the TV press conference that Minister Mentor gave on 9 August 1965 when Singapore separated from Malaysia. He pioneered programmes like "Talking Point", "Friday Background" and "Diary of a Nation". For many years he supervised the production of the annual National Day Rallies and coverage of our General Elections.

3 I got to know Chandra in the 1980s, when he was in charge of current affairs in Singapore Broadcasting Corporation (SBC), which evolved into present-day MediaCorp. We needed to use TV more for explaining and discussing current affairs and political issues, in order to reach out to and engage a more educated public. SBC launched a "Today in Parliament" programme. This was a most demanding exercise: to distil a long and complex debate lasting hours into 45 minutes of watchable television to be broadcast the same night. We had never televised Parliament debates before. Chandra personally oversaw the production of these programmes, and made sure that they were coherent and balanced.

4 SBC also did special programmes on the issues of the day, such as our economic competitiveness or the falling fertility rate. The programmes had to present issues objectively and credibly, deal forthrightly with tough questions, and very importantly hold the viewers' attention. In short they had to inform, educate and entertain Singaporeans. Chandra always understood what we needed to get across, and could be relied upon to propose the best way to do so.

5 Chandra produced a few shows that I participated in. I remember one studio discussion that had gone well, and overrun the targeted time. I remarked to Chandra that it would be hard to compress the material, since it all seemed relevant. But with his greater experience, he replied that by looking closely at the transcript, he would identify sections to edit out, which would tighten and improve the programme. Of course he was right. It was a pleasure working with him.

6 Chandra continued to help us even after he retired from MediaCorp. His experience and professional judgment were too valuable to be left untapped. One of the last projects he did was a series of on-the-shelf programmes about prominent Singaporeans for use upon their passing away. His own passing will be felt by all his many colleagues and friends.

*With deepest sympathy,,*

*Yours sincerely*

*Wettien Wong*