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SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS STATEMENT.

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SPEECH BY THE ACTING MINISTER FOR CULTURE,
MR. WEE TOON BOON, AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING
OF THE 20TH INTERNATIONAL SALON OF PHOTOGRAPHY
ON SATURDAY, MAY 3RD, 1969, AT 5.00 P.M. AT
THE NATIONAL LIBRARY.

12

I am happy to be here this afternoon at this exhibition which is the 20th in the series of International Salons held in Singapore by the Photographic Society of Singapore. I must congratulate the Society for the earnestness with which it is promoting the cause of photography in the Republic.

The uses of photography in the world of today are legion. It has served the cause not only of the amateur photographer but also of commerce in the field of advertising, of pictorial documentation, of the motion picture industry and of science.

Photography enables man to record, interpret and make images of the life he lives based on the reality of his existence. The photographer is also an artist in the sense that it is he who determines the tone, shape, detail and texture of the living image he wishes to capture. Photographs present a marvellously accurate pictorial record of our age - its pageantry, its disasters, its personalities and the innumerable passing incidents that are the very stuff of which our life is made. What words cannot describe adequately, however skilfully they are used, the pictorial image translates into meaningful shape what words attempt to describe.

Photography is one of the most effective of modern ways to record current history which can be preserved for posterity. I suggest that in a country like Singapore where vast changes are taking place, pictorial records of these changes should be made more and more so that our history can be read through them. It would be useful therefore if more emphasis is laid by our local photographers to capture the changing moods and aspirations of our people who are endeavouring to build a nation that is strong and viable. These pictures will reveal to the world not only the colourful design of existence in our multi-racial Republic but also the course along which history is taking us into the future. They will prove immensely useful to Singapore particularly in the economic and cultural spheres.

The fine prints displayed here show unmistakably the creative artistry of photographers and it is therefore with great pleasure that I declare this Salon open.