

Leave of Absence

Monday, May 14, 2007

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 14, 2007

The House met at 1.30 p.m.

PRAYERS

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mr. Speaker: Hon Members, I have received communication from the hon. Member for Toco/Manzanilla, Mr. Roger Boynes requesting leave of absence for the period May 12, 2007 to May 18, 2007. The leave which this hon. Member seeks is granted.

PAPERS LAID

1. Annual financial statement of the National Quarries Company Limited for the year ended September 30, 2004. [*The Minister of Trade and Industry and Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Kenneth Valley)*]
 2. Annual financial statement of the National Quarries Company Limited for the year ended September 30, 2005. [*Hon. K. Valley*]
- Papers 1 and 2 to be referred to the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee.*
3. The Value Added Tax (Amdt. to Schedule 2) (No. 2) Order, 2007. [*Hon. K. Valley*]
 4. The Toxic Chemicals Regulations, 2007. [*Hon. K. Valley*]

WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION

**Medical Data Caribbean Limited
(Details of)**

- 73. Mr. Ganga Singh** (*Caroni East*) asked the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry:

Could the Minister provide:

- (a) a listing of the names of the persons trained by Medical Data Caribbean Limited for the period January 2005 to October 2006;
- (b) a listing of the trainers and their qualifications?

Vide end of sitting for written answer.

CONSTITUTION (AMDT.) BILL

[Second Day]

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question [May 09, 2007]:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question again proposed.

Mr. Speaker: On the last occasion, the hon. Member for Diego Martin West was on his feet. He has a balance of 26 minutes of original time. May I remind Members that in contributing to this Bill, you may also contribute on the Bill to amend the Police Service Act.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. When I made my intervention at the last sitting, I indicated that my concern with respect to this matter was one which stems from the need to be more cognizant of what, in effect, is good management. The purpose of the amendments is to bring us to a position where we could put the structure in place and, hopefully, this revised structure will facilitate an improved management of the police service.

I wanted to demonstrate that management of the police service and, by extension, the wider public service, is not something that we can legislate in here and walk away from. While the Cabinet is the head of the Executive, I would like to see the Parliament, itself, be viewed by parliamentarians as part of the country's management. If we do not do that we will not get the benefit of what we are trying to do. That is why I am happy that the Members on the Front Bench, on the other side, have indicated—I was not here when the Back Bench spoke. I am sorry if I missed it. I am told that the Back Bench is also in support of the legislation, but I am really trying to respond to my friend, the Member for Princes Town, whom I thought encapsulated the position of the Front Bench Opposition. I am trying to deal with that. He did say that they are, in fact, supporting the legislation. If I may quote him, he said:

“...we are saying that we are going to support this legislation because it was our drive to have this legislation put in place, but at the same time while we support it we are attempting to draw attention to some pitfalls.”

Mr. Speaker, after he made his argument about a lot that was troubling about the legislation, he went on to say—I want to quote him correctly—quite categorically:

“This piece of legislation means nothing; it is almost insignificant in the big picture.”

I am wondering to what extent that is ambivalence, or to what extent there is truth in that statement. If it is ambivalence, it says that the Opposition has no real position on the matter. In one breath, you are saying that you support it, and you are part of the drive to improve the legislation and in the next breath you are saying that it means nothing. I would like to be charitable and say that it is not that the Opposition is ambivalent but, in fact, what the Member is saying is that if we put this in place as a Parliament and walk away, and think that we have fixed the problem then we have not, because there must be more to it. That I would agree with. That is, to me, the only reasonable position. I thought maybe I could not be saying that because maybe there is more to it.

Before the Member arrived at that position of saying that it means nothing, he had a long argument about what the Government's motive was and so on. What was worse, as a Member of Parliament, the Member did something which, to me, was quite surprising. In the face of information that told him that the managers had a serious problem with the behaviour of a junior, he went at length to put on *Hansard* some very strong positions supporting this junior, even though what was available to him was information that the junior might have questions to answer. Mr. Speaker, let me just tell you why I am bothered.

Mr. Panday: We have more information.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Well, you did not share it with us.

Mr. Panday: It is confidential.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: I am not talking to you; I am talking to the Speaker. He said—I do not want to misquote him. I want to quote his exact words. The length of time he belaboured this point told me that it was important to him, and that is where he was making his case. He said:

“...the police officer said that there was no or little evidence at all and his boss made him do it.”

I am saying, at the time he was saying that, there was a parallel rebuttal from a senior manager in the police service. He went on to say:

“Look at how the entire system is a conspiracy against the people.”

So, he accepts it, and then he goes on to say:

“They know what they did, and this is what the police are doing to people...”

The DPP is advising the senior police officer, and yet he proceeded to charge her...”

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No, that is not true. The senior officer who rebutted the junior statement, addressed that particular point saying no, no, what that junior officer is saying is not true. He consulted the DPP and it is on his advice that the charge was laid against the lady, but a Member of Parliament, having that information, comes to the House and makes these accusations and then he goes on to put on *Hansard* as a statement of fact,

“The DPP is advising the senior police officer and yet he proceeded to charge her...”

Mr. Speaker, when he was speaking, on two or three occasions, I tried in parliamentary tradition to get up and ask him to give way, and he boorishly refused to give way.

Mr. Panday: That is what is hurting you.

Dr. Nanani: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: Order, Member for Princes Town. What is the point of order?

Dr. Nanani: Standing Order 36(7).

Mr. Speaker: I have ruled about this 36(7), so far as you are concerned on previous occasions. Standing Order 36(7), for the benefit of Members says:

“Members shall be referred to by the names of the electoral areas for which they have been elected.”

That is the Standing Order the Member has raised. I have also ruled, when this particular Standing Order was raised by the Member for Princes Town, that it is not in order to raise matters which appear to be trivial. Please, continue. [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, thank you. The Member for Princes Town went on to give so much weight to this that he said what he expected on the last day we sat, was a Government Minister coming to this House and apologizing to this lady, who was wrongfully charged on the instruction of a senior, who would have misconducted himself by directing this junior to do what he did; in fact, swallowing lock, stock and barrel, the rebutted statement of a junior officer. [*Interruption*] I am responding to what he said. He said that this is what they did to a junior policeman. What did anybody do to him?

Mr. Panday: They bully him.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Now, he went on to say and, again, stating as a statement of fact:

“And senior police officers are charging and locking up people, keeping them in custody, and to this time, we have not heard any Member of the Government come before this House and apologize to the lady.”

He went on further. I presume that he knows Constable Hamilton.

Mr. Panday: “I don’t.”

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Speaker he said:

“This officer has done yeoman service to the country.”

Mr. Panday: He exposed them. [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: The point I want to make on all of this, is that we cannot take the position that management is important; management must manage; and, as parliamentarians, when we get up in the House, we take the kind of position that the Member for Princes Town took, which is, to disregard anything to do with what the management has to say in the police service. He is over there shouting. “We do not believe him.” On what basis, I do not know, but, of course, he believes the junior officer. The senior officer made a statement of the police service saying what the facts are—

Mr. Ramnath: And you believe him?

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: I did not take that position. I am simply saying that if you have a situation where two positions are available; an initial one and a rebuttal one, and you take the initial position 100 per cent without reference to the rebuttal then, obviously, you are either being dishonest or incompetent. Mr. Speaker, the agenda is to place blame on the Government, but the police service is a paramilitary organization—I have said this over and over again—where rank is important. Rank in the police service and the military equals management. If we take the position that you are not going to accept what the management does, and what you are prepared to do is to allow the constables or privates or whoever, to determine how the organization is run—you may have a number of instances where people go to court and win cases with respect to transfers and so on but, at the end of the day, what in effect you are going to end up with is an ineffective organization, because the management would have been either demoralized or eviscerated.

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Mr. Speaker, it is an open secret in this country right now that—let me give you an instance. If the management level of the police service, observes or gets information that a junior officer is hanging out with the wrong crowd, or is in questionable company and so forth, and that management officer decides that the way to deal with this matter is to transfer this officer out of that environment where he or she may not be exposed to that and so forth, that would be a management decision which, in any military organization, should be the preserve of those who are called upon to manage their ranks.

In Trinidad and Tobago, it is very frequent that such persons can go before the court and claim that their transfers were as a result of all kinds of motives. [*Crosstalk*] The end result of that is that one is tempted to ask: When do you cross over from management decisions in the organization to management decisions in the court? This is not to say that there cannot be wrongdoing on the part of management which requires ratification by the court. One has to understand that if the general culture is that the juniors can do as they please, and their seniors feel that whatever they do, somebody is second guessing me and I would change it; then you would end up with an organization that is ineffective or corrupt.

I distinctly recall, many years ago, I was on WASA's board, and there was a major issue with respect to the handling of their spares. As a member of the board, I was trying to push the management in a certain direction, resulting in the call for a senior accountant to appear before the board, and the person refused. The person frankly refused to come before the board. This resulted in disciplinary proceedings being put against the individual. The structure of the organization was such that when I checked sometime later—eight years after—that management situation that would have never been tolerated in the private sector in any company—the person was still there on full pay, and the matter had not been concluded.

Interestingly enough, I had reason to raise this matter at a board meeting at one time, and I was told by a spokesperson for management: “Just understand something Sir, that management is permanent and the board is temporary.” So, today, when you end up in a situation, where you cannot get water left, right and centre, one has to ask: To what extent this is so? This may have begun in 1981, and we are in a system where one does not accept and support strong management to solve problems.

This country has not accepted that culture, and until we get there—the Member may be right that this may not mean anything, unless managers are allowed to manage. Managers must manage. They must be held accountable; they must be well paid; and they must be given the authority to make management

decisions and to take management risks. [*Desk thumping*] [*Crosstalk*] I am talking about managers in general, across the board. If it is that we want the benefit of good management, we have to encourage that culture, and that culture is not being encouraged by Members of Parliament flippantly coming here, and making statements which seem to support ne'er-do-wells and miscreants, because it appears as though it would score political points.

When a Member gets up in the Parliament and speaks of a particular situation about a particular officer, it must mean something in this country. It must not be dismissed as yet another bit of hot air, triggered by somebody trying to score points. In both Houses of this Parliament, there is a culture, where you could get up and say anything, and the next day you are shown to be totally wrong, and there are no consequences. None! Members of Parliament do it over and over and, at the end of the day, they want to know why the population views us as a bunch of jokers. That is so because our interventions mean nothing. We have been found to be wrong too often. I am saying that I do not accept it. In fact, I reject, out of hand, the defence of this constable, by the Member for Princes Town, at the expense of the management. If I have to come down as I am coming down now, I come down on the side of the management [*Desk thumping*] because I suspect the very fact which has not been disputed; the very fact that he missed court 24 times; and trying to give the impression now that he did that so for the case to be thrown out, because he thought something was wrong, that tells me the kind of officer he is. If I have to support, I support the rebuttal of the management.

Mr. Speaker, it is bad enough to say that management must manage in the private sector where they are making balloons and flour and so forth, but in a military organization where they are handling arms and ammunition and men are under arms, do you think you could tolerate juniors doing as they please and behaving as though management is incidental? If there is one thing that the colonial masters taught us, is the importance in maintaining that respect and the fear of intervention by the senior, if the juniors go astray. That is what the colonial masters taught us, and we seemed to have lost that because it is a good thing.

We have taken the position that anybody could do anything; you could talk to anybody anyhow; and you could react anyhow and there are no consequences. I am saying that there must be consequences, especially, in a military organization or a paramilitary organization. So, while I am a strong supporter of that arm of the State that is responsible for dealing with misbehaviour in the police service, it can only be effective if the managers are allowed to manage the people under them. [*Desk thumping*]

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When we come to put legislation in place, my friend, the Member for Princes Town gave a lot of examples of what could happen, what could go wrong and so on in assessing for promotion and getting the points and so forth. Mr. Speaker, any system that you put in place—there must be a system—one can raise these hypothetical possibilities. He did say, and I agree with him, let us pass the legislation; let us put it in place, but let us be on our guard to make amendments in the future, if the practice and operation shows that it is required to be amended from time to time, and that is a given. To create the perfect situation where of the 7,500 policemen, none will ever have a complaint about being discriminated against. That is impossible.

Mr. Speaker, in the police service, it is, again, open secret, where there are a number of *Gazette* readers. Everybody knows that. They are Gazetteers. They spend most of their time reading the *Gazette* to see who lies where in the system, and where their promotion comes in and on what date. There is no interest whatsoever in police work. So, a system like this that talks about performance and assessment, I expect such persons to have a problem. Usually, they are the ones who speak the loudest. While many are working over and above the call of duty, and should get the commendation of their seniors, there are others who are simply marking time. I am saying, the system must allow the management to recognize performance and reward it. They must do that. If you do not do that you are going to end up in our current situation.

Recently, I was talking to a retired police officer, and I asked him: When do you think the police service started to go to hell in this country? He said that there were two milestones: one is when they started to promote purely on seniority, and the other one is the 40-hour work week. Those two things destroyed the police service in this country. Those two things happened at a time when the country was changing and was requiring even more for effective policing. So, what we had, in effect, is as the country changes and joined the world of criminality, we required more effective policing, and the effects of our actions were the opposite. So, we were going in two different directions.

What we are trying to do now is to pull that back to bring systems that are relevant; systems that are effective to create a new kind of policing, and present in that new kind of policing are effective managers, armed with the tool of responsibility and authority. We believe that if we put those two things together, and we give them that support, from the level of the Parliament—support in the country; support as a culture supporting correct attitude as against wrongdoing—we could do well.

Mr. Speaker, support for wrongdoing seems to be a normal pastime in this country; normal pastime. Let me give you an example. In our society, there are persons who, by virtue of the stations that they have held and so forth are influential. In any community, there are certain persons who influence other persons.

Last week, I was very surprised when I saw in the newspaper, a very short article written of a former President of the Senate, who acted as President of the Republic. I interacted with him as a Member of the Senate when he sat in the Chair as President. He took time out to write an article and have it published. The article made reference to me, in my capacity as Minister of Housing, as Rowley demolishing people's houses in Bagatelle. Mr. Speaker, I said to myself, this represents an aspect of this country which I would rather forget, but I cannot forget it. This is a former acting President of the Republic; a former President of the Senate; not a man in the street who takes an issue.

Mr. Speaker, what exactly was he referring to? He was referring to an agency created by the Parliament of which he was a part. The Parliament created an agency called the Land Settlement Agency (L-SA), specifically to treat with the issue of squatting. It gave that agency a mandate to regularize squatters in 240-odd locations, as spelt out in a schedule and, secondly, to curtail new squatting. There is an appointed date, spelt out in the law, which is January 01, 1998, and one year later for applications for a Certificate of Comfort. Any person who did not apply for a Certificate of Comfort after that one-year period, the law is crystal clear; you cannot apply for one now. The appointed date was set by law, and the one-year period was there in law and all of that has past.

All that is happening in Bagatelle is that the Parliament which created an agency called the LSA is treating with that particular situation of some families who have to be dealt with in a certain way, because they happened to have occupied the Diego Martin Recreational Ground. As Minister of Housing, it is my sworn duty to uphold the Constitution and the law. [*Desk thumping*] I am simply doing my job. As the agency is doing its job, I see a former President, writing an article in the newspaper, accusing me of demolishing people's houses when, in fact, what we are doing is over and above what the law requires, which is treating with, valuing their property and compensating them in the most humane way.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the speaking time of the hon. Member has expired.

Motion made, That the hon. Member's speaking time be extended by 30 minutes. [*Hon. K. Valley*]

Question put and agreed to.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, thank you and I thank my colleagues for the extension, and I would not be that long. I just have a few points to make. The Member for Princes Town did say that the Government views the Opposition as a stumbling block. He was referring to a stumbling block inside the Parliament, in terms of how they relate to legislation that the Government brings, requiring their support. One can be a stumbling block beyond the Parliament walls. If, in fact, you support the legislation in here and, at the same time, you do not support the management culture that the legislation speaks to, that rubric of stumbling block is applicable.

When the Member spoke about agreeing to give the Government support, I think that in itself demonstrates a misunderstanding of what they are trying to do, and that might influence a conduct. You are not agreeing to give the Government support. The Government is simply a number of Members holding office and the public service by extension. The support that you are giving is to the country that is supposed to benefit from the measure. I know that the Opposition would like to see the back of the Government. I mean, that is understandable. As a matter of fact, that is what the Opposition should do; try to get the Government out the door and, of course, we resist.

Mr. Ramnath: You do not know what transpired. They did not pick you.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Hello, if you want to interfere in PNM's business ask me. We are not like you. When we speak, we speak as one body, because we are properly informed. [*Desk thumping*] [*Crosstalk*] So, do not get in PNM's business. [*Crosstalk*] I am going to tell you one thing. If you want me out you will share Couva South with me. The trouble is that you might be further out than I am.

The point is that if Members think that they are doing the Government a favour, then by their nature of Opposition being, would want to oppose or not support the Government. What I am saying to my colleagues on the other side is to extend that support, not in the context of supporting the Government, but in supporting the country by way of supporting a piece of legislation that should bring benefits to all the people who send us here to represent them. If you say it in that context, then your offer of support for the legislation is welcomed, and it is to be seen in that context; no favour to the Government. As we do that, we would begin to create the kind of environment that would allow us to have a police service doing its job—strong managers, disciplined juniors—and the managers knowing that they are being back stocked by a Parliament and a people who will

differentiate between right and wrong, and come down on the side of what is right all the time, and that augurs well for high morale.

My colleague, the Member for Princes Town did say that something was missing from the legislation. He was comparing the mechanism that is proposed for assessing and promoting the senior ranks with what prevails for the junior ranks. He was saying, why do we not have the same thing. He said that the Promotion Advisory Board which currently says that it shall comprise Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner and a couple of other persons; he said that should have been the route to go. I would simply say that we had a lot of help and a lot of involvement in trying to create a new and improved approach, and it is that which is recommended for the senior ranks.

I was also saying to my colleague, the Member for Princes Town, even as he holds out this Promotion Advisory Board with the Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Director of Human Resources, senior officers of national security and independent management consultant—as he holds out that five-man team as the way to go—I am sure you will be cognizant of the number of instances of persons coming up and saying that something has gone wrong with the promotion of this individual or groups of individuals, because this was not a perfect panacea. It is under this arrangement that the plethora of complaints or lawsuits come about by persons who feel that they have not been fairly treated.

Mr. Panday: You are wrong.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: The point I am making is, no system can guarantee you perfect acceptance, because there will always be people who believe that they have not been fairly treated, and to the extent that these are avenues for redress, those avenues are absolutely essential. To the extent that the persons are raising unreasonable arguments, they can be adjudicated upon. So, this Promotion Advisory Board, as compared to what is proposed in the legislation, does not guarantee what you think should be guaranteed by legislation. [*Interruption*] We are saying the same thing. You are saying that you prefer the existing Promotion Advisory Board, and we are saying that on examination on what exists, we are offering something different and, hopefully, we believe that is an improvement.

I come back to your point. We are going to try it, and to the extent that we expect it to work, it would as an improvement. If per chance it does not work, the Parliament is always here to rectify it. We are not saying anything—

Mr. Panday: You are saying the same thing that I am saying.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: I am saying that your preference does not improve—

Mr. Panday: We are saying the same thing. [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: No, we are not saying the same thing. Mr. Speaker, he made a most amazing suggestion, which I am sure he did not really mean. I think he was making up time when he said that. He said:

“...section 111 is amended in subsection (2) by inserting after the words ‘Chief State Solicitor’ the words ‘the Chairman of the Equal Opportunity Tribunal’.”

Does that exist? This is a most interesting suggestion. The last time I checked, the Equal Opportunity Bill is before the Parliament, and it has not been passed by the Parliament—

Mr. Panday: So, therefore, you hope that when we debate that Bill—

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, I am talking to you. I presume that you are saying that the Equal Opportunity Bill is before the Parliament being adjudicated upon by a committee.

Mr. Panday: No.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: It is in the House.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: It is in the House. We are debating the Equal Opportunity Bill—[*Crosstalk*] Mr. Speaker, may I be allowed to address you? The Equal Opportunity Tribunal does not exist. It may or may not form part of the new legislation that we proposed. I cannot understand, how we can be asked to put in the existing legislation, which we are about to pass into law, a provision which will apply to something which may or may not become law. That could not be serious. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker, I would love to get the support of my friend, the Member for Couva South. I want to tell him one thing, and that is we have done very well in the last how many years without his support. So, you have to decide what is relevant and what is not relevant. If your position as you have stated is not to support anything the Government brings, that is for your account. We are imploring you to take a position of responsibility which you have indicated you will take and, therefore, we welcome your support, but the option is always yours not to offer that support.

I am confident that on this matter which you have indicated your involvement from the beginning, and your statements made in the House, that you would see nothing to want to back away from your commitment to support.

Mr. Panday: You said that you do not want it. [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. K. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, my friend, the Member for Princes Town does not have to speak for me. I can speak for myself. I have said what I want to say and I have said so. As we move towards voting on this issue, I think we are all sufficiently on common ground to want to have a better managed police service. The extension is a better managed service would result in a better and more effective police service. That is what we are saying.

Mr. Speaker, that is our objective and, if it is not, it should be. We may quibble over what this should have been or what that should have been, but let us not lose sight of the objective. The sight of the objective is a modernization and an improvement in our police service. I am of the view that all of us in this House are on the same page when it comes to treating and agreeing on that matter. Where there are divergences of views is whether this should have been done before, after and so on, but these are, in fact, peripheral to the core issue that the Parliament wants the police service improved and improved like yesterday. The country demands no less. I implore my colleagues on the other side to support this legislation and we will move forward.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

Mrs. Kamla Persad-Bissessar (Siparia): Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. We are here today to deal with amendments to legislation which was brought to this Parliament over a year ago, and that is part of the package of the Police Reform legislation. What we are doing is, we are being asked to amend an amendment. So, we are amending today, or we are being asked to amend today, an amendment to the law that was made last year. Even before we complete the debating on amending an amendment, the Minister has already indicated that he wants to amend the amendment further. So, we are amending an amendment, and that amendment, we are going further to amend.

Whilst this Government continues to really parody amendments to amendments, to prove to the nation or to show in some way that they are fighting against crime, it is ironic that up to this day, the much touted package of Police Reform Bills that was given the parliamentary stamp of approval, over 400 days ago, up to today, the Government has failed to implement one single section of that Bill, but seeks to come back to this Parliament to get approval from these benches saying, as the Member for Diego Martin West just said, “we have got along fine without you thus far, we can do it again, we do not need you”, knowing full well that to make the amendments to the Constitution, once more, they need to get a two-thirds majority.

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They have succeeded in the past, when they needed a three-fifths majority, by getting the support of the Back Bench without the Front Bench support. This particular Bill needs a two-thirds majority, which means that they must get every single Member of that Back Bench present today, and if they are not present, then they will have to get the votes of the Front Bench here of the official Opposition. You are asking us to give you that support, in a context where, as I say, we are amending an amendment, and being asked to make further amendments to the amendment. All of this is happening whilst this country is under siege by the criminals.

Every single survey that has been done by every single entity shows that crime is the number one concern for everybody in this country. It is not foreshore development, not LNG, it is not GDP, it is not macroeconomic indicators of growth—whether it is single digit or double digit growth—but the number one concern for every single person in this country is crime. Crime is the number one issue.

Mr. Speaker, in March this year, the Caribbean Development Strategies published a report of a crime risk assessment in Chaguanas. According to that report, 94 per cent of the persons surveyed claimed to be very worried about crime. This, to me, is indicative of the general population as a whole; 99 per cent of those persons said that poor government policy was the major factor causing crime; and 97 per cent of them said that the factors contributing to crime and the crime crisis was an inefficient police service.

We understand, as we understood then, that we needed to put things in place to deal with the police service, and to improve the management of that service. The Government came to us and asked for our support, and we give that support in the interest of the public good. We gave that support for these Bills. Millions of dollars was spent by the Government to get our support. We looked at it, we negotiated and we put changes within the Bills to bring them into the Parliament to bring them into statute to make them Acts and, as I said, up to today, in spite of the hue and cry by the Government of every citizen in this country, not a single section or provision of any of the legislation has been implemented by the Government.

We have become a nation living in fear of being raped, robbed, assaulted, battered, kidnapped and/or murdered. Every one of us here knows someone who has been a victim of crime—someone who has been killed; someone who has been kidnapped; someone who has been robbed; someone who has been raped; someone who has been assaulted; and someone who has been battered. Every one of us knows firsthand, not hearsay or they say and them say but, firsthand, every one of us knows of a victim of crime.

Sitting right here in our midst, our brother lost his son as a victim of crime, kidnappers and murder, and up to today no headway has been made, in terms of detection. On the other benches, the Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's/West also lost a family member; victim of crime, and up to today the perpetrators of those crimes remain unknown; no detection, no bringing to justice. So, I am saying that firsthand every one of us knows a person who has suffered at the hands of criminals; and a person who has been a victim of crime. There is no one here that feels safe in this country, whether in your car, home, workplace, school or wherever you are. No one feels safe. We are not safe in the daylight much less for the nighttime.

Whilst criminals are roaming freely in search of their prey, law abiding citizens of this country are forced to huddle behind closed doors and behind burglar proofing. They are petrified. No one feels safe. As I said before, we are a nation under siege by the criminals. I ask you: Do you feel safe? Does anyone here feel safe? I certainly do not feel safe. I have said it before and I am going to repeat it. Every time a family member goes out—I think everybody in this country would say the same—you are afraid and uncertain until that member returns home, because you do not know what will happen to them, You are terrified that they will become a victim of crime.

If your family members are out and that telephone rings late at night, you are scared, and you are petrified in case that telephone call is to say something terrible has happened to your loved one; your relative has become a victim of crime. When you are sitting in your home and you hear noises outside—strange noises and unusual noises—you are petrified, in case there are bandits outside roaming around to come to damage your home.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that you feel that same way too, and many citizens can identify with that fear that we have with respect to the crime wave that is sweeping this country. I am sure Members opposite feel the same. Even the Prime Minister has no confidence in the ordinary police force. The hon. gentleman has beefed up his security detail. Some would say that is why the Prime Minister ensured that his son got a firearm, because they do not depend on the security forces, so he could protect himself. So, the Prime Minister himself acknowledges that the regular police service is unable to protect him from the criminal elements in the society. I ask when that is happening: what about the ordinary citizen? What about the average man and woman and the average businessman or businesswoman who do not have a firearm to protect themselves, and who do not have these security forces around them to protect themselves and their families?

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What recourse would they have? Instead, they play Russian roulette every time they set out outside of their homes, and even within your home it is a game of Russian roulette, you do not know when the shot will call for you. That is the scenario here.

Two years ago, residents out in Chaguanas and the business community, begged the Minister of National Security for firearms to defend themselves, and at that time he refused. These businessmen in Chaguanas and elsewhere continue to be targeted. What we are seeing is a phenomenon of a runaway criminality in our society that is an appalling abomination. This situation is no longer just a little family secret for those of us here in Trinidad and Tobago.

Now, the international community and the United Nations know of this dreadful disease that has infected the Trinidad and Tobago society. Mr. Speaker, I refer to the recent United Nations World Bank Report. This study was conducted by the United Nations Office on drugs and crime in Latin America and the Caribbean Region. It is entitled *Crime Violence and Development: Trends, Costs and Policy Options in the Caribbean* which was published just last month in March 2007. It is a very voluminous document.

The Minister who piloted this legislation—he has stepped out or he is in the Chamber somewhere—talked about persons quoting the report out of context. Mr. Speaker, the document is a voluminous one. Not even the Minister could stand in the Parliament here to read the length and breadth of the entire document. What it does show and what we must note with concern is that there is a bar chart which is contained in that document and it shows the growth of murders in three countries here in the Caribbean: St. Lucia, the Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago.

What this chart showed is the distinct growth with Trinidad and Tobago having the least number of murders of the three countries in 1999. So, Trinidad and Tobago was at the bottom of those three in 1999, and by 2005 Trinidad and Tobago has caught up and surpassed the other two countries. So, in 1999, Trinidad and Tobago was number three, the lowest. In 2005, Trinidad and Tobago became number one for murders out of these.

Given the number of murders for 2006, the report was up to 2005, so they have given the number for 2006 and even for 2007, we know that Trinidad and Tobago now has the dubious distinction of being in the first position for murders in the region.

This country now has, according to the report, the dubious distinction of becoming high profile for kidnapping and gun crimes. There is an entire chapter of the report that is captioned “*Guns and Crime: A Case Study of Trinidad and Tobago*” and I quote from the report:

“In fact, drug trafficking has spawned a vibrant industry, namely guns for hire—a service particularly useful to addicts who need to commit crimes to support their habit and hence perpetuate more violent crimes. From this has spun off another criminal industry—contract murders.”

So, what we are having is drug trafficking, guns for hire and contract murders. This is where we are, according to this report.

Further, the report says, six years ago, one-third of all homicides in this country was due to firearms. By last May, that percentage has risen to 74 per cent. So, homicides due to firearms, one-third; 33 per cent. These homicides have risen due to gun crimes to 74 per cent, a 200 per cent growth in the use of firearms to commit crime under this Government.

The report noted as well that drug trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago has spawned two vibrant industries: guns for hire and contract murders. The study repeated the claim often made by our hon. Prime Minister that firearms are required for protection of illegal drugs. When the drugs are transshipped, the Prime Minister has stated, the guns usually remain, hence the proliferation of firearms in the country.

Mr. Speaker, you may recall and many would recall a comment being made by one Vernon Paul, who specified that named members of this Government were involved in a transaction in which drugs and guns were brought into the country. To the best of my knowledge, the Ministry of National Security opted to ignore Mr. Paul’s claim and up to now, have not investigated it.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: That is not true.

Mr. K. Persad-Bissessar: In any case, the statements by both the Prime Minister and Vernon Paul are confirmed by the report which tied drugs and guns, and I quote again from the report.

“These weapons are used for protecting turf, for intimidating customers and competitors, for empowering recruits into the distribution networks, for maintaining discipline within them and for executing informers.”

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That report also notes that the share of wounding committed with a firearm has decreased, just as the number of murders with a firearm has increased. The report says:

“This is likely a reflection of the increasing lethality of weapons used.”

In addition, the seizure of guns by the police, mostly 9 mm pistols and .38 revolvers, has increased, up from 132 in 2000 to 199 in 2005. The report notes, even though they have captured more of the guns:

“it is not clear whether this increase is due to increased enforcement efforts or to a greater supply of illegal weapons.”

So, when we hear these statistics and when we recall that in the anti-crime talks that the UNC held with the Government, one of the things that we brought to the front was the fact that so many crimes are being committed with firearms, and that the vast majority of the homicides were as a result of the use of firearms, and that is why we suggested to the Government that we should set up a gun court. Kidnapping was also, and it is still, very much on the front burner, and we suggested that a special gun court and kidnapping court be set up. Mr. Speaker, that was in November 2005, when these suggestions were taken on board by the Government team led by the hon. Prime Minister. So we ask: What has happened to the promise that was made by the Prime Minister which emanated from those anti-crimes talks that the PNM would set up a gun court and a kidnapping court? What has happened? I do not think that we have heard of it apart from the statement made by the hon. Prime Minister on November 18, 2005, where he repeated the heads of agreement that we had reached, one of which was for the gun and kidnapping courts. We have never heard of the gun and kidnapping court again.

So, we ask: Where is the commitment? Where is the implementation first of the agreement, and the commitment to really deal head-on with crime in this country? Where is the promised gun court? Where is the promised kidnapping court? Even the draft legislation has not been brought to us. We have not seen anything or heard anything further. That promise was made since in 2005, and to date nothing.

Mr. Speaker, that was not the only promise that was broken. On November 18, 2005, as I said, after several days of meetings and cooperation between the UNC and the PNM, the Prime Minister reported to this honourable House the agreement reached by both sides, and that agreement firstly was to bring, at the earliest opportunity, a package consisting of nine pieces of legislation.

2.30 p.m.

These were, the Police Reform legislation which comprised of three Bills; those have been brought and passed, as I said, but up to today have not been implemented. Amendments to the Bail Act, that was also brought and has been coming, and will be coming again in June for further extensions; introduction of a Bill to establish a Gun and Kidnapping Court, as I have said, nothing further since then on this issue; revision of the DNA legislation and amendment of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act.

Mr. Speaker, this one, really, I feel very strongly about. We had passed in this Parliament the Criminal Injuries Compensation Bill and made it into an Act. The purpose of that legislation was to acknowledge that where Government fails to provide the protection to its citizens, then it would give to citizens some type of compensation—sort of like an *ex gratia* payment—to allow that victim of crime to be able to get back into the society and be able to function. At that time we had placed the maximum compensation that a victim of crime or a dependent of the victim of crime would receive \$25,000 which was since the year 2000.

Thereafter, when we met in the crime talks we all agreed that \$25,000 maximum would be totally useless, and therefore we would want to increase that amount. The Prime Minister came to this House on November 18, 2005 and he read into the record the agreement that was reached and he quoted from the *Hansard* of that day the Prime Minister's words to this honourable House:

“The intent of the development of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act is to offer citizens who are victims of crime, compensation from the state or the parties who have wronged them. This legislation has not been implemented, consequently, a mechanism for implementation is to be determined. It has also been agreed that the maximum compensation that one can receive through this Act be increased from \$25,000 to \$250,000. [*Desk thumping*]”

Everybody was very happy.

Dr. Rafeeq: When was this?

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: This was November 18, 2005. Since then nothing has come to the Parliament until, maybe, two or three weeks ago where in the Senate a Bill has been laid. And this again is another broken promise, because the Bill that has been laid to deal with an amendment to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act does not reflect the promise made by the hon. Prime Minister

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to increase the maximum compensation from \$25,000 to \$250,000. Do you know what that Bill does? That Bill says that clause 10, the amending Bill would provide for an increase in the amount of compensation to \$50,000.

When the head of agreement came here in the *Hansard* record in black and white, was to raise it to \$250,000, the Government brings a Bill to raise it to \$50,000. Another broken promise, Mr. Speaker, and of course when it comes to this House we will deal with it accordingly, but I raise it here in the context of the promises that were made and have not been kept. In fact, they have gone back on that particular promise.

So, amendment of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act, okay, they have brought the amendment 400 days later, it is still to be debated in the Senate. When they brought it, they brought it in breach of what the agreement was, which is to increase that maximum compensation to \$250,000, they have brought it to increase it only to \$50,000. So what is right? How can you come on November 18, 2005, read out the heads of agreement, thereafter, proceed on those heads of agreement, get the Opposition support on the amendments to the Constitution and so on, get support for the Bail Bill amendments then, and then you renege on your promise and you go from \$250,000 that you promised to \$50,000.

Mr. Speaker, we can go on and on to talk about all the money being spent in this country, the kind of salaries and so on that the Government has given to itself; monies being spent on houses, the Prime Minister's residence, the \$210 million, \$146 million, Lord alone knows how much it really will be at the end of the day. But this is totally untenable, it is totally unacceptable for the Prime Minister to come to this Parliament and to read into the Parliament record, the heads of agreement, and say this is what we have agreed to \$250,000 in November 2005 a year and some months later, lay a Bill in the Parliament that is totally in violation of that agreement by coming only for an increase of \$50,000.

The Government had also agreed with us and read on the November 18, 2005 record, that there would be strengthening of money laundering legislation. We have seen none! Nothing has been brought! From November 2005 to date, a year and several months thereafter, nothing has been brought to this Parliament or shared with any Member of this Parliament. Government had also agreed to have Protective Services Compensation legislation because we had brought it to Government's attention, listen, there are those who are working in the protective services, they are damaged, they are injured and so on, that the rates that are given to them for compensation where they are damaged in the line of duty on their jobs, it is so archaic, it goes so way back, that we need, if we want the police

service to perform we must give them compensation that is adequate that it will be an incentive, that will justify the sacrifices they are making. We have not seen that. Has not come! Nothing has been said about it!

With respect to the amendment to Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic legislation, that is stuck somewhere before a committee. DNA legislation stuck somewhere before a committee of the Parliament. And so when we look at the promises made, basically, nothing has happened. Even though—*[Inaudible]* Well, you respond and tell me all that has happened. I will be very happy to hear. I will be very happy to hear what has happened. Where are we today! Where are we today, so many hundreds of days later compared to where we were then, when Government came to seek support to pass a legislation, which support we gave them and up to today they have not implemented, they have not dealt with and they have not brought these provisions into action. The Member for Diego Martin Central is moaning and groaning, I am sure he will respond.

Mr. Valley: I am not saying a word.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: I think you are now afraid of the Judiciary; you are no longer afraid of the Opposition Benches. *[Laughter]*

Dr. Rafeeq: Not even bantering.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Not even crosstalk, no banter. *[Laughter]* No banter, no Crosstalk from you.

So, Mr. Speaker, these pieces of legislation, I am saying, were supposed to have been brought with urgency to the Parliament, with the support of the Opposition they would have been passed and they would have been implemented. As I said, this was in November 2005, the Prime Minister talked about historic collaboration between the Government and the Opposition UNC and we really believed—

Mr. Valley: I wonder whether the Member—would you give way please?

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Yes.

Mr. Valley: Mr. Speaker, I just want to put on record.

Hon. Member: You are on record.

Mr. Valley: I am on record. I just want to put on record that of the list *[Interruption]* mentioned, the only piece of legislation that has not been introduced in this honourable House is the Gun and Kidnapping Court. All the other pieces of legislation are at different stages in the Parliament.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: No.

Mr. Valley: Tell me which one? The Gun and Kidnapping Court, that is the only one you mentioned.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: No, no, please. I just read them and I will read them again. We talked about amendments to the Protective Services Compensation legislation, that is nowhere before us; we talked about strengthening of money laundering legislation, that is nowhere before us. We did not just speak of legislation as well, these were the legislative measures. Government had also promised, and we looked at that statement in November 2005; we would see other matters with respect to administrative measures that did not need legislative support. I speak here and I quote from the *Hansard*—

Mr. Ramnath: Always getting into trouble.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar:—of November 18, 2005. I quote from Mr. Panday's contribution on those Bills where he said:

“Mr. Speaker, in the context of our discussions, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has also decided to meet with the Judiciary and the Law Association to discuss matters related to the swift administration of justice, and also to discuss any administrative changes that can be made within the judicial system in order to improve its administration.”

We had talked about the backlog of cases. I used to say it was 200,000-plus; the last report of the Judiciary shows us that 300,000-plus cases are pending in the Magistrates' Courts. We talked about the backlog, we talked about appointing more judges, more magistrates; open up more Magistrates' Courts and so on, and what the Government said, they agreed with us. They agreed that they would meet with the Judiciary and the Law Association to tackle these backlogs, things with respect to the administration of justice in the country. [*Interruption*] Has not happened! In fact, instead you went at the Chief Justice and you continue to go at the Chief Justice without having the discussions to deal with the problem in the collapse of the administration of justice in this country. The criminal justice system is in a state of collapse, so that was the promise too, to meet with the Judiciary—

Mr. Ramnath: The Chief Magistrate may be corrupt.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar:—to meet with the Law Association to discuss matters relating to swift administration of justice.

Mr. Ramnath: *[By Order of the Chair remarks withdrawn]*

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: To discuss administrative changes that can be made.

Mr. Speaker: No, I do not think the Member for Couva South, really—
[Interruption]

Mr. Ramnath: What I said? *[Laughter]*

Mr. Speaker: I think I heard you saying that the Chief Magistrate took bribe, am I correct?

Mr. Ramnath: I do not know, whatever you say. *[Crosstalk]*

Mr. Panday: Wax in his ears.

Mr. Speaker: You know what banter does to—

Mr. Ramnath: I never said banter.

Mr. Speaker: You know what banter does. *[Crosstalk]* *[Laughter]* So, I will caution you to be careful about injudicious banter.

Mr. Ramnath: I am glad that you are rolling now. *[Laughter]* *[Crosstalk]*

Mr. Speaker: Have it expunged from the record, please!

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am talking about promises that never materialized, broken promises coming from the Benches opposite with respect to the fight against crime, and these are the words of the hon. Prime Minister himself to this House and I continue so to do on that same day, because this was the discussion; these were the points of agreement, and it continues:

“In the coming weeks, there would be other meetings between the Government and the Opposition on all legislation we have discussed as we are committed that the way forward will be an inclusive one. Today, I give the undertaking to present to the Opposition team within one week the bail and police service legislation...”

Mr. Panday's words in response are as follows:

“The Opposition made it clear to the Government that it does not believe that legislation can solve this spiralling crime wave and the increase in lawlessness which we have been experiencing particularly over the last four years. What is of even greater importance is the question of management, including workable systems of administration, new and transparent processes and the provision of

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proper support services. In this regard, we emphasized the need to look at non-legislative measures that would reduce the economic incentives in crime-related activities.”

So, whilst we said we would give support to legislative measures, we also agreed and Government agreed with us that it was not just legislation; that the legislation could not really deal with the crime wave and that you would have to go into administrative systems. I continue from Mr. Panday's contribution:

“We drew to the attention of the Government the recommendations of the Law Association dated November 10, 2005 which, inter alia, made recommendations relating to the electronic monitoring of persons convicted of certain crimes, guidelines and sentencing to give effect to restorative justice and the reduction of prison overcrowding, prison reform, the provision of more courts and more judges to deal with the increasing number of cases that are coming before the courts and the enormous backlog of cases already before the courts, the construction of a proper prison in Tobago, repair and construction of new police stations and improved working conditions of policemen and other members of the protective services.

We also drew to the attention of the Government the recommendation of the various non-governmental groups such as communities mobilizing against crime, the Keith Noel 136 Committee, the joint statement on crime by the organizations’ representatives of the private sector of Trinidad and Tobago and the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers’ Association. We believe that the more in-depth analysis of further legislative measures that deal with crime would support the very strong call for constitutional reform.”

So, Mr. Speaker, the promise was for a legislative package, I have identified nine various pieces of legislation, but in addition, we put forward to the Government, the Government accepted that it was not just about that legislation; it had to do with management; it had to do with administrative processes; it had to do with matters dealing with prison reform and it had to do with matters dealing with all areas when it comes to the fight against crime. We have not seen any measures. Any of those, Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the heads of agreement and in keeping with the statement made by the hon. Prime Minister to this House on November 18, 2005.

And so we are here then, one year later, after we gave support to these Bills to once again amend them even though the parent legislation has not been implemented. And whilst we seek to push this legislation through we must remember that this

Government has a history of unproclaimed legislation, of proclaimed legislation that they do not implement. Children in this country are dying, they are being abused, they are being mistreated and every day Government is refusing to implement legislation already passed in this House with respect to children.

In November last year I wrote to the secretary of the Cabinet seeking the proclamation dates and the Legal Notice numbers of 27 pieces of legislation which I had reason to believe had not been proclaimed. Mr. Speaker, needless to say, I did not have a reply, but from my own checks I have identified several pieces of legislation that went through both Houses of the Parliament and to date remain unproclaimed. Why? Why do we spend all this time passing legislation here and then have it sitting on a bench somewhere without implementing, without proclaiming. Why do we waste these kinds of resources only to have it sit there? I speak for example of an entire package of legislation that dealt with land and land titles in this country of which, Mr. Speaker, I am sure you will be very familiar with and very aware. The Land Adjudication Act, 2000; the Land Tribunal Act, 2000; the Registration of Titles to Land Act, 2000; all of these passed by the Parliament and up to today not implemented.

Mr. Speaker, I think the worst of the lot has to do with the package of children legislation. I keep returning to this because I think this is a most despicable failure on the part of Government has been their callous treatment on the children of this nation. *[Interruption]* Promises again, promises never materialized! Typical PNM! Promises never materialized. Again this morning the Minister of Social Development was on TV6 telling the nation that he would be bringing the children legislation to Parliament shortly. Again, this is not the first promise; this is not the second promise; it is not the third promise, and I am sure it will not be the last promise, because at each point the promise is made and it is not kept.

At the end of March, this same Minister announced to the country that a new children package, including the much touted Children Act and the Children's Authority Act—

Mr. Roberts: Would the Member give way?

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar:—was said to be laid before the Parliament—

Mr. Roberts: Would the Member give way?

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: I will give you way in time. *[Inaudible]* The Children's Authority Act was said to be laid before the Parliament in April, this was carried in the *Trinidad Express*, March 28, 2007.

Hon. Member: The only thing worst than a promise is no promise.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Mr. Speaker, we now know or we now have to ask, if that was just not another cruel PNM April fools joke, making a mockery of the citizens of this land. April has come and gone, nothing has happened. We are now in the middle of May so far. Nothing! Another promise, and the country is now screaming already, mayday, because we are in a state of crisis when it comes to that. I was not aware that the Children's Authority Act had to be brought back to Parliament. *[Interruption]* These Acts have been debated and passed in Parliament.

Hon. Member: Both Houses.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Both Houses! The Government supported the legislation, there were nine PNM Members in the House on that day and every one of them voted for it:

Hon. Kenneth Valley, MP voted for it;

Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley, MP voted for it;

Hon. Colm Imbert, MP voted for it;

Hon. Jarrette Narine, MP voted for it;

Hon. Edward Hart, MP voted for it;

Hon. Eulalie James, MP voted for it;

Sen. The Hon. Martin Joseph voted for it;

Hon. Fitzgerald Hinds, MP voted for it;

Hon. Eric Williams, MP voted for it.

They are all Ministers of this Government; they all sat here and passed that legislation in the year 2000, and seven years later they have not implemented it, they have not proclaimed it, they have done nothing and children in this country continue to be abused, mistreated, murdered and brutalized. The Government is still saying today, once more, the Minister is on the TV again saying, we are bringing the package soon. *[Interruption]* We are bringing the package. You made those promises; you had six years to implement legislation already passed, you did not do it.

Mr. Panday: Shame on you Minister!

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Many children who have been abused over the past six years continue to be abused, they could have been saved. The pain, the

suffering, the hurt, the humiliation, the scaring that these children have been put through is a direct result of the PNM not implementing the legislation. They promised to do that.

In his budget speech in 2004—2005 the Prime Minister boldly promised the establishment of the children’s authority and survey of children’s authority and survey of children’s homes which commenced in fiscal 2004 will be finalized in the new year 2005; 2005 has come and gone, Mr. Speaker, promises that have not been kept. If that promise had been kept, the authority would have been in place in 2005, a full year before Amy was killed; she would have been saved. Today marks one year since Emily Amy Annamunthodo was killed. One year!

Hon. Member: Rowley protecting the legislation.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: And up to now the legislation has not been implemented.

Mr. Panday: Shame!

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: The promised package still has not been brought. What are they waiting for? Another child to die or to be hurt; I would like to find out what has happened to the Justice Monica Barnes report.

Hon. Member: Rowley covering up.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: When the Minister of Legal Affairs, Christine Kangaloo announced the appointment of retired Justice Barnes, May 18, 2006 almost one year ago to investigate the failure of the State support system she said, and I quote:

“Each of us in Government individually and collectively joins in the national uproar, grief and concern; some have opportunities to prevent this tragedy were missed at various levels...”

That was the Minister.

“...Justice Barnes report, I am told was received by the Minister of Social Development since January 2007 but to date the nation does not know anything about the contents of that report. Perhaps now the State's case against Emily's mother has also failed, there may be another secret enquiry to take place as to why that happened. In the meantime, whilst Ministers are twiddling their thumbs, the children of this country continue to suffer.”

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So when the Minister says today he is bringing this package shortly, I hope it would be on the Order Paper of this Parliament in time for the next sitting of the Parliament, that package of children legislation.

The Witness Protection Programme, again on the statute books since the year 2000, since 2000 we have talked about, we have passed law in this Parliament, both Houses of Parliament for a functional Witness Protection Programme with the Justice Protection Act, 2000. We begged the Government to look at the fact that many cases were collapsing including kidnapping cases because witnesses were being threatened. Instead of taking us on, the junior Minister in the Ministry, Minister Fitzgerald Hinds proclaimed to this House on February 15, 2007 he said:

“In the midst of multiple cases collapsing the State’s Witness Protection Programme was up and running and was working well.”

Like so many others that Justice Protection Act remains languishing. It remains on the books, it has not been implemented, and again we ask Government to account for why it is that they have failed to implement that piece of legislation. Those are just some of them, the package of children legislation, the package of land law, the Witness Protection Programme through the Justice Protection Act.

Today we are reading in the newspaper that it is now confirmed that nine persons have been charged with the murder of Vindra Naipaul Coolman and I really wish to take this opportunity to extend our very sincere condolences to her husband, her children and her parents. We have just celebrated Mothers’ Day yesterday and as a mother myself I can only say and that I hope that God will give solace and strength to Vindra's parents, to her children and her husband at this time. At the same time I note the collapse of several serious cases recently, and so I call on the investigating and prosecuting arms of the law to do all in their power to ensure that justice is done. There is another case we are reading of today, Mr. Speaker, where the DPP has written to the family of Shazard advising that the case against the officer who killed him is being dropped.

One really has to wonder if this—whilst the DPP may have his reasons for so doing, whether the approach was the best one. This is a very delicate situation and it is obvious there is need for a more humane approach in dealing with victims of crime and the loved ones who remain thereafter long after the victim has gone that would involve some kind of counselling and mediation. Certainly I would think that a representative of the DPP's office could have met with the family, with their representatives to discuss this matter and deal with it in a more humane way. I

understand the family will take further steps to have the DPP clarify the situation, but that I leave up to them. I am just saying that the method of dealing with it leaves much to be desired and leaves the family even more traumatized or continues to be traumatized from that particular incident. So we are talking about the fight against crime; we are talking about Government's trust—

Mr. Bereaux: I thought you were going to congratulate the police.

Mr. Sharma: After six months.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Perhaps the Member for La Brea would do those congratulations and so on; he is suggesting that we congratulate the police. *[Interruption]* Perhaps the Member for La Brea would be able to tell us and explain the congratulations for us. *[Interruption]*

I want to talk about counselling for kidnapped victims and their families. *[Interruption]* In his 2004 budget presentation, the Prime Minister promised the provision of counselling by trauma specialists for victims of kidnappings and their families. *[Interruption]* Three more budgets have come and gone, more than 100 persons have been kidnapped for ransom and Government has not provided this very basic support. If the Prime Minister says he wants to tell us differently I am willing to give way.

Mr. Manning: You talk.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: I am willing to give way for you to tell us.

Mr. Manning: You talk “nah” man.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: The Prime Minister will stay and banter across the floor, but he is not prepared to stand and put on record if this has happened. My information is that no support systems have been put in place for counselling following upon that promise in 2004. No support systems have been placed! So banter does not go into the record I am told, Mr. Speaker, based on the Member for Diego Martin Central, so across the floor is not sufficient. It is not sufficient, our information is despite the promises made in 2003, 2004, 2005, *[Interruption]* that no systems have been put in place. *[Crosstalk]*

So now, Mr. Speaker, I am saying that the international committee knows of this dreadful sickness in Trinidad and Tobago, the sickness of criminality, even if you are not afflicted by this disease you can become a victim of those who suffer from it. In these islands of the blue Caribbean Sea, the land of soca, this rainbow country, we are breaking new records with murder, with shootings, with robberies

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and with kidnappings. Government it seems is out of control and the criminals are in control at this time. They strike at will to maim and kill. Frightened and terror stricken, the population is leaving in droves, seeking solace in other countries. We must understand people in a country look to the Government of the day for protection and leadership which they deserve. These Police Bills like the Bail Bill so far represent the legislative warranties from Government.

Mr. Speaker, we are deeply disappointed; we have lost patience with Government over its response to this crisis. We understand that the factors contributing to crime are very complex. We do understand that! There are some things over which we have no control, for example our geographic location, our proximity to South America has made us a natural transshipment point to north bound drugs now faced with a tighter net around the US by the DEA. Of course we cannot change our geography but a serious and competent government can take appropriate measures both domestically and internationally to curb the traffic and prevent temptation for the fast narco-dollars which is a significant factor. The pursuit of narco-dollars by the previously marginalized and powerless youth has now resulted in a whole new sub-culture of newly empowered gang leaders and followers.

What can the Police Bills and Bail Bill do about this major source of criminal activity? There are sociological and psychological dimensions to the problem which require other interventions and remedies instead of spending millions of dollars on wasteful measures. You will recall it was a UNC government that entered in a Shiprider agreement with the United States to assist us with interdiction at the international level.

Mr. Speaker: Before I move the Motion for the extension of the hon. Member for Siparia. I think it is appropriate for me to seriously caution Members of the honourable House to be extremely careful with loose talk where it concerns Members of the Judiciary.

The banter by the Member for Couva South is equally wrong [*Interruption*] as occurred on the last occasion. It is highly improper to criticize members of the Judiciary. I would imagine in days following we will have some comment being made by those in authority with respect to the outburst by the Member for Couva South. So I am appealing to Members to be extremely careful, do not make any injudicious statements concerning members of the Judiciary. It is most irregular.

Mr. Singh: Expect by way of substantive Motion.

Mr. Speaker: Except by way of substantive Motion.

Mr. Panday: You cannot bring that on the Order Paper.

Mr. Speaker: Please, hon. Member for Princes Town, I am making a very serious statement here and I want all Members to heed my warning.

Hon. Members, the speaking time of the hon. Member for Siparia has expired.

Motion made That the hon. Member's speaking time be extended by 30 minutes.
[*Hon. K. Valley*]

Question put and agreed to.

3.00 p.m.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: I thank you, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I deal briefly with the issues of guns and the use of guns. Government knows that guns go hand in hand with the drug running, but so far, Government has not taken any real measures to reduce the availability of guns in this country. The gun is becoming part of a culture not just for criminals and this maybe because of the US influence through the videos, movies and so on. The handgun has become now like a fashion accessory, like a cellphone for some; people do not leave home without it.

Indeed, the Prime Minister's son now has one, thanks to daddy. Instead of glorifying guns and buying guns for our sons and following the American gun culture, we ought to consider the example of Canada and bring in gun control legislation. The initiatives of Government in the name of crime fighting in my view, have been mostly cosmetic, symbolic and even economic for those who benefit.

Government attempts to convey it to the public that something is being done about crime, but these are just cover-ups in my view. The economic aspects of Governments initiatives has to do with the vast sums of moneys that are transferred for contracts, to cronies, to party hacks and others for multimillion dollar equipment, like the blimps, attack helicopters, raiders and speed boats. The practice of secretly passing million dollars national security expenditure on related bodies, as was done with the multimillion dollar spy ware purchase through VMCOTT serves to confirm suspicions that all is not right.

Mr. Speaker, the excessive Government expenditure in this regard, the absence of accountability across the board therein to perception, there is massive corruption involved. What causes great unease to all of us, is a desperate ploy to give the public a false sense of security. In addition to this being corruption, it is

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also a case of deception and cheating. As we debate these pieces of legislation, I cannot help but feel in some way compromised as if I am becoming complicit in a process to deceive a hopeful and trusted public into believing that these police related Bills would do much to provide in safety for them and their families which they want so badly. I am convinced that this Government is also engaging in crime fighting pappy-show, purely for political reasons.

Mr. Speaker, this is unconscionable and reprehensible, even if it is done because Government is bankrupt for ideas. Government should not be trifling with the feeling of a scared population with emotions of those who recently endured trauma and grief; these Bills are not the answer. These Bills are not the answer, Mr. Speaker. People have expectations, Government must deliver. The Government strategy to get the Opposition's cooperation to improve the Government's image, sanitized their actions are obvious. Like the Bail Bill, if we hold out for a better deal for the people; we run the risk of being portrayed as playing into the hands of the criminals.

Mr. Speaker, I am not comfortable with the idea of using crime in this regard in an election season and as I said before, it is unconscionable opportunism and we want no part of it. Because when we look at these Bills, when we see what is happening, as we deal with the police reform pieces of legislation, we are reminded of the continuous and consistence failure of Government to deal effectively with crime. We are reminded of the equally consistent denial and their multimillion PR campaigns to convince a traumatized beseeched population that they are safe from crime; they are safe from the crime wave enveloping this country. Newspapers have become the recipients of a very large advertising contract from the Ministry of National Security. Some of you would have seen two weeks ago a two-page spread appeared in the daily newspapers comparing last year's first quarter crimes statistics to this year's first quarter crime statistics.

According to those figures, crime has dropped except for larceny and larceny of motor vehicles. I am sure that most people reading this, John Public out there like me would have scoffed at these claims. I previously made the point that the Minister needs to stop wasting taxpayers' dollars on these advertisements. That one advertisement cost taxpayers maybe close to \$50,000 because it was carried in more than one newspaper.

Under the PNM, several Ministers of National Security, multiple national security advisors, a mass of expensive high-tech equipment, including a flyer (macro) device, \$13.6 billion spent to date. The Minister's celebration that the number of murders is a mere 61 in three months is an insult to say the least. If the

present trend is extrapolated, we can expect about 240 murders for the year 2007, which is substantially higher than the 151 in 2001 under the UNC. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker, by my calculation it would mean that the murder rate under the PNM is substantially higher than it ever was under the UNC. Let us look at the statistics. The total number of murders for the six-year period, 1996 to 2001 was 667, at that time the UNC was in Government. Under the PNM, 2001 to 2007, as of Friday, there were a total of 1,513 murders and the six years has not finished yet, so the number of murders is more than double. Every four days three persons have been murdered and the Minister has the gall to talk about crime decreasing.

Crime has skyrocketed; it continues to be unacceptably high and no amount of PR imaginary will change that. What is required is a serious committed united attack on crime and the criminals, something it seems that Government is very scared to do or is unwilling to do. And so, as the Minister seeks to convince us that crime is going down, we have to ask if he is living in this country. Where is he living and which land is he living? Does he not know that the average citizen lives in fear at this point in time? And whilst he boasts about crime going down, the DPP says crime is going up and detection is going down.

Recently, DPP Henderson advised the nation that while the crime rate was going up, there has been a significant fall off, in crime detection and successful completion of criminal cases in court due to intimidation of witnesses and years of decay in the criminal justice system. The DPP stops just short of dealing with the assault on the criminal justice system by Members of the PNM Government.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said, we have raised the collapse in the criminal justice system continuously inside and outside Parliament and Government has studiously and consistently turned a blind eye. I have mentioned before in this Parliament and outside, the Hood Report which says that out of every 1,000 murderers only one will pay for the crime; 999 of 1,000 will go free. They will go free. The DPP also lamented the huge backlog of cases in the criminal courts, not only is justice being denied, justice delayed, you know the saying, is justice denied.

According to the annual report of the Judiciary 2005 and 2006, at the end of the 2004/2005 legal term, the backlog in the Magistrates' Court had grown from the previous year of two hundred plus thousands and it was 387,027 cases pending in the 40 Magistrates' Court in this country—at the end of the 2004/2005 legal term, so that will be July/September 2005, 387,027 cases pending in the Magistrates' Courts. By the end of the relevant period in 2005/2006, so that is the end of the legal law period last year 2006, that figure had grown to 393,360; 393,360, that is up to the end of the law term last year.

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When we come into this year, I am sure that that number has passed the 400,000, so past 400,000 cases pending in the Magistrates' Courts. There are 40 magistrates. There are 40 Magistrates' Courts with 400,000 cases pending, how can you get justice with 400,000 cases pending before 40 magistrates in this country? When will they ever be heard? When will they ever complete those matters? When will there ever be justice with a situation like that? Clearly, a responsible Government will expedite options to reduce this backlog. Instead Government has found greater priority in pursuing industrialization policies to the exclusion of the development of the administration of justice.

Mr. Speaker, their version of fixing the Judiciary involves attacking Members of the Judiciary, [*Desk thumping*] at least those who are unwilling to do their bidding.

Mr. Ramnath: Be careful, you might get warning, you know.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Mr. Speaker, the Judiciary is staff protest as well. Their idea of dealing with the Judiciary is to have them under duress. There is a significant shortage of administrative and other staff in the Judiciary. Last week we were advised—and this is carried in the *Express* on May 15—of the unfortunate prospect of the administrative staff of the Judiciary, close to boiling point over non-payment of acting allowances in some instances over two years. And so, on the one hand, Government disrespects and undermines the judges, we have heard the comments about the CJ and Justice Tiwarie and on the other hand, you are frustrating administrative staff. You are not giving the financial resources; you are not giving any kind of real support to the Judiciary and to the administration of justice in this country.

Therefore, it is no wonder the entire system has collapsed. There is a collapse in the criminal justice system in this country. Government has—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Bereaux: Not to me.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: You want to tell me 400,000 cases pending in the Magistrates' Courts before 40 Magistrates' Courts and the system has not collapsed? Where in the world would you find that? This is not a banana republic. This is where oil is above \$60 a barrel, \$75 a barrel and you can spend \$210,000 million to build a house up in La Fantasie; you can spend another \$200 million to build a tsunami stadium down there. All of this is happening and you cannot find the resources to fix the administration of justice.

In a society where there is a collapse of the justice system, then nothing else can stand. Nothing else will stand up if you do not give the support to the administration of justice because we do not live by the law of the jungle. A civilized society lives by the rule of law, it is not about the rule of the jungle who could cuff who and could bounce down whom, who could shoot who and how fast you could shoot, that is not what a civilized society is about. The pillar of a civilized society is the rule of law, and therefore, the justice system must be given the fullest support—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar:—in terms of respect, in terms of financial resources and otherwise. And so, Mr. Speaker, when they speak about Vision 2020, their Vision 2020 is empty, empty, because without justice, without a functioning system, the society will not stand. They are sowing the seeds for an even greater crisis in this nation. When we look at the priorities they have; when we look at where they are putting their funding and their resources, Government has unfortunately not chosen to deal with the manpower issue, the lack of enough judges, magistrates and support staff. Instead they are attacking the Chief Justice, simultaneously hacking away at public confidence in the administration of justice. We have seen that the *Newsday* carried \$3.25 million spent in the failed case against the Chief Justice. You know, Government could have chosen to spend that money—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Ramnath: You know, you attack the Chief Justice because he is an Indian.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar:—in terms of manpower resources for the administration of justice; in terms of the physical plan and infrastructure, the dilapidated courthouses creating new positions at approximately \$3 million could have dealt with, matters such as that. So, I asked when we look at these pieces of legislation, I want to speak with respect to the Police Service (Amdt.) Bill, and in particular—I think I just have about 15 minutes to get to those specific clauses in the proposed legislation.

Mr. Speaker, two years ago we resisted the pressures to support the parent legislation; we resisted for good reason, we said that we wanted to see changes in there. There is something very interesting now that we see Government is attempting to fix in the amendment which is very troubling and I want to know what it means, if the Minister in his winding up could tell us what it would mean

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for the status and pensions and so on for the Commissioner of Police? Clause 3 of the Police Service (Amdt.) Bill. The purpose of clause 3 and I quote from the Bill is:

"... to clarify the composition of the Police Service of Trinidad and Tobago."

When we go to clause 3, we see that it is an amendment to section 4 of the parent legislation. In the parent Act, the Police Service is defined as constituted of the offices listed in the third schedule. Clause 4 of the Bill before us then, seeks to add to those offices listed in section 4 now, the offices of the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner. What does that mean, Mr. Speaker? It means that since this parent Act was passed and proclaimed, the Police Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner have not been members of the police service; have not been legally members of the police service.

Mr. Speaker, what does it mean then? If for the past year whatever, they were not members of the police service because of the drafting, you did not include them in the schedule of offices included in the Police Service, what is their situation? We talk about sloppy drafting, that really has to take the cake that the top posts were completely left out. The highest office in the land; the highest offices in the police service were left out.

The Minister came and asked us now, to make changes with respect to the promotion procedure in the Police Service Act. I listened to him on the last occasion and I took the liberty of reading the unrevised *Hansard* of his contribution and at no time did the Minister explain why it is he was replacing what had been in that legislation with respect to an assessment centre. Why is that now being replaced by an assessment process? Let us look at this. We have seen the interference of the Executive into the business of the Judiciary; into the business of the police service; other offices in which they have no proper business. We know of their war with the Judiciary.

Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister himself had personally interfered and blocked the appointment of a public servant to the High Commission in London. I am making these points because these are examples of interference in the running of other institutions in which the Executive had no say, but nevertheless, the Executive interfered. When the parent Act was before this House as the Police Service Act, then Bill, we gave our support and we agreed to provisions which will see the establishment of an assessment centre for the promotion of police officers.

Clause 4 of this Bill seeks to change those provisions which relate to the process promoting First Division officers. So the original clause, the original provision was of an assessment centre. In the amendment, all of that is deleted, there is no mention of any assessment centre, instead now, we talk about an assessment process.

Firstly, why is there no centre? Why have you removed that provision to replace it with what you call this process because even when the centre was there, there would still be a process, but you would go through this assessment centre? There is no centre; no attempt was ever made to implement any. There is none because this Government, apart from sitting on the legislation for months, did not implement a single element of it. They did not lift a finger because they never had any intention of following through, so there is no centre. Now they want to change that.

The second question then, if there is no centre, then who is going to perform the appraisals when you come to the promotion? For the answer to that, we have to look at the new amended section 17. Under that section, that power and authority is given to a person who is to be contracted by the Commissioner of Police, a person who is to be contracted by the Commissioner of Police. So, here it is you are going to hand-pick somebody and you are going to say, you do all these appraisals for people to decide on their promotions.

So we are trying to remove curry favour, bias and political control from the police service, but we are placing a power for promotions in the hands of a person. But, Mr. Speaker, because it is more convoluted and there is evidence Government needs to look at this again, when we read the proposed amendment clause 17(6) and look at the definition of a "person", it says:

"(6) For the purpose of this section, "person" includes a corporation whether aggregate or sole, and an unincorporated body of persons ... but does not include an individual."

So a person does not include an individual.

So, the law says you are now going to contract a person and then you define person as a body corporate and so on, which is fine, we do that all the time, but why have you excluded individual? A person is an individual in the first instance, and then you could be incorporated into a body or a group that is not incorporated and so and so. Please look at that, it seems to be totally confused. But this is vague; it gives not minimum standard for the selection of this person or persons in whom you are going to give such tremendous power. Why are we removing this assessment centre?

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Mr. Speaker, you want to change that and put the power in the hand of someone or a group of individuals who we hand-pick by the Commissioner and they will be given a contract. We know how this Government operates; we have seen how this Government operates; and we have seen contracts going to friends and family. I recall my colleague from Caroni East, on the last occasion speaking about the person who was selected to select contractors for the CEPEP. So here we are having the Commissioner of Police is going to contract someone, person or group or whatever, and that person is going to do the performance appraisals and so on in order to determine appointments. What happened with the CEPEP?

My colleague from Caroni East told us a consultancy firm hired by sole selective tendering, Market Space whose principal is one Jacqui Lazarus, a PNM member and former campaign manager for the Member for Diego Martin West, they were paid \$1,938,000. How was this person chosen? We are told from the Auditor General's report sole selective tendering without board approval, in breach of tendering policy. A PNM party hack became a millionaire courtesy the PNM party. Having selected a PNM functionary, clear PNM functionary, unlike Justice Amrika Reddy who I will say, never was, has never been and is not a UNC functionary. She has never functioned and is not a UNC functionary. I state that for the record, Mr. Speaker.

Here we have a PNM functionary given this job through sole selective tendering without board approval, in breach of tendering procedure and what happens? Simple. What happens? This is exactly the same thing now that you want to put into law that the Commissioner of Police is now going to contract a person, person being a firm or company, whatever it may be that they will now appraise police officers to give them promotion.

Mr. Ramnath: That is for their friends.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Friends and family again. The very thing that you want to keep out, you are now going to put that into place by making this amendment and I say we will not support this aspect of the amendment in that Bill. We know the coalition will take place, so when it is that you selected your firm, hand-picked your PNM firm to do the CEPEP contracts, what happens? It reads like a list, the 110 or 118 contractors, 113 contractors, and the list reads of only PNM friends and family. So you have A. E. Rasolli Maintenance Service Limited, Marva Bostic as the prime person, PNM San Fernando West activist; EBC Commission of Enquiry, PNM witness; Assistant Secretary to the PNM National Women's League 2006; net total to date of \$4.4 million through those.

Hon. Member: What?

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Mr. Speaker, you have ANSA Maintenance Limited, Ainsley Matthews, San Fernando West activist. Beautification and Sanitation Company Limited, Suresh Seecharan, PNM activist.

Cut-Clean and Clear Maintenance, Kathy Ann Cardinal-Austin, PNM San Fernando West activist. Corner Stone Environmental Maintenance Company, Dane Ferguson, PNM activist. Danavin Company Limited, Alvin Reeves, San Fernando City Councillor—a councillor—*[Interruption]*

Hon. Member: What?

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar:—local government councillor—\$3 million in CEPEP contracts. Darwin Limited which created a lot of fracas in this House not too long ago one night—Darwin Limited. The principals are Darian Marcelle and Wendell Stevens. I am advised that one is a Port of Spain City Councillor as well, PNM Councillor in the Port of Spain Corporation and you want to defend friends and family. Brother-in-law! The Minister is here, I am told that one of them is the brother-in-law of the Minister of National Security in Darwin Limited. Brother-in-law of the Minister of National Security. I will give way if he wants to tell us it is not so. But, here it is *[Crosstalk]* you had a provision—

Mr. Speaker: Order!

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar:—sole selective tendering contracted it out to a firm, that is a PNM firm and you end up then with PNM friends and family getting all the contracts. Diva Enviro Limited, Prakash Persad—no relative of mine even though my name is Persad or my maiden name is Persad—a university lecturer getting contracts worth \$1.8 million in CEPEP. Mr. Speaker, I hope your law firm did not get CEPEP contracts?

Mr. Singh: The price of Swaha.

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Imagine a university lecturer. Why? Because he is the brother of High Commissioner, Manideo Persad. We go on. Environmental Enhances Limited, Horace Gordon, husband of Marilyn Gordon, former PNM Minister, CEPEP contracts \$2.8 million. Environmental Improvement Company, Charmaine Cummings, activist and chairman of one of the constituency. Enviropro Limited, John Rust, San Fernando PNM activist. GP Maintenance, St. Clair Williams, San Fernando East activist. High Place Enterprises Limited, Stanley Butcher, brother of Ken Butcher, campaign manager of Barataria/San Juan. Lardinus Limited, Perry Eastman, Diego Martin Central activist, and the list goes on. *[Interruption]* Perry Eastman, you do not know that one. Ask someone else.

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MS Community Maintenance Limited, McDonald Padmore, PNM Baratavia activist, \$2.8 million. Marryshow Services, Jennifer Marryshow, PNM Councillor. Miracle Brite Maintenance and Company Limited, Shirlyn Nickles, San Fernando East, ex-Councillor. I would not go back into the Minister's father because she says she is honouring her parents and so and so, so I will leave that to her conscience. PatCliff Industrial Services, Patrick Clifford, San Fernando East activist, dad, ex-Mayor San Fernando. And so the list goes on.

In Siparia, Roopy's Contracting Services Limited; Roopchan Balliram and Phillip Salazar, \$4.5 million in CEPEP contracts, they are both PNM Councillors in the Siparia Regional Corporation. Sarah Maintenance Company Limited, Jameel Mustapha, Nafessa's campaign manager. He gave evidence against Fuad Khan at the EBC, over \$3 million in contracts. South-West Development Agency, Beville Simmonette, activist, her dad a former General-Secretary of the PNM. Maintenance Advantage Company—that is incorrect? I will withdraw that one if it is not correct. I withdraw that one because the others are correct. The PNM Mayaro activist shot dead in 2006, Peter Marine and so it continues with these 110.

The point to close in two minutes I have left, although you did take some time for injury time when you were upbraiding my colleague from Couva South.

Mr. Ramnath: I was not here when that was—

Mrs. K. Persad-Bissessar: Mr. Speaker, the point I am making, you are now giving a commissioner by law, the power to contract someone, to select, a consult at, for the promotion and assessment exercise, they will have to do his bidding; the bidding of the persons who pull strings to get them there. So what will happen? The First Division now becomes stacked with friends of the commissioner or the politicians pulling the strings behind the scenes. The succeeding commissioner must come from the First Division too, so Government is setting the scene where they can have the line of succession for the Office of Commissioner also stacked with their hacks. There are a few things less frightening in this country where the armed security forces may be inside the pockets of the politicians.

A very senior police officer who just went on pre-retirement leave—and remember he had to be kept away from work, he was flying all over the world at the expense of taxpayers. He was an agent of the PNM based on his behaviour and his conduct. So, Mr. Speaker, I think this is a very dangerous provision and we should remove it completely. [*Desk thumping*] We should not agree with it in this package of legislation.

So as I close, Government has not demonstrated the will or the commitment to fight crime. They make all the right sounding noises, the phrases, the words, they say all of them. It is all about promises and propaganda and publicity, but at the end of day this is an election year, you have been there for six years and you are now talking about consulting people out there in the fight against crime. So what would you do? Vote you back in and give you another six years to implement.

Mr. Speaker, we say no, that this Government does not deserve to go back into office if only because of their miserable failure when it comes to the fight against crime.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

3.30p.m.

Mr. Gerald Yetming (*St. Joseph*): Mr. Speaker, in the interest of the safety and security of the people of Trinidad and Tobago, the Back Bench Opposition representing the Congress of the People will be supporting the two Bills before us particularly where our support is needed the most, the Constitution (Amdt.) Bill, 2007.

Mr. Speaker, sufficient has been said by the previous speakers about the actual Bills and the measures to deal with the unprecedented and unacceptable levels of crime in the country and the widespread insecurity of the people of Trinidad and Tobago. Safety and security are considered fundamental rights of citizens and, therefore, should be treated by any Government as a top priority, and to me, and I think the majority of citizens of this country, this Government has never treated with the safety and security of the people of Trinidad and Tobago as a top priority. Never!

It could not have been clearer by the very first act of the Prime Minister when he returned to office, that lack of priority could not have been clearer by the appointment of the first Minister of National Security, Howard Chin Lee. That set the stage, and if safety and security were the top priority of this Government, one would have expected that after six years and about \$15 billion expended by the Ministry of National Security over the last period, we would have at least had—if not in management—a better manned, better equipped, better trained police service operating out of better facilities including police stations. We certainly would not have had as we had recently, policemen having to abandon stations as happened in Carenage and St. Joseph.

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When one considers the expenditures being made by the Government in construction; the Prime Minister's residence at \$150 million to be completed in record time, the Tarouba Stadium which was never necessary, the massive construction of big buildings to house Government employees, all of which could have waited. If this Government had been interested in the safety and security of its people, the least that could have happened is that the construction resources that are now being pumped into these high-rise buildings and unnecessary expenditures could have at least been pumped into making sure that every police station in Trinidad and Tobago would have been a first-class police station in accordance with its 2020 Vision. [*Desk thumping*]

We certainly would not have been hearing about a shortage of manpower in the police service by about 1,000 men. This Government, therefore, for the past six years had not at the beginning and never in the six-year period, treated the safety and security of its people as a top priority, in addition to all it did not do and could have done with respect to the police service specifically.

The Member of Parliament for Siparia went through a host of broken promises by the Government particularly as they relate to legislation already on the books that have not yet been put into force. Mr. Speaker, even if the Government had not contributed to the high rate of inflation, if it had not contributed to the high food prices and construction costs, if it had not created as it has, the massive opportunities for theft and corruption, if it had provided water for all, if it had solved the transportation problems and provided efficient health services, and all of those things right, all would have come to nought because the citizens of the country would have felt as they feel now, that they are not being protected by the State.

Selwyn Ryan, in a commentary entitled "Paradise Lost" said:

"There is a widespread view that the PNM Government is a do-nothing Government that is soft on crime, and that it has either surrendered to the criminals or it is itself aiding, abetting, and funding criminality."

So in this election year, the Government's response now is consultations. It began its term with experimentation—whether it be Howard Chin Lee, Anaconda, Eye in the Sky—and then went into reactive interventions, then into denial, and it has now come to consultations. In the case of reactive interventions—we would not deal with the experimentation—I go back to 2005 and the Prime Minister, not in Parliament, but at a public meeting which was held by his party on the streets of

Tunapuna I believe, went to announce to a crowd according to this article in the *Sunday Guardian* April 24, 2005.

“He made the announcement to a crowd of PNM party supporters at a meeting in Tunapuna on Friday night.

This came after a public outcry for action following Thursday’s daring midday murder in Port of Spain, where gangsters pursued and fatally shot a 25-year-old gangster...”

He reacted to that shooting by saying:

““Cabinet will consider very shortly a proposal for the reintroduction of corporal punishment in T&T.””

Corporal punishment was and continues to be on the books, but the Prime Minister, at a public meeting in Tunapuna reacting to a daring murder in Port of Spain went on to announce the latest crime plan. And Dana Seetahal, S.C. Independent Senator in an article in the *Trinidad Guardian* said:

“It is a sign of a desperate man who has little new to offer when he has to resort to talk of beating people as a means of deterrence from crime.”

This is a sign of many cases of reactive interventions.

Then there have always been the denials. In fact, the current Minister of National Security in an article in the *Trinidad Express* two days later said despite a record number of murders and kidnappings so far that year, he did not believe the crime situation was “as bad as it is made out to be.” This is when crime was at it is highest. And do you remember the Minister of National Security, arriving from a trip to London and flashing a United Kingdom (UK) newspaper saying it is not so bad in Trinidad and Tobago, there is crime in the UK too, and we know about the statement by the Prime Minister on collateral damage, and the statements he made about kidnappings being orchestrated. Denial! Now in an election year we come to consultations.

In the first place, Mr. Speaker, these consultations apart from the fact they are costing a considerable amount of money, not just the consultations it is having, but the full page, full spread advertisements that have been appearing after each consultation which are not intended to go to the people to hear what they have to say, in fact the big halls you see in these consultations are a result of people being bused, PNM people, and that is in addition to the few who voluntarily attend.

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The interesting thing is that the bussed people are the very ones who are going to the microphone and making their voices heard about their deep concern of the state of crime in the country. But the consultations should not really be for the politicians to go before the people and talk for 60 minutes to say how great things are and there is now a decrease in the increase in crime, and then allow each individual 60 seconds to speak their minds. That is not consultation.

In the *Sunday Guardian* of May 13, this is what the editorial had to say:

“Evidently, the consultations around the country are organised, and advertised, more as platforms for ministers to promote policies and plans than as opportunities to hear from the public.

The consultation road shows are the centerpiece of a strategy that includes media ad campaigns to document statistical improvements in crime...”

So, the purpose for these consultations in this election year has not been lost on the population; in fact, in this election year this Government's only mission in this campaign is to go out there and try to change the minds of the majority of the population into believing that for the past four or five years the majority have been upset with the performance of the Government, and now its sole purpose in office over the next couple months is to go out there and convince the population to forget their upset of the past four to five years because everything is now good and hunky-dory.

You see it happening every morning when you turn on the radio or television, every programme in the morning you have the Ministers appearing one after the other. Minister Valley was on TV6 at 6 o'clock and by 7 o'clock he was on CNC3, and Ministers Rahael and Roberts are doing the same thing. We have never seen Government Ministers parading on television and radio as they are doing right now and it is a fact.

Mr. Valley: If they call me, what do you want me to do?

Mr. G. Yetming: They know better than we do because they have been doing polls all through the years. We have just done one. We could only afford one, Mr. Speaker, and we know what the results are. They have known for longer than we have what they need to do to win the next election and they are doing it by propaganda and statistics and we will come to statistics in a minute.

They have failed us in the area of personal and national security, they have failed us with food prices, transportation and traffic jams; and they have failed us in the provision of water, health services and education. Every area you can call,

they have failed us. They know that because their polls tell them, they do not have to hear that from me. They have also failed us with respect to waste and corruption and, in fact, the *Sunday Guardian* editorial yesterday also talked about the constant number crunching that Ministers and officials seek to accentuate the positive in this case about crime and law enforcement. They feel that by quoting statistics people will feel more secure, they feel that by quoting statistics about the level of poverty in the country—because that is what we are told now—that it is now at 17 per cent compared to 32 per cent. That is part of the propaganda. People are suffering by the day to make ends meet and by just saying that poverty is now at 17 per cent rather than 32 per cent that everybody is going to feel better about the state of the country, and by quoting the statistics about crime, that everybody is going to feel better.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deal now with a related matter. The Member for Siparia spoke a lot about a number of pieces of legislation that should have come and did not come, and I want to talk about one because in talking about this one I am dealing with crime; not murder, not kidnapping, but white collar crime.

In September 2004, the Member for Diego Martin Central came to this House and presented a Green Paper to deal with a reform of the Government's procurement regime. In August 2005, the Green Paper became a White Paper, in the Budget Statement of 2006; the Prime Minister announced that the legislation to establish this new procurement regime would have come by the fourth quarter of 2006, that did not happen. In his Budget Statement of 2007, he said that the legislation will come to Parliament in the early part of 2007, we have now crossed mid-year and that legislation has not come.

Mr. Speaker, it is not hard to want to come to the conclusion that it is a deliberate act by the Government not to bring that legislation to Parliament. [*Desk thumping*] All these 15 state enterprises that are now spending billions of dollars are doing so without any kind of serious review. There is no accountability in spite of what the Minister in the Ministry of Finance, Christine Sahadeo would try to have us believe, absolutely none, and the Government will prefer the legislation for the new procurement regime not to come so that these 15 state enterprises can continue to do what they want in the expenditure of billions of dollars.

An example of that waste—and more will come to Parliament. We will bring examples and more would come to light because we have some state agencies doing all kinds of things in the expenditure of billions of dollars, but I want to come to the Brian Lara Stadium.

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It was announced after a Cabinet meeting last week that the Brian Lara Stadium would now cost \$558 million as against the original price announced of \$275 million. That question of the current cost of the Brian Lara Stadium had been on the Order Paper, by the MP for Chaguanas for more than a year.

Mr. Singh: That was contempt of Parliament that took place.

Mr. G. Yetming: In contempt of Parliament, according to my colleague, the Member for Caroni East, that answer never came. An announcement was made at a post-Cabinet meeting last week and, therefore, it is now in the public domain that the Brian Lara Stadium will now cost \$558 million as compared to \$275 million.

Mr. Speaker, all kinds of reasons are now being advanced for the increase in cost such as: We had to move it from Union Park to Tarouba and after we moved it we had to do additional piling and what have you.

In an article in the *Trinidad Guardian* on Thursday, May 26, 2005, the announcement was made about the \$850 million sport facility for Tarouba and this is what it said in part.

“Cabinet yesterday approved an \$850 million multi-purpose sports facility to be built on farm lands in Tarouba.

A major feature of the complex is a \$275 million cricket stadium...”

Cabinet approved it, and the article went on to say:

“The original construction site was Union Park, Marabella, but because of inadequate space it has been shifted to Tarouba.”

Therefore, Cabinet knew, or when the proposal went to Cabinet for this facility in Tarouba, the decision to relocate from Marabella to Tarouba had already been made and, therefore, one would have expected that in the proposal to Cabinet to spend \$850 million, it would have factored in all the site preparations of Tarouba to come to the \$850. So, to now advance that the move from Marabella to Tarouba, and additional piling or what have you is the cause of it has got to be a very serious untruth.

This is quoting Mr. Hart of UDeCott.

“Hart said UDeCott had decided to use fixed-priced contracts in its public tendering procedures...”

So that UDeCott who was contracted by the Government to build this is saying that fixed-priced contracts be used. In fact, he went on to say:

“...there has been some resistance from the industry to that.”

So he is talking about fixed-priced contract, and he talked about going out to tender.

Of course, in this article both the Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs and Minister Christine Sahadeo, gave assurances to the national population that there will be no cost overruns according to Mr. Boynes that is why they appointed UDeCott who he said:

““As well as UDeCott has had a good history... as not having too much cost overruns.””

Mr. Speaker, in an article in the *Saturday Express*, dated May 12, two days ago this is what Mr. Hart had to say:

“Yesterday, Hart said when Boynes first announced the project, in particular the stadium in May, 2005, the estimated costs were not based on a ‘fully designed facility’ at that time.”

Could you imagine, Mr. Speaker, a proposal going to Cabinet to build a facility costing close to a billion dollars and Mr. Hart is now saying two years after the fact that when this proposal was announced to the public and in fact, when it went to Cabinet, it was not based on a fully designed facility. What absolute madness is this?

It continues:

“He said the complex is based on an entirely new design concept for Trinidad and Tobago and it is only when construction begins that the true cost can be calculated...”

Do you believe what I just said, Mr. Speaker? That this man would say that the construction of Tarouba of \$850 million is being built on a new design concept imported from where and that it is only when the construction begins that we will understand what the true cost will be. What absolute madness!

The Member for Ortoire/Mayaro has a right to shake his head partly in amazement and partly in shame that this could be happening to our money while the police in a newspaper report today are talking about lack of vehicles.

In the *Trinidad Express*, Monday May 14, police complained that there are no vehicles for patrols. So, while this madness is taking place in Tarouba, we have

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the police service which we want to help by this legislation and management techniques and practices, and what have you?

In the *Sunday Express* May 13, the same Calder Hart of UDeCott said:

“...Calder Hart said his team did not anticipate the construction of the Brian Lara stadium would end up costing taxpayers more than \$500 million.”

He did not anticipate it at all and he talks about fixed-priced contracts. He talked about going out to tender and about fixed-priced contracts and the people from the industry were objecting to that, and he was assuring the population in 2005, that was how UDeCott was going. He is now saying that he never anticipated that it was going to reach so high.

He goes on to talk about all elements were tendered. Tendered when? You see Mr. Speaker, this stadium was being designed, is being designed, and has been designed by a firm from Texas by the name of Hellmuth, Obalat and Kassabaum. It is a Texas based architectural firm with no experience in designing cricket grounds. I would believe there are many architectural firms in the world which are intimately familiar with designing cricket grounds, but Mr. Hart went to Texas without any local or even regional architectural firms invited. He went to Texas, to sole selective tender to bring this Texas firm to design this cricket ground.

And a firm, Alfa Turner, was appointed to project manage this stadium. Alfa Turner, without any request for proposal being invited from any other firm, local or otherwise—no project management firm in Trinidad and Tobago was invited to tender to submit proposal for the management of this, but Alpha Turner was.

4.00 p.m.

My understanding is that Alpha Turner broke up this stadium and packaged and farmed out their various packages to local and foreign contractors. We are not aware that any of the packages were tendered out but Turner farmed them out.

Project management firms operate on the basis of a percentage of the construction cost. As I understand it, the fee is usually 4 per cent. Apart from how Turner was selected to project manage this, are they getting 4 per cent, and at what cost? If it is on final construction cost, clearly it is not in Turner's interest to keep that down. Because, if they are getting 4 per cent of \$275 and they can get it on \$558 and they can get it on \$800, the higher they go the better. Who is keeping a check on that?

Mr. Singh: Nobody.

Mr. G. Yetming: And they cannot tell me; Minister Sahadeo or anybody cannot tell me that they are monitoring it. The very way that they were not able to monitor CEPEP. CEPEP went ahead and awarded contracts to anybody, anyhow, to be picked up by the Auditor General and they did not know what was going on? Do you think they know what was going on with these million-dollar contracts particularly where some of these untouchables are involved? [*Desk thumping*]

They cannot tell me that Minister Sahadeo could question Calder Hart or Andre Monteil or Kenneth Julien. They cannot! And I know that these numbers were called in here before, but I will call them again because apart from the relocation which I have dismissed from Marabella to Tarouba, they talk about escalating costs of material.

The Providence Stadium in Guyana was just completed, not two years ago, not three years ago, with a seating capacity of 15,000 identical to the Brian Lara Stadium, the Providence Stadium cost TT \$176 million and the Brian Lara Stadium is scheduled to cost \$558 million and counting. The \$558 million is not the final figure.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know when the next election is going to be called and I do not know whether they are going to be on that side. I promise you if they are not, when they are not, there will be a full scale enquiry into all of these major projects in Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*].

The IMF—[*Interruption*] The COP will do it alone. This took place in 2005 but it still applies. The IMF is seriously concerned—and I am quoting from an article which appeared in the *Sunday Guardian* of April 14, 2005—about the PNM's administration recent revival of a policy to create new state enterprises to execute major developments and projects. And, in fact, they went on to talk about the fact that it is because the Government wanted these state enterprises to go unhindered in the award of contracts that they did what they did. So, I am calling on the Government to bring that new procurement legislation to the Parliament. It would have come after billions would have gone through these state enterprises. When that legislation comes, I want to ask the Government, not to touch any of the provisions in the White Paper because I am aware that there is at least one major lobby to the Government to change one of the major provisions in that White Paper, and that is why it has not come because some of the major spenders in the major state enterprises are uncomfortable with one or two of the provisions in the White Paper. But I come back to crime. I spoke about the consultations taking place and the fact that the Government is on a mission to try to convince the

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population that they do not have to worry; that they should begin to feel safe and secure once more. But I did not have to go and look very far for material.

I have with me the *Guardian* of Saturday, May 12, 2007, the newspaper of two days ago. On the front page of the *Guardian*: “Valley of Death”.

Mr. Valley: That has nothing to do with me. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. G. Yetming: And on page three, “Residents live in fear.” The article is about the people of Cantaro Village in Santa Cruz.

“Within the last two weeks the village has become infamous to gang-related killings...”

And frustrated business owners were ready to pack up for fear of the criminal elements. This is two days ago. So that in spite of all the consultations and all the reassurances that they wish to give, I want to let them know that it is not just the people of Cantaro Village, but people throughout Trinidad and Tobago that are still living in fear. But in the same *Guardian* newspaper of Saturday, May 12, 2007, major headline “Man shot dead in Arima”.

“A 31 year old mechanic has been gunned down by masked men outside a bar.”

I turn the page: “Mother cries out for justice”. The Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, dealt with the justice system as part of the range of measures that we may need to take to control this crime epidemic. There is this mother appearing in one of their consultations crying out for justice and when you turn the page there is another major headline:

“Abducted school-boy afraid to attend classes”.

“A twelve-year old boy who had been abducted on his way to classes is now afraid to go back to school”.

And you turn the page and TUTTA, major headline, “We will not accept violence in schools,” and they talk about the president of TUTTA, expressing deep concern about the lack of action being taken by the Ministry of Education on school violence, all of which is part of the crime situation, the state of insecurity in the country. Students are now not even secure in school. And next to that article are pictures of young innocent children. They cannot be more than eight years old, walking the street with a headline banner, “Students walk for Peace.” They are not talking about peace in Iraq. They are talking about peace in their schools and peace in Trinidad and Tobago.

I did not have to go very far. This is two days ago and I want to let the Government know that their consultations and whatever else they do on television to try to convince this population that they should feel secure, that high prices is a thing of the past, and poverty is on the way down, it is not working.

Mr. Speaker, I refuse to believe that the majority of the people of Trinidad and Tobago will buy that propaganda in this Trinidad and Tobago today. The fact is that more Trinidadians and Tobagonians today, are being murdered every year since this administration took office and, unfortunately, by their inaction fewer people are being brought to justice. Reported murders in 2006 went up by 150 per cent over 2001. To date 1,700 persons have been murdered. Death involving firearms have increased since 2000 and, in fact, in a World Bank Report on crime in the Caribbean, it highlighted the fact that Trinidad and Tobago is the worst case for growth of murder by firearms.

Mr. Speaker, crime and violence are not limited to a few criminal gangs. It is affecting families everywhere. When one talks about domestic violence cases, stolen vehicles, in every area there has been an increase but while that is taking place, Mr. Speaker, the police service has been eroded at all levels, where even now a teenager with a cellphone and a gun is considered to be better equipped than the average policeman on the street. And that is not an Opposition exaggeration, because, in fact, the Member for Diego Martin West, in his contribution when he started last Wednesday, said and I quote: "In many instances some of the criminal nests are better managed than some elements in the police service."

And he is absolutely correct. So that the police service has been allowed to be eroded at all levels and whether it is with respect to the state of police stations— Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the complement of police officers is short by 1,000.

In 2006, 171 recruits were turned out. Even without considering the attrition rate now, it will take more than six years at the current rate of turning out of officers to fill that big hole and if we take the current rate of attrition, that hole will never be filled if we allow the Government to continue to treat with the filling of positions as they are at the moment.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the speaking time of the hon. Member has expired.

Motion made, that the Hon. Member's speaking time be extended by 30 minutes. [*Mr. G. Singh*]

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. G. Yetming: Mr. Speaker, I thank you and Members, for extending my time. If this Government had considered the safety and security of its people as a top priority, then one would have expected that with the same speed with which they have moved to bring in labourers from abroad to build at a rapid rate many of these high-rise buildings and so forth, that they would have used the same speed to do some innovative work in turning out more than the 171 recruits that they try to turn out every year. One would have expected that they would not have allowed a shortage of 1,000 officers in the police service to continue for the length of time that it has, and in instances where an arrest is made, the court and the judicial system are woefully equipped to see a case through to a just conclusion. The Member for Siparia, spent a fair amount of time on that, and so will we.

Mr. Speaker, the changes in our society with respect to the level of criminal activity, the type of criminal activity, the trust of the public in the police service and the other protective services, and the erosion of confidence in the sitting Government to do anything to turn those trends back are having an immeasurable impact on economic activity, on the entrepreneurial class, on the brain drain and on our international reputation. And all we may discuss and debate and the billions of dollars that are being spent by this Government, our citizens and many of the international agencies about are not at all reassured about the state and safety of this country.

In a recent independent survey conducted in Central Trinidad, reported in the *Business Express*, 81 per cent of the business people said they were very dissatisfied with the Government's handling of the crime problem; 97 per cent felt that the inefficient police service was a serious contributing factor; 99 per cent felt poor Government policies are a factor; over one-third of the businesses, 41 per cent, said they would shut down or sell off their businesses if crime continues at the current rate and the little business people in Cantaro said the same from the article I quoted of two days ago, Mr. Speaker. International agencies continue to publish figures showing that our environment for competitiveness in business has deteriorated significantly in the past five years and corruption and crime are major factors. No consultation, no single PR initiative, no one-time purchase of any piece of equipment or any short-term spending increase will solve what is an endemic and chronic failure to maintain law and order by this Government.

What is desperately required is an action plan against crime consisting of a multilevel approach, blending immediate changes in legislation and funding, overhauling of the systems and facilities of recruitment, training in management

and development of all the protective services and initiatives to restore trust between the police and the communities to protect, as well as to remove built-in incentive for crime and to redirect the energies of our people to more positive and productive outlets.

Mr. Speaker, we do not believe that crime simply happens in a universe outside of Government control and independent of any accountability on the part of Government. Rather, we believe that policy development must be on a more modern understanding of managing crime and that managing crime is a science and a discipline that has been developed over decades. Government, with the political will and competence to implement the methods to make a difference in the levels and types of crime that occur in the society, the people's safety and security is not a matter of global trends outside of control. We can deter crime, we can restore trust. Criminals are not mysterious people unknown to us and beyond our capability to control. We can convict and we can rehabilitate. Control of crime and the provision of national security for everyone comes down to leadership and political will. And certainly a lack of leadership is when there are policemen working in dilapidated police stations with crumbling floors and no toilet facilities where, in the middle of the night they have got in at least a couple of cases to abandon post.

A lack of leadership is when you use the protective services to intimidate people who are protesting as is their democratic right, for better roads, for water, and what have you. A lack of leadership is when these people are brutalized as happened in Barrackpore, and when they leave communities and villages vulnerable, when they sleep at nights in their humble conditions.

A lack of leadership is when Government will launch a million dollar public relations campaign to fight crime and use statistics as they are doing that are meant solely to mislead the population. But as I said before, the population will not buy it. [*Crosstalk*] You are on a campaign! Statistics and lies!

Mr. Speaker, the protection of our people, our mothers, fathers and our children and keeping them safe is a matter of leadership and the political will to enforce the law.

Last Friday, the Congress of the People, launched a document and it is now in the public domain that deals with 100 plus steps to a safer Trinidad and Tobago. There will be many similarities in those 100 plus steps with what the Government might be contemplating. There will be many similarities between what we launched last Friday, and what any other political party will produce simply

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because I am sure we would have all consulted the same research from abroad, universities and otherwise, we would have consulted with the same crime busters and their successes and we would have built on their experiences. So, it would not be surprising that much of what we produced and launched last Friday, would be identical or similar to what others would do and are attempting to do. The difference is in the people that will execute these steps; the difference will be in the priorities that we, a Congress of the People government, will apply in the executing of these steps.

Some of the initiatives and some of the steps outlined would deal with helping the police service recover from the chronic neglect that they have been subjected to, particularly over the past five years. And whether it is in an accelerated programme for the renovating and where necessary, the rebuilding of police stations to bring them into not 2020, but for us, a 2010 state; whether it is renewing and increasing the fleet of vehicles so that stations are not without transport to get to crime scenes in a very quick and expeditious manner; whether it is in providing officers with better protective gear and security equipment and whether it is increasing the number of officers recruited and trained and doing so in a fashion that will fill that void, that shortfall of 1,000 officers within a very short time frame using whatever resources we can command; whether it is equipping the police service with better tools for fighting crime and giving them a more up-to-date training and providing them with tools to utilize more modern technologies, including global positioning systems for tracking the location of vehicles and people; instituting a modern training academy for officers to acquire new skills and to deal with the new science of crime fighting.

We certainly will be supporting the police service to focus their skills where they can make a difference by hiring civilian staff to take care of general administrative duties, instead of wasting officers' time on administrative duties rather than on crime fighting and protecting citizens and allowing officers to get more specialized training so that they can better support the policing process and building people management which is partly what we are seeking to do by the legislation that we have, and crisis management training so they can defuse difficult situations and help to avoid the use of force. And instituting partnership programmes to build more cooperative relationships with communities so that the public will learn to trust police and share information to solve crimes. And they may say, that all of those things they are aware of, but why after six years none of it has worked.

Mr. Speaker, as I had said, it is not that these things are new things that are now being discovered. Our approach would also deal with solutions that would be guided by the knowledge that 40 per cent of the crime today which is committed by persons who have already been through the prison system. That means that two out of every five crimes are committed by repeat offenders and yes, they know that. They have those statistics, but ask them what they are doing about it. They have been doing nothing to encourage and to ensure that our prison system is reforming prisoners and it is not just creating criminals. We will institute rehabilitation programmes for offenders ensuring that upon release from jail they have enough options for earning an honest income and they have learnt social skills like anger management and communication, so that they can function in the society without having to resort to crime.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the sitting of the House is suspended for tea and will resume at 5.00 p.m.

4.30 p.m. *Sitting suspended.*

5.00 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Mr. G. Yetming: Mr. Speaker, just before we took the tea break, I had indicated that the Congress of the People had, last Friday, launched the document entitled, *100-Plus Steps to a Safer Trinidad and Tobago* and that it covered matters that will deal with the chronic neglect of the police service; not just the physical side of things, but also training, facilities and taking care of repeat offenders.

The Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, in closing her contribution to this debate, brought out some of the points I will repeat here. I repeat them only to put them in the context of the document we have just issued. I would just add that the Member for Pointe-a-Pierre is a part of the team that helped put this plan together. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker, in that document, we speak of the plan not to use policemen as prosecutors unless they possess the required legal qualifications, and to have officers maintain law and order outside the courts. We will divert cases for petty and non-violent crimes out of the court system and into proper criminal mediation facilitated by mediation experts. We speak of the establishment of a ministry of justice affairs, separate from the Office of the Attorney General; the inclusion of representatives from all stakeholders to advise the Minister; having the Minister report to Parliament on measurable targets and account for their achievement or failure.

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We speak of reducing wait times to hear cases by establishing a remand yard court and, instead of transporting prisoners to the Magistrates' Courts, have a magistrate go to the Remand Yard, to the prisoners, and have the status of the matters heard there. We speak of removing the backlog by diversifying the courts and that specialized matters should be directed to the Family Court or to a juvenile court.

You will recall the Acting Chief Justice Roger Hamel-Smith made a suggestion of moving traffic offences out of the courts and let the transport authority deal with them. That certainly is something that we intend to do. The Member for Pointe-a-Pierre spoke about having at least one other forensic science centre in Tobago, if not others in Trinidad also.

We speak of preventing young offenders becoming older, hardened criminals by dealing with them separately in court and in youth detention. This will prevent their exposure to more experienced and hardened criminals in the regular prison system. We speak of engaging other groups in society to help support people and give them options other than crime and dealing specifically with the NGOs and the private sector and, certainly, the community-based and face-based organizations.

Mr. Speaker, I did say there were going to be a lot of similarities between what we have outlined in that document that we have now made public and what the Government might say they are doing or contemplating. The difference, of course, will be the people that will have to make those things happen and the priorities that we will assign to the various initiatives.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, critical to all of this is the fact that the people, the leadership will not allow any criminal group or organization to gang up on the State; [*Desk thumping*] people who will block the criminals from all fronts, who will restrict their access to state resources—laugh at that one, Member for Laventille East/Morvant—who will ensure that the protective services can outnumber them and who will ensure that our justice system can pursue, capture, charge and prosecute them. [*Desk thumping*]

Our approach will stifle the criminal elements at every turn. Our approach will make it abundantly clear that things have changed and that the Government is no longer their ally. [*Desk thumping*] We will not allow the people and the State to be held captive by criminals and the criminals must be aware that we will find them, we will arrest them, we will prosecute them and we will jail them.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of National Security (Sen. The Hon. Martin Joseph): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let me first of all thank all Members who participated in the debate: the Member for Princes Town, the Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, my own Member for Diego Martin West, the Minister of Housing, the Member for Siparia and, finally, the Member for St. Joseph.

In responding to some of the issues raised, I will be guided—and I guess we all will be—by a comment he made that this is an election year. As a result, what we see and what we heard this afternoon has to be taken within the context of it being an election year. I propose not to treat with the electioneering that took place this afternoon, but to deal with some of the issues raised.

I do not know if the Member for St. Joseph realizes that, in part of the comments he made this afternoon, he was in some way at loggerheads with a position taken by his leader on a previous occasion. I think it is necessary for me to put it on the record because it is the first time I am now saying who is the person who indicated to us that the police service cannot be transformed. When we first entered into discussion, the hon. Member for St. Augustine disagreed and said that the police service cannot be transformed, so that the list of measures—

Mr. Yetming: He meant by you.

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: Well, he did not say that. The list of measures you have now articulated clearly is at variance with the—when I hear what you are going to do with respect to the police service, the reform, whatever you are going to call it—position taken by your leader that the police service cannot be transformed.

Mr. Speaker, let me also indicate, from the outset, that a comment was made by the Member for Siparia, I think, endorsed by the Member for St. Joseph, with respect to the Government's strategy and approach to firearms being employed or not being employed. Very early in our new term, law enforcement indicated to the Executive that the question of drugs and guns must be dealt with in a way in which measures were put in place to reduce, minimize or eradicate the inflow of drugs and guns into the country. They said it made no sense to put measures in place to get the guns off the street and we could not stem the inflow of drugs and guns at the same time. As a responsible government responding to that major concern expressed, it was necessary for us to put measures in place to stem the inflow of drugs and guns.

So, Mr. Speaker and hon. Members, the approach with respect to the purchase of the various assets—the question of the 360-degree radar system, the question

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of the purchase of the OPVs, the fast patrol boats, the interceptors, et cetera, are all designed to provide this country with some measure of protection to reduce the inflow of drugs and guns. So when I hear comments and criticisms being made about the priorities of the Government being wrong, nothing could be further from the truth.

But more importantly, while a couple of them quoted from the very same document that I spoke to when I introduced the Bill, that is, the Joint Report by the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime and Latin American and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank Crime and Violence and Development: Trends, Cost and Policy Options in the Caribbean, it points out—and the Member for Siparia asked who wanted to read the 200-page document and I suggested that all she had to do was to look at the executive summary.

In the executive summary, the key messages and recommendations from the report include—and it indicated that the same position this Government took, that the central cause of criminal activity—not just that—we were only dealing with Trinidad and Tobago—was the question of drugs and guns, and that governments had to find ways and means of stemming the inflow of drugs and guns, not just into Trinidad and Tobago, but also the Caribbean.

All the IMF did was to confirm a conclusion that we had drawn and as a result put measures in place to treat with it. We were on the right track, so it pains me when I hear, in talking about the strategy with respect to Government spending, that our priorities are wrong; that we are spending taxpayers' money with respect to radar systems, spy equipment, airships, et cetera, designed, Mr. Speaker and hon. Members, to deal with it.

We all know it takes only five or seven minutes in a fast boat from Venezuela to here. That is the challenge we are facing and, as a result, the strategy being used by the Government as they relate to ensuring that law enforcement is provided with the kind of assets critical to the success of the fight against crime and criminal activity in this country and, by extension, the rest of the Caribbean. I just thought I should put that in perspective.

While we are on that, the hon. Member for Siparia took the opportunity to use this same report to put on record something that could not be further from the truth. She talked about nobody responding to Vernon Paul. Mr. Speaker, I am almost sure that I came to this House, if not the other place and talked about the fact that not only did the police try to investigate the allegations made by Vernon Paul, but Vernon Paul refused to provide the kind of information needed. [*Desk thumping*]

They went to Venezuela. He refused to come here. The entire gamut was followed and, at the same time, you still find yourself—the Member for Siparia and Leader of the Opposition—indicating that the Government and the police did nothing to respond to the question. Again, Mr. Speaker and hon. Members, I am guided by the fact that we are saying that we are in an election year.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Siparia also gave the impression that the Bills were passed in April 2005 and proclaimed in January 2006 and nothing happened. Again, I indicated when I was piloting this Bill that we had to put measures in place to make sure that the legislation was fully operational. As early as July 01, the Police Commissioner will—there is a six-month period between the proclamation of the legislation and it being fully implemented—it is in showing that the legislation cannot be fully implemented that we realized that there were some loopholes. We realized that there were some measures that needed to be firmed up. It is as a result of the work that had been done since the passage of the legislation and the proclamation that we are here today to make sure that we cover all bases as they relate to ensuring we have the legislation that can work.

We restructured the Homicide Bureau of Investigation—increased it from 47 to 125. We established the Homicide Prevention Working Group designed to address some of the issues, especially as they relate to gang and drug-related homicides. It is as a result of that, we started to see an improvement in 2006 and we are continuing to see that improvement. We do not jimmy statistics. All the Government does is to report on statistics that are provided by the police and one of the reasons why homicides are used as a barometer is that it is one of the most measurable form of criminal activity that is used in all jurisdictions.

The hon. Member for Siparia said, on the basis of a projection, if we continue, what would happen. It was Members on that side who made the prediction that we were going to pass 400-plus homicides in 2006, almost as if it was something that they wanted to achieve. It was not achieved and it is not going to be achieved in 2007 and you are going to see a reduction on the basis of measures being taken by law enforcement.

We established an Incidents Coordinating Centre. We addressed deficiencies in the areas of performance appraisal systems, the promotion system, the purpose of the amendments before us, the police complaints process. We are increasing the strength of the police service. Yes, the hon. Member talked about a deficiency. At the last count, there was a shortage of 1,700-plus members in the police service

Constitution (Amdt.) Bill
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and as a result of that, measures are being put in place to enhance that. But without proper management systems in place, Mr. Speaker, doing all the other things will still not give us the kind of results we want to achieve.

Modernizing our police service, which this legislation will allow us to do, will help us to move quickly to put things in place. For example, we will recruit approximately 500 new police officers in 2007—double the batch; from 250 to 500. We will also, by August of this year—in August we will have 250 and, as I said, we will double that by another 250. [*Interruption*] It takes six months for proper training, Member for Siparia, and we are not going to force train them. We have 315 regular, part-time SRPs who have been recruited and have started their assignment. An additional 322 will commence training in the next four to six weeks.

We have established the 555, which is now serving as a partnership with law enforcement in our fight against crime. The policing for people with the model stations, designed to enhance law enforcement at the community level, and we have already identified five police station districts where that is taking place.

The Special Anti-Crime Unit Crime Academy: increased training in forensic awareness and crime scene management, investigative interviewing, court familiarization and crime scene investigation. We are restructuring the Forensic Science Centre. With respect to equipment and infrastructure, we have completed repairs and refurbishment to all 51 police stations that are not earmarked for construction and, Mr. Speaker, hon. Members, we have identified—the Member for St. Joseph talked about ways in which we could increase construction of police stations—and we intend to do that—because we have gone through dealing with local contractors. I do not now need to say anymore. As a result of that we have encountered a tremendous amount of hardships.

There were five police stations that were supposed to be completed in 2006. Every month it will be next month. There are 17 police stations that are on the cards to be constructed and, as I have indicated on previous occasions, this Government will not be embarrassed. We will find ways and means of increasing the construction of those police stations.

With respect to vehicles, this year we intend to procure 300 purpose-built police vehicles and we will ensure that the police service continues to be provided with the means by which it can enhance and improve its ability to provide this country with law enforcement. I have said on previous occasions that the transformation is not superficial; it is built to last. It is going into the nuts and

bolts of the police organization, and the legislation before us, Mr. Speaker, will help law enforcement to be able to reach that level.

The Member for Siparia raised the question of why we are moving from an assessment centre to an assessment process. We realize that the term “assessment centre” may have been construed as a location or building although it was always meant to refer to a process. The US and other jurisdictions use the term “centre” to refer to the process and we took the opportunity to amend the Police Service Act to ensure that there was no ambiguity in understanding the process for promotion and the process will be subject to parliamentary approval of the selection of commissioner.

The Member for Siparia also raised the concern about the Government putting mechanisms in place so that the Commissioner of Police could ensure that favouritism, et cetera—we have already passed legislation that calls for the appointment of the commissioner and deputy commissioner to be approved by the Parliament, so we have already put measures in place to safeguard some of the very same concerns.

The Member for Princes Town raised the question of SRP officers who were not selected for contract. According to the information I have, 58 SRPs have not been recommended for absorption based on the findings of their psychological evaluation and, in one case, also the medical examination. These officers will no longer be employed on a full-time basis, effective April 01, 2007. However, the option of part-time employment will be made available to them. Two have abandoned their post; one officer has resigned; one officer has retired; three officers are on suspension; three officers are yet to complete the psychological evaluation; one officer has refused to complete the psychological evaluation and one officer is on extended sick leave effective February 2006. That it is the state of play as it relates to those SRPs who were not considered for absorption into the complete police service.

Mr. Speaker, I would be here for a long period if I attempted to respond to all of the concerns raised by hon. Members on the other side. With these few words, I beg to move.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole House.

House in committee.

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Clauses 1 to 4 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 5.

Question proposed, That clause 5 stand part of the Bill.

Miss Lucky: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Bill be amended as follows:

In paragraph (d), by deleting the words "as a" in subclause (d) and substituting words "on dismissal in";

In subsection (8), by deleting paragraph (f).

5.30 p.m.

The second aspect was with respect to paragraph (d). I put subsection (8) but that should really read:

In paragraph (d), by deleting paragraph (f).

That deals with "on resignation". I am not sure if anybody on the other side could explain to me why "on resignation" has been included. That would suggest, to me, that the Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner could forward his resignation, but that the Police Service Commission may terminate. In other words, to me, if the Commissioner of Police or the Deputy Commissioner wants to resign, he tenders his resignation and that is it. I do not understand why it is now being included. If I understand then I am prepared to withdraw, but I do not understand. I am asking if we can withdraw that.

Mr. Chairman: Delete it.

Miss Lucky: Much obliged.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 6.

Question proposed, That clause 6 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. Chairman: There is an amendment that has been circulated.

Sen. Joseph: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that clause 6 be amended as follows:

Delete, and substitute the following:

Section 136 amended	6. Section 136 of the Constitution is amended -
	(a) in subsection (15) by inserting after the words “a Service Commission” the words “other than the Police Service Commission”; and
	(b) in subsection (16) by inserting the words “apply to” the words “the Police Service Commission.”

Mr. Chairman: Member for Princes Town, do you have an amendment for clause 6?

Mr. Panday: I withdraw it at this stage and bring it at the appropriate time.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 6, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Preamble approved.

Question put and agreed to, That the Bill, as amended, be reported to the House.

House resumed.

Bill reported, with amendment.

Question put, That the Bill be now read the third time.

The House voted: Ayes: 29

AYES

Valley, Hon. K.

Manning, Hon. P.

Rowley, Hon. Dr. K.

Imbert, Hon. C.

Robinson-Regis, Hon. C.

Beckles, Hon. P.

Rahael, Hon. J.

Roberts, Hon. A.

Bereaux, H.
James, Hon. E.
Hart, Hon. E.
Callender, Hon. S.
Seukeran, Hon. D.
Hinds, Hon. F.
Khan, F.
Achong, L.
Williams, E.
Rafeeq, Dr. H.
Persad-Bissessar, Mrs. K.
Sharma, C.
Partap, H.
Nanan, Dr. A.
Panday, S.
Baksh, N.
Moonilal, Dr. R.
Singh, G.
Yetming, G.
Ramsaran, M.
Lucky, Miss G.

Question agreed to.

Bill accordingly read the third time and passed.

The Minister of Trade and Industry and Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Kenneth Valley): Could I record the Government's appreciation? Mr. Speaker, I think we need to put on record our appreciation for the support given by both sides of the Opposition—*[Interruption]*

Mr. Panday: To the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

Hon. K. Valley:—for this important Bill. I thank you for your support.

POLICE SERVICE (AMDT.) BILL

Order for second reading read.

The Minister of National Security (Sen. The Hon. Martin Joseph): Thank you very much Mr. Speaker. I beg to move,

That a Bill to amend the Police Service Act, 2006, be now read a second time.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole House.

House in committee.

Clauses 1 to 4 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 5.

Question proposed, That clause 5 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. Chairman: There is an amendment to clause 5.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Mr. Chairman, I expressed my concern with the method by which the Commissioner would cause a person to be contracted and we had discussed an amendment to that. We have asked the draftsmen to put our concern in writing.

Mr. Chairman: Do you have the amendment?

Mr. Valley: It went out for circulation.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Do you want to read it?

Mr. Chairman: Read the amendment. Where are you on clause 5?

Mr. Valley: It is on page 7, clause 5, 17(A)(1):

“In the proposed section 17(A)(1) after the words ‘Commissioner may,’ insert the words, ‘in accordance with the procedure prescribed,’”

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: That is okay. Why are you using “may” instead of “shall”? Would it not be mandatory?

Mr. Valley: May means shall.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Why not use "shall" and mandate that this procedure be followed?

Miss Lucky: I support "shall".

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: After the "Commissioner" we have to delete "may" and insert "shall" and after "shall" then we have the comma.

Mr. Chairman: Delete "may" insert "shall" add a comma and insert the following words: "in accordance with the procedure prescribed" and insert a comma.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: I see the draftsman is a little concerned about where we are putting this comma.

Mr. Chairman: The comma comes after "shall".

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: I believe it should be after "shall" and before "cause".

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clauses 6 to 8 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 9.

Question proposed, That clause 9 stand part of the Bill.

Miss Lucky: Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment. I can make the amendment less clumsy than I proposed and it would have the same effect. In clause 9 delete the word "application" where it appears at the end of subsection (2) and delete word the "application", which appears twice. Insert the words "from the date of the certificate of analysis". It will read:

"...within three months of the date of the certificate of analysis."

Rather than deleting the entire clause to rewrite it.

Mr. Chairman: If you go back to the amendment you have in clause 9(2):

"The Police Service shall destroy the analysis of a fingerprint impression..."

Is the word "if" missing?

Miss Lucky: Put "where". Disregard what—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Hinds: The amendment is suggesting that the police destroy the analysis.

Miss Lucky: No. What I have done is—based on the fact that I think it would not have to be an internal procedure as to what is done and the law that suggests, based on the DNA, that you cannot mandatorily or legally keep the fingerprint impression, as with DNA—is I am now suggesting that in this amendment, instead of the three months' time limit being within three months from the date of the application, I would like it to be three months from the date of the certificate of analysis.

I had made two recommendations before but I agreed, Member for Laventille/East Morvant, you had made the point that there may be some legal complications and it would be an internal mechanism that could be put in place and I have accepted that, but my concern is it should not be within three months from the application. I am asking that the word "application" as it appears at the end, be deleted and insert the words: "from the date of the certificate of analysis".*[Interruption]* The certificate of analysis would have a date.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Is this the first time we are finding the words "certificate of analysis"? Is it referred to elsewhere?

Miss Lucky: This is the first time in this section. They do not say certificate of analysis.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Nowhere else is it mentioned. I do not have the parent Act, so I do not know.

Miss Lucky: I have the parent Act but this was not a section before in the parent Act.

Mr. Valley: Agreed, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: I have a difficulty. On the one hand, you are speaking of a fingerprint impression and we are speaking about a certificate of analysis. I am asking whether we referred to certificate of analysis anywhere in the legislation, if not, we will now have to define what we mean. I understand the point about the date, but I am concerned if it is the first time these words are being mentioned—

Mr. Valley: No. It is above. It talks about:

“The Police Service shall destroy the analysis of the fingerprint impression where the person, who made the application under subsection (1), fails to collect the analysis within three months from the date of the certificate of analysis.”

It is the same analysis we are talking about.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: What are you destroying, the certificate or the analysis? You are destroying the analysis, so what happens to the certificate? Are you keeping the certificate?

Mr. Hinds: That is the question.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Are you keeping the certificate? It is not making sense. You are speaking of an analysis on the one hand, and on the other you are talking about a certificate. You destroy the analysis, but what do you do with the certificate? Are you destroying the certificate?

Mr. Valley: It is one and the same.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Is the analysis or the certificate one and the same? Obviously not.

Mr. Valley: What it is saying is that what they are destroying is the analysis of the fingerprint impression.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: I agree.

Mr. Valley: Why do we not take it out and say: "from the date of the analysis"? Take out "certificate of analysis." That is what is complicating everything. Say: "from the date of the analysis." What we are destroying is the analysis. Perhaps, there is no certificate. Mr. Chairman, we would delete the words: "of the application" and include the words: "from the date of the analysis." There is no mention of any certificate.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: This is the point I am making, if it is not mentioned anywhere else. When a person applies for an analysis—what is an analysis?

Miss Lucky: If I might be of some assistance—

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Sorry, if the person collects—the analysis remains when the person collects the certificate? You are still destroying the analysis.

Mr. Valley: The analysis is the written document, which you are describing as the certificate.

Mr. Hinds: No. The analysis is a process.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Analysis is the process and at the end of the process you issue a certificate. You need to destroy both where it is not collected.

Mr. Chairman: If you want to keep something, why are you destroying both?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: No. This is to keep nothing.

Mr. Chairman: I thought you had argued that you should keep something.

Miss Lucky: During my contribution I was asking for this level of clarification. An analysis, to me, is the scientific method. In other words, you are analyzing the fingerprint. The certificate of analysis would be the results. In other words when you go, you get the certificate. What was explained to us, and understandably so, was that the Minister said that there were logistical problems in keeping all these certificates of all these people who may not have collected it. You wanted to destroy the paper. Once we could sort out what is the intention, in terms what should be kept and not kept, we could sort this out in no time.

Mr. Manning: You want to destroy the certificate, but you want to keep the analysis.

Miss Lucky: Exactly, so that you would always have the analysis forming some kind of database, like a DNA bank.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: I beg to differ because when you read it, before the word "certificate" was introduced, the intention was very clear that what you wanted to destroy was the analysis. Now we have introduced a second element, which is the result of the analysis.

Mr. Chairman: The Member for Pointe-a-Pierre wanted to keep something.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Yes, but I think it has changed.

Miss Lucky: That was the point. If it is that you wanted to keep the analysis and destroy the certificate, because that was causing the logistical problem of storage, that was one issue in the section.

The other thing was the time frame of the three months. The three months caused a problem because three months from the date of application—maybe the machine broke down and it is not your fault—which is from the date the analysis was available. That is what this section is meant to capture. We could sort it out easily.

Mr. Manning: The certificate is based on an analysis that has been done. There is a difference between the two. Therefore, what do you want to keep or destroy?

Miss Lucky: That is a matter for the Government's policy. My view was to keep the analysis—*[Interruption]*

Mr. Panday: My view is to destroy the analysis.

Miss Lucky:—to form part of a databank.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: If you are now keeping this analysis you are starting to look for constitutional majorities.

Miss Lucky: Suppose you get bad character.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: That fingerprint analysis is something that is private and confidential and you have taken it from me. Therefore, if you are saying: "I am going to create a database with it", you have to get a special majority. That is how you had it first: the analysis shall be destroyed. That was the first phrasing. The word "certificate" has not been introduced so we need to knock out both.

Mr. Hinds: No.

Mr. Sharma: Let me make a suggestion. The certificate has a shelf-life of six months. After six months it becomes null and void. Even the analysis has a shelf-life of six months.

Mr. Panday: No, no, no.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Who gives it that shelf-life? The analysis does not have a life.

Mr. Sharma: You cannot use the same one. You have to get a new one.

Mr. Hinds: That is administrative, not legal.

Mr. Manning: You said if we keep the analysis you now need a special majority to pass it. What would be your position on that?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: I would have to consult with my colleagues.

Mr. Manning: Consult because I suspect we need to keep the analysis.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Why did we bring—before your intervention. You said:

"The Police Service shall destroy the analysis of a fingerprint..."

This is what was brought.

Mr. Manning: As we discuss the matter, it is becoming clearer.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: I have no problems with a database being kept.

Mr. Manning: That is really what it is. You are keeping the database, but all the paper, you destroy that.

Mr. Valley: Why do we not leave it as is?

Mr. Manning: No, Ken, do it right because you are going to come back to Parliament with that. They will strike up things in the court. That is appeal and money and all kinds of thing.

What we ought to do is to find a form of words that preserves the analysis and destroys the certificate. If we do that, according to the Member for Siparia, we need a special majority to do it; right or wrong? Is that the argument?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: That is my understanding.

Mr. Sharma: If the certificate has a six months shelf-life.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: We are not worrying about that, we are worrying about the analysis. You need a special majority for that. That is what the Member had initially. She said database. I supported her on that. Do not destroy it. Anytime you lift a man's fingerprint on a crime scene you could run it through that database.

Mr. Manning: Could I say something else, please? If we are of the view, as indeed we appear to be, that we should keep the analysis and destroy the certificate, then to be able to do that we need a special majority and we need to make a further amendment to the law.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Correct.

Mr. Sharma: Do you all agree to that or not?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: I have no difficulty with it. I have to see the wording. I support it in principle.

Mr. Manning: I want to suggest that we break for 10 minutes to find a form of words because we also have to put a clause that circumvents sections 4 and 5.

Mr. Sharma: Before we go I want to make one recommendation.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: We could treat with the others and come back to that.

Mr. Sharma: On the same one, in case you are going to—I suggest we add the words "fails to collect." The applicant will not necessarily know when it is at the station.

Secondly, can we incorporate where it can be delivered by the police?

Mr. Hinds: What?

Mr. Sharma: The certificate.

Mr. Hinds: Do you think it is a fast food outlet or a pizza shop?

Mr. Sharma: They are delivering channa and roti.

Mr. Chairman: Are we doing the regulations this evening?

Mr. Valley: Yes.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: Not today.

Mr. Valley: Are we not doing the regulations today?

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: No. That was never indicated to us. We were never told that we were doing the regulations today, with due respect.

Mr. Sharma: The difficulty, oftentimes when an applicant goes to the police station, is that the person who has responsibility may not be there. As a result he or she cannot collect it. Can we incorporate where it could be collected and/or delivered? For instance the applicant pays \$50. When the results come it can be easily put to TTPost and have it delivered. Oftentimes you go to the police station—

Mr. Valley: He has to collect at the station where he took the—

Mr. Sharma: If it is delivered by TTPost, he can sign for it the same way. The difficulty is he may go to the police station on five occasions and the officer with responsibility—

Mr. Valley: What is the problem with going back to collect it?

Mr. Sharma: The officer may not be there and the three months—what is the difficulty in delivering it? It costs \$1 to deliver by TTPost.

Mr. Manning: I suggest we break for 10 minutes and let us look at the details.

Mr. Chairman: The sitting of the committee would be suspended. I would give the Minister the opportunity to report progress and then we would break for 10 minutes.

House resumed.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

The Minister of National Security (Sen. The Hon. Martin Joseph): Mr. Speaker, I beg to report a Bill to amend the Police Service Act, is being considered in committee. I report that progress has been made but there is still an outstanding matter to complete.

POLICE SERVICE (AMDT.) BILL

Mr. Speaker: The Minister having reported progress on the Bill before us, we will suspend the sitting for 15 minutes to allow consideration by the draftsmen of clause 9 and we will resume at 6.15 p.m.

6.00 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

6.15 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Mr. Speaker: I understand that you need some more time.

Hon. K. Valley: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: Can I suggest 6.45 p.m. or 7.00 p.m.?

Hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Too long?

Mr. Panday: Only when necessary.

Hon. Members: 10 minutes.

Mr. Speaker: Let us be sure. Take an extra 10 minutes—6.40 p.m. We will come back at 6.40 p.m. The sitting is further suspended until 6.40 p.m.

6.17 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

7.04 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Trade and Industry and Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Kenneth Valley): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to Wednesday, May 16, 2007 at 1.30 p.m.

Dr. Moonilal: What are we going to do then?

Hon. K. Valley: We would be completing the Police Service (Amdt.) Bill and we would do the regulations.

Mr. Panday: I humbly submit that we should postpone this for a week later and we should look at the Supplemental Police Act, Chap 50:02. That is the estate police. If we are going, we should open the net to complete them and bring in the defence force and the cadet force. If we are going we must go the full run.

Mr. Speaker: That is a matter you should take up behind the Chair.

Adjournment

Monday, May 14, 2007

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar: If we are coming on Wednesday, with respect to these, we would be very happy if we can see the proposed amendments. They have been based on my recommendation to your good self. We would like to see it before we come on Wednesday, if it is possible. We can deal with the others, so this will be a start.

Mr. Speaker: Okay. Are you dealing with matters on the adjournment? No.

Mr. Singh: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs is not here so it will be deferred until such time as he is here; the matter dealing with the car racing industry.

Question put and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 7.07 p.m.

WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION

Medical Data Caribbean Limited

(Details of)

73. Mr. Ganga Singh (*Caroni East*) asked the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry:

Could the Minister provide:

- (a) a listing of the names of the persons trained by Medical Data Caribbean Limited for the period January 2005 to October 2006;
- (b) a listing of the trainers and their qualifications?

A Listing of the names of the persons trained by Medical Data Caribbean Limited for the Period January 2005 to October 2005 to October 2006

MEDICAL DATA CARIBBEAN LIMITED TRAINEES (JAN2005 - OCT 2006)

Cohort 1

	Surname	First Name
1.	ALI	ALEESA
2.	ARCHIBALD	GAIL

*Written Answer to Question**Monday, May 14, 2007*

	Surname	First Name
3.	BAIM	HAZEL GRANT ETIENNE
4.	BAIRD	CASSELLE
5.	BAJNATH - DE SOUSA	SITA
6.	BALDAH	LYRA-LEE
7.	BALRAM	STEPHEN
8	BALROOP	NATASHA
9.	BEHARRY	HILLARY
10.	BLAKE	RECHEL
11.	BOOCHOON	KRISTIAN CAREY CAMERON
12.	BOODLAL	RAISHMA
13.	BYRON	KRYSTLE
14.	CHARLES	PETRA
15.	CYRUS	KISHA
16.	DABIDEEN	KAMILLEE DIANA
17.	DARCELUL	MARILEE
18.	DELPESH	HANNAH

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	Surname	First Name
19.	DIAL	KAVITA
20.	EDWARDS	CAROL
21.	ELDER	ADANNA ERICA
22.	GARIB	NIRMAL
23.	GEORGE	AVA BEVERLY
24.	GRAPPIE	WENDY
25.	GRAY	KENO
26.	GREENE	KAREN ELIZABETH
27.	GUEVARA	MARSHA
28.	HARVEY	MARLENE JOY
29.	HOLLINGSWORTH	MICHELLE
30.	HOWARD	KETCHURA
31.	HUMPHREY SEALES	LYNDA
32.	KHAN	NURJAHAN B
33.	LONEY	ODETFE SR
34	LUTCHMAN	LAURISSA

	Surname	First Name
35.	MANO	MARILYN MARIA
36.	MARAJ	VINOD
37.	MAYERS	HASINA
38.	MOHAMMED	BRAD
39.	MOORE	JACINTA
40.	MOOTOO	RAQUEL
41.	NARINE	ANYAL
42.	NEDD	JELANI
43.	NELSON	KIZZY SHIVAUGHN
44.	NOEL	KEZIA
45.	PANTIN	ANTIONETTE ALEXANDER
46.	PHILLANDER	KWEMA
47.	PRINCE	MARCUS
48.	QUAMINA	SOMMER
49.	RAMILAL	KESHAAN VISHAL
50.	RAMLOGAN	CANDACE

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	Surname	First Name
51.	RAMPERSAD	ANIL
52.	RAMPERSAD	DENZIL
53.	RAMPHAL	RAJENDRA
54.	RANSOME	ANISIA
55.	RATTAN	LEEMA
56.	RIPLA	SARIKA USHA
57.	ROBERTS	DENISE
58.	SAMAROO	MELISSA
59.	SEEPERSAD	JEWAN
60.	SHAH	NADIA
61.	SINGH	ROBERT ANTONIO
62.	SINGH	SUSAN B
63.	SOOK1-IAI	CAMILLE
64.	SOOKHOO	LAUREN
65.	TAITT	GODWIN
66.	THOMAS	LAURALYN

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	Surname	First Name
67.	THOMAS LEZAMA	AYANA
68.	THOMPSON FRIDAY	ABIGAIL
69.	TULLAH	SALIMA
70.	VERAPEN	SINDAMANY
71.	VICTOR	SHENNEL
72.	WALKER	IYOLA
73.	WILKINSON	CRYSTAL
74.	WILLIAMS	SINDY ROSE
75.	YUSUF	ANISHA

Cohort 2

	Surname	First Name
1	ALI	KEEMAL
2.	AMRATH	JENELLE
3.	ANTHONY	ETHNEY
4.	APPLEWHITE	ADANNA
5.	ARLINGTON	DAMIEN

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	Surname	First Name
6.	ASSAM	KIMBERLLY
7.	BELGRAVE	KEISHA
8.	BLAKE	KIMILYE
9.	BRATHWAITE	DONNIE
10.	CHARLES	RUTH
11.	D'ARCEUIL	GENEVIEVE
12.	DAVID	MELISSA
13.	DEBI	ASHA
14.	DEBI	RASSEE
15.	DENNIS	CLARISA
16.	DINNOO	NADINE
17.	DINNOO	NICHOLA
18.	DUBERRY	LISA
19.	FRANCIS	RONDA
20.	GEETOOAH	KATRINA
21.	GEORGE	ANNESHA

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	Surname	First Name
22.	GLASGOW	SHEVON
23.	GODDARD	DINEISHA
24.	GOOLCHARAN	TARA
25.	HARRIPERSAD	NAIKA
26.	HARRYNARINE	DANRAJ
27.	HENRY	IRLANNA
28.	HYPOLITE	MARK
29.	JAMES	JANELLE
30.	JOSEPH	RONALD
31.	MAYERS	ERICA
32.	MOHAMMED	AKISHA
33.	MOHAMMED	SHALIMA
34.	MOHAN	CHRISTA
35.	MOLLINEAUX	GISELLE
36.	MONGROO	AMRIKA
37.	MORLE	MARISSA

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	Surname	First Name
38.	NURSE	STACY
39	OLIVER	ALTHEA
40	PEREZ	JUNE
41	PERSAUD	PEGGY
42	PHILLIP	LISA
43	PIERRE	JAUMARK
44,	RAMPERSAD	RESHMA
45,	ROMILLY	ANNISSA
46	SAMLAL	DEVANAND
47..	SEUKUMAR	SIMONE
48..	SEUNARINE	AVIEAN
49.	SHIM	ALICIA
50.	SOOKDEO	ALICA
51..	VALENTINE	RHONDA
52.	VANCE	MAKESI

*Written Answer to Question**Monday, May 14, 2007**Cohort 3*

	Surname	First Name
1.	BAKSH	CRISELL
2.	BARTHOLOMEW	RAYANN
3.	BELLILLE-RUSSELL	KAREN
4.	BHARAT	PETRONILLA
5.	BUCHAN	LESLEY-ANN
6.	DODOUGH	VALERIE
7.	FIGUERO	ANTONIO
8.	GABRIEL	MAYA
9.	HUSAIN	CALISA
10	JOSEPH	STACY
11	KING	KERLENE
12	KISSOON	CAMILLE
13	MORRIS	ERICA
14.	NEDD-JOHN	CHRISTINE
15..	NICHOLAS	PATRINA

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	Surname	First Name
16.	OLTON	MELISSIA
17.	PATINO	LISA
18.	PAUL-MILLER	VERONICA
19	PICOU	PATRICIA
20.	RAMOUTAR	SHELLY
21..	REID	GORDON
22.	ROLLOCK-PHILLIP	DENISE
23.	RUDO	KIMBERLY
24.	SOLOMON	FAREEHAH
25.	SOGRIM	PETAL
26.	TIMOTHY	JOSANNE
27	WILSON	ANTOINETTE

Cohort 4

	Surname	First Name
1.	ALI	SHERAZ
2..	ANDREWS-GAY	MICHELLE
3.	BRAY	GEETA

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	Surname	First Name
4	DOMAN	NERUDA
5.	DOWLAT	LUCRECIA
6.	DRAKES	LATOYA
7.	GORDON	TILON
8.	HEADLEY	KAREN
9..	HING-DURITY	RIA
10.	HOYTE	CHRISTOPHER
11.	MOHAMMED	TARIQ
12.	NARINE	LISA
13.	PATRICE	KAVIAN
14.	POPALIE	MOHANIE
15.	QUANHEM	VAUGHN
16.	SHAH	FARAH
17.	SOOKHOO-RAMROOP	SHAMEEN
18.	ALEXANDER	AMANDA
19.	BURTON-PIERRE	BEVERLY

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	Surname	First Name
20.	CORBIE	NICOLA
21..	DILLON	JOANNE
22.	DOUGLAS-BACCHUS	JOSETFE
23.	GILBERT HARRIGIN	GILLIAN
24.	HARRIGIN	SHONNA
25.	HOSEIN	STEFAN
26.	JAMES	TERRY-ANNE
27	KISSOON	SOPHIA
28.	LEE QUI	JOHANA
29.	MC CONNIE	HELEN
30.	MELVILLE	TRICIA
31.	PERSAD	PAMELA.
32.	PROVOTEAUX	ALANA
33.	RAMJIT	EDWIN
34.	RAMSUNDAR	ANGELA
35.	ROSTANT	ELEONORA

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	Surname	First Name
36.	AVILA ROSTANT	OMAIRA
37.	SMITH .	KENISHA
38.	TAYLOR	NATASHA
39	TIWARI	CRYSTAL
40.	WILLIAMS	MARILYN
41.	WILTSHIRE	TESSA

A Listing of the trainers and their qualifications.

PATRICIA C SOLAR, CMI
 921 Dry Hill Rd
 Beckley, WV 25801
 304-253-8345

E-mail: pcsolari@charter net

EDUCATION

Medical Transcription Education Center, Inc.

Fairlawn, OH

1-877-733—4346

Diploma, November 2000

Montgomery College

Rockville, MD

Computer Course Work

1979—1981

Sherwood High School

Sandy Spring, MD

Diploma, June 1971

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EXPERIENCE

Transcription Relief Services, LLC

Kathy Rockel, CMT, FAAMT

03 /04-Present

Duties: Level 3 acute care transcription in all specialties. Currently in Quality Assurance.

Healthscribe

Sterling, VA

02/03—2/04

Duties: Level 3 acute care transcription in all specialties

MedQuist

Mount Laurel, NJ

08/01-02/03

Duties: Level 3 acute care transcription in all specialties.

Echo Sten-tel

Fargo, ND

12/00-12/01

Duties: Transcription for psychiatric facilities.

COMPUTER SKILLS

- Proficient on IBM compatible computers.
- Type 70+ words per minute.
- Proficient with e-mail, the Internet, and several Internet Service Providers.
- Proficient in Windows 95/98/XP, Word Perfect, Microsoft Works, Microsoft Word, Quicken, JD Edwards Worldvision on A/S 400.

CERTIFICATION

Certified Medical Transcriptionist, AAMT; 04/11/05

*Written Answer to Question**Monday, May 14, 2007*

D. Melissa Wood, CMT

P.O Box 1334

Mebane, NC 27302

(919) 563-2665 or cell: (919) 594-7028

Durham Gastroenterology Consultants, PA

11/01/02 to present

308-D Crutchfield St

Durham, NC 27704

(919) 470-8630

Scott R. Brazer, MD

Duties: Patient Coordinator - maintaining electronic medical record system, triage, coordinating, and scheduling patient appointments, processing patients in the office, maintaining recall system for return appointments, creating letters and forms for contacting patients and referring physicians, interacting with patients and physicians on the telephone, obtaining records, labs, and studies for patients, and medical transcription.

Transcription Relief Services, Ltd.

4/01/02 to present

Winston-Salem, NC

Kathy Rockel, CMI, FAAMT

Duties: Started as level 3 medical transcriptionist, then moved into quality assurance and quality assurance reviewing. Transcription has included acute care and clinics in a variety of hospital and Private practice settings.

Duke University Medical Center

4/01/1988 to 4/01/02

Durham, NC 27710

Scott R. Brazer, MD

Duties: Began as level 5 staff assistant, finished as a level 10 Medical Office Coordinator.

Duties included medical transcription and quality assurance for six physicians as well as maintaining general offices, patient charts, triage and coordinating of patient problems, studies, etc. Started in Cardiology, moved to Gastroenterology; also included "freelance" transcription in Gynecology Oncology, cardiology, radiology, ER, and general internal medicine.

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Transcriptions Limited

1995 to 2000

Durham, NC 27708

Duties: Medical transcription in a variety of hospital and clinic settings including acute care, ER, cardiology, psychiatry, general surgery and ophthalmology.

Education: Guilford College—Bachelor degree in Business Management, 1995
Greensboro, NC

Courses studies include accounting, business law, marketing and statistics

AAMT CMT certification: 4/11/05

Skills: Microsoft Word, Excel, Word Perfect, Lotus 123, Peachtree Accounting, Quicken, and a wide variety of word processing and database systems.

SUZANNE S. GALLIVAN, CMT

700 SW 2nd Ave.

Hallandale Beach, FL 33009

(954) 454-5829 suzylady@bellsouth.net

RESUME

QUALIFICATIONS:

Experienced medical transcriptionist and medical transcription educator. Active member of American Association for Medical Transcription, serving at local, state and national levels.

CREDENTIALS/EDUCATION:

Graduated Philadelphia High School for Girls, 1955. Medical Secretary Certificate, Sheridan Vocational. Technical Center, 1975. AA degree (summa cum laude from Broward Community College, 1979, including transcription courses (two semesters) and extra credits in medical terminology (two semesters). CMT in 1988 from American Association for Medical Transcription; 287 CECs accumulated 1988-1997 (90 required), 150 CECs 1998-2000; recertified 2003. Teaching certification, Broward County School Board, 1993.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

Medical Record Transcribing Instructor, Sheridan Vocational-Technical Center, July 1993 to June 1995. Training consultant, Trans-Comp, Inc., 1995 and 1996. Medical Transcription Instructor, Miami-Dade Community College, Medical

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Center Campus, 1997 and 1998. Also conducted a 9-month program of private MT instruction.

MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTION EXPERIENCE:

Early experience at Flair Medical Transcription and Medico-Legal Transcription Services, 1974 to 1975.

Independent medical transcriptionist 1976 through 1985. Clients included Transcriptions, Ltd of Florida; Drs. Silverman and Seley, orthopedic surgeons, North Miami Beach; Drs. Luxenberg and Lustgarten, neurosurgeons, North Miami Beach; Drs. Truppman, Ellenby and Schwartz, plastic surgeons, North Miami Beach; Dr. David Thornburgh, pathologist, North Miami General Hospital.

Cedars Medical Center, medical transcriptionist, 1985-1987. Trans-Comp, Inc., medical transcriptionist, 1987-1991. Broward General Medical Center, medical transcription supervisor, April 1991 to April 1992. Medware, medical transcriptionist, July 2002 to August 2004. OSi, medical transcriptionist, August 2004 to date.

Independent medical transcriptionist, 1992 to 2002. Imperial Point Medical Center; Universal Medical Center; Greater Fort Lauderdale Heart Group; Neurological Testing Centers of America; Aventura Radiology Associates; Biscayne Diagnostic Imaging; George Borrero, MD; Aventura Surgical Group; Boca Radiology Group; Coral Springs Medical Center; Nova-Southeastern Radiology Department; and various small accounts.

Transcription of hospital accounts through transcription service employers listed above, including Aventura Hospital and Medical Center, Miami Beach Community Hospital, North Shore Medical Center, Palmetto General

Hospital, Victoria Hospital (radiology), Memorial Regional Hospital, Memorial Hospital Pembroke, Memorial Same Day Surgery Center, Florida Hospital in Orlando, and U.S Army hospitals.

ASSOCIATION EXPERIENCE:

Member of AAMT for 18 years. President of Gold Coast Chapter (Broward County), 3 terms; currently President again. Served two terms (4 years) as Florida Delegate to AAMT House of Delegates. On-Site Coordinator, 1998 FAMT Annual Meeting. Speaker, 1997 FAMT Annual Meeting and 1998 AAMT Annual Meeting; speaker, TCC 2000, GMC 2003. Currently a Florida Legislative Liaison, and participating in ASTM.

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JANET KUNZE CMT
 2000 NW 22nd ST
 OKLAHOMA CITY OK 73106-1B18
 (405)525-5413
 jkunze@transrs.com

WORK EXPERIENCE

- Medical Transcriptionist; Quality Assurance Editor; Overseas Trainer
 Transcription Relief Services, Greensboro NC
 8/03 - present; QA 2/04 10/04; Overseas Trainer, Guyana 9/05 – present
- **Administrative Secretary and Medical Transcriptionist**
 University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, Oklahoma City OK
 Department of Pediatrics
 Administrative support and overflow transcription 2/01—8/02
 Transcription Section 10/02—8/03
 Transcription for sections of cardiology, diabetes/Endocrinology, infectious
 diseases, gastroenterology, genetics, nephrology
- **Office Manager/Salesperson/Reflexologist**
 Scoff L, Kunze's American Therapy, LLC (massage, reflexology, equipment
 sales) 1/94—present
 Bookkeeping, tax preparation; sales at State Fairs and Trade Shows; reflexology
- **Secretary II**
 American Fidelity Corporation, Oklahoma City OK (insurance)
 6/93—7/99
 Internal audit department: administrative support and routine audit oversight
 activities

EDUCATION

- BA 1986
 Oral Roberts University, Tulsa OK
- **Graduate Coursework**
 Oral Roberts University School of Theology and Missions, Tulsa OK, 1986
 University of Oklahoma School of Social Work, Norman OK, 1992 —1993

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- **Business**

Andrews School, Oklahoma City OK, 2003
Medical Transcription

Wright Business School, Oklahoma City OK, 1993
Medical Secretary; Professional Administrative Secretary

Toastmasters International, 1994-1999
Advanced Toastmaster Bronze; Competent Leader

PROFESSIONAL, DESIGNATIONAS

- **Certified Medical Transcriptionist #01063C, 2004**

American Association for Medical Transcription

- **Certified Professional Secretary, 1998**

International Association of Administrative Professionals

- **Associate, Customer Service, 1996**

Life Office Management Association

BIOSKETCH: Stella J. Olson, CMT, FAAMT

DEMOGRAPHICS: 2826 Whisper Quill Street
San Antonio, TX 78230
Office Tel, 210-479-4043

Email - solson4444@earthlink.net

Currently, Stella is a partner in MT Resources LLP, a new company formed in November of 2003

She previously provided input and information in the development of a new division in medical documentation/transcription for a company located in the Baltimore, Maryland. The company was an international company providing services to support Fortune 500 companies. While in the employ of this company went to India to test prospective individuals as transcription candidates for the company's new branch.

She previously served as the CEO of STAT Enterprises Inc. a multifaceted company that focuses on healthcare documentation, training, education, and consulting. STAT Enterprises was a company founded by Olson.

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Formerly, President/CEO/Founder of STAT Transcription Services, Inc., Olson sold her transcription service and has now directed her knowledge of the medical transcription industry to consulting with large medical facilities and clinics, health care providers, and training of medical facility staff, including medical transcriptionists.. Her professional development seminars target medical facilities as well as ancillary personnel, and specialize in quality and teamwork in medical transcription. She is a lecturer and workshop moderator in medical transcription practices, professional development and women's issues.

Olson also developed and was published in the original AAMT Book of Style on the criteria for quality assurance in medical transcription

In June 2000 traveled to Bangalore, India to test and evaluate the operations of Med Soft, India. The test was prepared and administered by Olson as well as the interview process of each trainer within the company. Recommendations were then made to the company based on Olson's findings.

From 1997 until 1998 Stella was Director of Industry Relations for Heartland Information Services, boated in Toledo, Ohio. She was part of the team that established the standards and procedures for quality assurance and education of offshore medical transcriptionists, and spent over two months in India overseeing the new operations as project manager.

Stella J., Olson, CMT, FAAMT

Previously, she was the operations consultant for a start-up company in medical transcription and the development of a health information repository. She assisted in the acquisition of established transcription businesses as the base for the start-up company.

Olson has given many presentations and motivational speeches as well as serving in many volunteer positions.

- Advisory Board, St. Louis Public Schools, Adult and Vocational Education
- Advisory Board as well as instructor at Belleville Area Community College
- Advisory Board, St. Charles Community College
- Advisory Board, The Vanderschmidt School

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- Advisory Board, Jefferson College
- NAWBO Board of Directors—6 years
- American Association for Medical Transcription Board of Directors—9 years
- Adjunct Professor, St. Louis University in the Health Information Management Program
- Missouri Women’s Council Foundation
- Board of Directors, Medical Transcription Industry Alliance
- Church Council-Lutheran Church, Living Christ
- Volunteer and financial supporter, 1994 Olympic Festival
- Volunteer and financial supporter, “The Women’s Event for Breast Cancer”

The following are the associations and the offices, which Stella has held or is currently holding:

- Delegate-Texas Association for Medical Transcription
- SBA Regional Small Business, Regulatory Fairness Board, Board Member
- AAMT—President, President-Elect, Treasurer, Delegate
- MTIA—Secretary (two terms)
- Church Council—Stewardship Committee Chair (second term)
- NAWBO—National Nominating Committee
- NAWBO—St. Louis Chapter, President
- NFIB—Guardian Advisory Council for State of Missouri
- NFIB - Media Liaison, State of Missouri
- White House Conference on Small Business—Delegate

RECENT AWARDS AND DISTINCTIONS:

2001-04 Appointed to the advisory board for Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, renowned publisher of medical text and reference materials.

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- 2001 Elected to the Medical Transcription Certification Commission for the American Association for Medical Transcription..
- 1999 Elected to the Medical Transcription Industry Alliance Board of Directors, to serve a 3-year term.
- 1997 Appointed as a member of the Missouri State Rehabilitation Advisory Council for the Blind by the Governor.
- 1997 Appointed to the United States Small Business Administration to serve on the First Regional Small Business Regulatory Fairness Board.
- 1996 Awarded the 1996 Distinguished Member of the Year by AAMT.
- 1996 Women in Business Advocate of the Year Award for Eastern Missouri by U.S Small Business Administration.
- 1996 Appointed to St. Louis Small Business Week Committee. As well as serving on the NFIB Media & Guardian Advisory Council.

EDUCATION

Stella has been a member of the American Association for Medical Transcription since October 1979 and received her certification in August 1981. Maintenance of her certification is dependent upon earning 30 CECS within a three-year period. Since her certification she has earned the following: 1987—95 CECS, 1990—92 CECS, 1993 194. 5 CECS, 1996—95 CECS, 1999—148 CECS, and 2002—62.75. In September 2002 became a Fellow in the American Association for Medical Transcription, which required points in eight categories for a total of 263 points.

Stella received her education in the Lutheran School System, receiving a GED Certificate from the State of Missouri. She has completed management courses from St. Louis Community College, St. Louis University-Metropolitan College with CEUs and attended Seminole Community College in Orlando, Florida for CEUs on ICD-9 Coding for the Medical Record. She has attended numerous management courses in conjunction with business and the medical profession. She has participated and moderated numerous workshops and continues her education in the industry regularly.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Alice Elaine Olson, CMT, FAAMT

DEMOGRAPHICS: 2826 Whisper Quill
 San Antonio, TX 78230
 210-479-4043 (Ofc) or 210-771-8767 (Cell)
 210-492-3754 (Fax)
 eolson4444@earthlink.net

NUMBER OF YEARS IN MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTION: 37

February 2004—Consulting for a medical transcription service in Minnesota.
 Reorganizing the operations.

November 2003 - Formed MT Resources, LLP.

November 2003 CyMed, Inc. Retained to review interview, hiring, and training process. Assisted in rewriting training materials.

June 2003 to October 2003—eScribe Medical Transcription, Inc.

Administrative assistant to the president, and Quality Assurance Manager. Rewrote employee handbook, policies and procedures, quality assurance program, Career Ladder, and eScribe Dossier.

1998 to June 2003—STAT Enterprises, Inc.

Chief Executive Officer for this multidivisional company with emphasis on educational programs and training for medical transcriptionists (domestic and nondomestic) as well as business development.

Created presentations (overheads/handouts) for previous CEO.

Other responsibilities include consulting for medical facilities in department re-engineering, which included recommendations for technical upgrades and total system replacements.

Created continuing education workshops for medical transcriptionists.

November 2001—2004 Consultant for SPI Technologies, Manila, Philippines.

Have made 3 trips to create the training program for the MTs, provide continuing education materials, and HIPAA compliance. The company originally had 45 MTs and now has over 200 with two offices in the U.S. The MTs are some of the best ever trained and continue their education on a regular basis.

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January 2002—September 2002 Consultant for A Transcription Company in Minnesota. Rewrote policies and procedures, presented training on HIPAA, revised payroll system.

April 2001—October 2001 Onsite consultant for 28-Physicial Multispecialty Clinic, N.C. Spent five months onsite re-engineering the medical transcription department including the recommendation for a digital dictation system to support 40 physicians, HIPAA training and participation in Compliance Committee development, established a quality assurance program.

May 2000—May 2001 Consultant for a Medical Transcription Service in Salem, Oregon. Evaluated service for efficiency, made recommendations for a new dictation/transcription platform. Presented continuing education workshops, and gave a HIPAA workshop for the service's clients.

January 2000—April 2000 Consultant for a start-up company in New York. Developed presentation overview for company, developed policies and procedures; spent time with Speech Machines in Atlanta in February; responded to RFPs for transcription outsourcing.

August 2000—2002 Austin Medical Center. Acute care facility (part of Mayo Healthcare System). Established standards, created new policies and procedures, established a continuing education program, re-engineered department with team concept. Decreased transcription costs from 48 cents per line to, 14 cents per line in 12 months. In past six months this client has been instrumental in the creation of an AAMT chapter and there are 4 CMTs and 11 more seeking certification. Invited back annually for participation in continuing education symposium.

August 1999 to December 1999—Interim Director for Diskriter Healthcare Documentation Solutions' outsourcing division, Responsible for:

- Re-engineering the department
- Training in CTS (CareflowNet Transcription Suite).
- Created the training manual for the medical transcriptionists.
- Instituted Policies and Procedures for the department.
- Instructed the transcriptionists in Word.
- Assisted in creation of RFP for Tenet, PA
- Developed Team Leader concept for the transcription department.

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December 1999—Phelps Regional Medical Center in Rolla, MO:

Trained medical transcriptionists in Word and CTS.

1998—2003—Developed marketing materials for Medical Transcription Education Center, Inc. (Catalog and Brochure). Holds position as Admissions Review Coordinator. Contributes to continuing education material development.

1999—Developed marketing letters and new brochure for Ideas Safety Company, St. Louis, MO.

1999—Developed marketing brochure for MTIA

1989 to 1997—President and owner of Tele-Trans Medical Transcription Service San Antonio, Texas

Grew business from a one-person operation to a corporation supporting 25 employees. Growth history: 30 per cent yearly. In 1996 sold the corporation to a national transcription service and remained one year after acquisition as Area Manager.

1987 to 1989—South Texas Eye Institute

Started part-time, within 30 days was offered the position of Director of Medical Records for this eye clinic and ambulatory surgery center. Created and maintained the quality assurance and chart review for two surgeons and five technicians. During this time passed two Medicare reviews with a score of 98 per cent for chart documentation.

1985 to 1987—The Hand Center

One of two CMTs to support a five-physician hand specialty group.

1981 to 1985—Nix Medical Center, San Antonio, Texas

Lead transcriptionist in acute care facility.

From 1969 to 1971: Medical transcriptionist at H. R. Margolis, MD, and Associates, Pittsburgh, PA; and then in 1974 relocated to West Palm Beach and worked in Medical Records as a transcriptionist at Good Samaritan Hospital.

EDUCATION:

Was one of the first six CMTs to receive the coveted AAMT Fellow in 2002.

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Certified by the American Association for Medical Transcription in 1981 (Member #06254, MTCP # B01393). Recertification cycle every 3 years; average of 250 credits earned.

High School Graduate: Thomas Jefferson, San Antonio, 1966

Duff's Business School, Pittsburgh, PA, 1967—1968. Graduate in Business Course.

Regularly attends seminars and workshops in various areas of business.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Featured in *Entrepreneur*, September 1995.

Featured in articles in *For The Record*, *Advance*, and *JAAMIT*.

Authored articles for *JAAMT*, *For The Record* (most recently April 5, 1999 issue), *Advance*, and *Medical Transcription Education*. Center web site, Articles of Interest, and *The Perspectives on Medical Transcription*, published by Health Professions Institute..

Have given presentations for the American Association for Medical Transcription's annual meetings, Lanier Input, and multiple AAMT state/regional component association meetings.

2002—Co-Editor for Lippencott, Williams and Wilkins 2002 Anatomy and Physiology Word Book.

2003—Under contract with Lippencott, Williams and Wilkins to sole author a new publication on American idioms, to be published in 2005.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES:

MTIA Director—Term 2002-2005

Developed webcast training for HIPAA for the MT employee and MT independent contractor.

Developed the MTIA Best Business Practice—HIPAA and the MTSO.

Program Chair for 2003 and 2004 annual conferences.

President of the Texas Association for Medical Transcription (as well as Alamo Chapter of San Antonio).

Editor of award-winning TAMT Newsletter two years in a row.

Member of Program Committee for NAWBO

Member of Program Committee for MTIA

Chair of MTIA's Membership Committee.

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402, Raja Mansions Apt, Opp Sumangali Sevashram
Cholangar, R.T. Nagar Post Bangalore 560032

Pramod V. Pillai

Objective	To contribute and participate in the growth of an organization by making a career in a professional organization which provides a challenging work culture and opportunities to develop my skills to the fullest extent.
Personal Summary	<p>Seven years of experience in Medial transcription business, working for reputed organizations in India.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A self-motivated person with excellent communication skills and abilities who seeks and enjoys responsibility. ➤ Creative and experienced problem-solver and decision-maker in customer service management, with excellent organizational and analytical skills used to make timely decisions and create cost-effective management solutions. ➤ Ability to skillfully manage multiple priorities in an ever-changing business environment. ➤ Enjoys working with people and interacts effectively at both technical and management levels. ➤ An exceptional leader who can create and articulate a strategic vision, build consensus, and motivate for achievement. ➤ Seeking the challenge of difficult assignments such as turnarounds and newly created entities.
Professional Experience	<p>July 200—Present Spheris Bangalore</p> <p>Spheris is India’s largest and most professionally run Business Process Outsourcing company focused on the healthcare sector. With proven credentials and state-of-the-art infrastructure, Spheris has built a reputation for quality service and consistent delivery</p>

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Currently Team Leader: My role includes

Principal Accountabilities

1. Handling 25 medical transcriptionists.
2. Mentoring new trainees and coaching them to become excellent medical transcriptionists.
3. Set targets for quality and quantity for all the team members.
4. Assuring the service level agreements are met.
5. Ensuring motivation levels at the highest within the team
6. Interacting with the client for any new specification.
7. Maintaining the communication channels between the management and the team.
8. Updating all the necessary work-related data and specifications from the client to the team.
9. Counseling and organizing one-to-one sessions at regular intervals.
10. Actively contributing for appraisals.
11. Rating the team members for quality and quantity.
12. Prioritization and distribution of workload.
13. Scheduling the team members according to the projected workload.
14. Reviewing the quality audit reports and make necessary changes.
15. Rewards and recognition for high performers.

Account Lead- My role includes.

To develop and implement systems which ensures customer requirements are met in terms of quality and turn around time for assigned accounts.

1. Challenge

- Proactive planning for smooth introduction of new account.
- Designing and Implementing solutions to eliminate problems which are encountered, e.g accounts specifics, customer complaints.
- To communicate and implement changes as far as customer

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- requirements are concerned.
- Ensuring common understanding of customer requirements at all points of time to minimize issues.

2. Essential Position Functions

A. Assisting on the floor

- Provide guidance to the team members with respect to quality of work to enable quality work teaches the client.
- Assist the team to reduce the proof rate of the account.
- Assist the team to enable work delivered to the client meets TAT.
- Provide leadership role in the absence of the Production Manager.

B. Mentoring

- Analyze correction reports to identify gaps and individual abilities for developing/ training in co-ordination with the training department.
- Analyze quality trends and action as needed to ensure continuous improvement.

C. Communication

- Check for all the latest updates on the account and customer complaints.
- Communicate and follow-up on quality issues concerning the teams.
- Liaison between the customer and the internal teams that service the customer.

D. Closing Customer Complaints

- Analyze all reports such as US QA, internal QA, etc. and put in generic corrective actions (including sharing of learnings) to ensure that the common errors are eliminated.

3. OMs Related

- E. Participate in internal audits.
- F. Initiate corrective actions based on audit observations/customer feedback and MRM decisions.
- G. Monitor effectiveness of corrective action.

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- H. Identify areas of preventive actions, continual improvement
- I. Identification of training requirements for the team members.

4. Authority

To do whatever it takes to provide the client, transcribed documents at acceptable quality standards within the contracted turn around time.

5. Additional responsibilities

- I. Make decisions based on TAT and allocate work.
- 2. Check schedule versus actual for the shift far work planning.
- 3. Overtime decisions based on capacity/work.
- 4. Communication for floor on various policies/procedures.
- 5. Manage conference calls with US.
- 6. Manage performance issues of MTs and proofers.

Professional Achievements

- I. My team got the Best Team Award for the year 200.3 out of about 55 teams throughout the company.
- 2. We were instrumental in getting JCAHO (Joint Commission of American Healthcare Organizations) certification for our client for superior quality service.
- 3. We have set new milestones in the company both in terms of productivity and quality.

Previous Role

Senior Quality Assurance Personnel—My role includes.

Principal Accountabilities

- Responsible to meet the SLAs, especially quality, of the team.
- Final proofing of critical medical documents before delivering it to the clients.
- Check the quality of the work done and improve the quality.
- Helping the medical transcriptionist with any medical terminology doubts or any doubts with drugs or drug dosages which will be very critical for the patients.

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- Creating sample reports for reference, i e, operative reports, cardiac catheterizatic reports, progress notes, emergency reports, history and physical examination reports, consultation reports, neurology reports, psychiatric reports, discharge summaries, et cetera, which requires a very high level of medical knowledge.
- Maintain the turn-around-time of the reports.
- Handle very critical stat reports.
- Devise new methods of improving the quality.
- Responsible for the appraisal of all the team members on a monthly basis.
- Recommend for promotions and identify further training requirements for individual development.
- Interacting with the client regarding any specifications and conveying the same to the team for better service of the client
- Conducting one-to-one with team members to gather inputs for further process development.
- Motivating team members to achieve higher targets.
- Rewards and recognition for high achievers based on monthly statistics.

August 1999—July 2001 Avintech Information Services Limited-Ahmedabad. Service provider for Heartland Information Services, Ohio, USA. An internet-enable service provider providing medical transcription and data management service neaurncare systems. Avintech architecture makes up the best choice for the large volume organizations such as Integrated Delivery Networks (IDNs) and multi-facility healthcare systems.

Transcription Center Supervisor: My role included

Principal Accountabilities

1. Handle 50 medical transcriptionists and quality assurance team.
2. Mentoring new trainees and coaching them to become excellent medical transcriptionists
3. Set targets for quality .and quantity for all the team members.
4. Assuring the service level agreements ate met.
5. Ensuring motivation levels at the highest within the team.

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6. Interacting with the client for any new specification.
7. Maintaining the communication channels between the management and the team..
8. Updating all the necessary work-related data and specifications from the client to team.
9. Counselling and organizing one-to-one sessions at regular intervals.
10. Actively contributing for appraisals.
11. Rating the team members for quality and quantity.
12. Prioritization and distribution of workload.
13. Scheduling the team members according to the projected workload.
14. Reviewing the quality audit reports and make necessary changes.
15. Rewards and recognition for high performers.

Trainer: My role included

Principal Accountabilities

1. Training 160 people on English grammar, Americanism, punctuation, subject vs agreement, prefix, suffix, medical terminology, and transcription practicals.
2. Conducting classroom sessions for English and Medical terminology.
3. Conducting tests on theory and practicals on a regular basis
4. Compiling all the errors and sharing it with the entire training team so that then general learning from those errors.
5. Ensuring motivation levels at the highest within the teams
6. Rewards and recognition for high performers.
7. Empowering the trainees with through knowledge of medical transcription.
8. Creating a sense of pride among trainees for our medical transcription profession

Education	<u>COURSE</u>	<u>UNIVERSITY</u>	<u>DURATION</u>
	B.A.	Gujarat University	July1996-May 1999
	MBA	Symbiosis	Pursuing

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Other Qualifications	Diploma in Computer Application	Aptech Computers	12 months
	Training in Medical Transcription	Avintech Information Services	6 months
	Certified Medical Transcription	American Association of Medical Transcription	
Computer Skills	Hands on experience on working on the internet, MS Office etc.		
Other Personal Details	Date of Birth: February 18, 1977		
	Marital Status: Single		
References	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Anil Jana Medical Transcriptionist, Spheris India Pvt. Ltd. Mobile-91-9448904310 E-mail: a_v_jana@yaboo.co.in Priya Menon Team Leader, Splieris India Pvt. L.td. Mobile: 91-9945569566 E-mail: pria_menon@gmail.com Harshavardhan B K Unit Manager, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Ltd. Mobile: 91-9886732712 E-mail: bkharshavardhan@mail.com 		