



# **PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

**Tenth Parliament**

## **SIXTH REPORT**

of the Joint Select Committee on Ministries, Statutory Authorities and  
State Enterprises  
**(Group 1)**  
on

## **THE ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS OF THE NATIONAL CARNIVAL COMMISSION**

Ordered to be printed with the  
Minutes of Proceedings and Notes of Evidence

**H.O.R. PAPER NO: 7 /2013**

**SENATE PAPER NO: 7/2013**

**PARL. NO. 14/5/14**

Date Laid: HoR: 08/03/2013

Senate: 19/03/2013

# Table of Contents

|                                                              |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>THE COMMITTEE .....</b>                                   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Establishment .....</b>                                   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Membership .....</b>                                      | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Secretariat Support.....</b>                              | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>Powers.....</b>                                           | <b>6</b>  |
| Background .....                                             | 7         |
| <b>Objectives .....</b>                                      | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>Conduct of the Inquiry .....</b>                          | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>THE EVIDENCE.....</b>                                     | <b>11</b> |
| Management of the NCC.....                                   | 11        |
| NCC's Relationship with Stakeholders .....                   | 14        |
| Funding of the NCC.....                                      | 15        |
| NCC Monitoring and Accounting.....                           | 17        |
| Forensic Audits of NCC and its agencies.....                 | 18        |
| NCCs Tendering Procedures .....                              | 18        |
| The Carnival Institute .....                                 | 19        |
| Status of Pan Trinbago Headquarters.....                     | 19        |
| The Grand and North Stands .....                             | 20        |
| North Stand structure.....                                   | 21        |
| Regional Carnival .....                                      | 21        |
| The Mas Academy .....                                        | 23        |
| Developing the Steel pan Industry .....                      | 23        |
| NCC Copyrights .....                                         | 23        |
| NCC's vision for the improvement of the Carnival System..... | 23        |
| Ensuring Quality in the operations of the NCC .....          | 27        |
| Challenges faced by the NCC .....                            | 27        |
| OBSERVATIONS/FINDINGS .....                                  | 32        |
| RECOMMENDATIONS .....                                        | 35        |
| <b>APPENDIX I .....</b>                                      | <b>40</b> |
| <b>APPENDIX II .....</b>                                     | <b>45</b> |
| <b>APPENDIX III .....</b>                                    | <b>66</b> |



## THE COMMITTEE

### Establishment

In pursuance of the directive encapsulated at section 66 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the House of Representatives and Senate on September 17, 2010 and October 12, 2010, respectively agreed to a motion, which among other things, established a **Joint Select Committee to inquire into and report to Parliament on Ministries with responsibility for the business set out in the Schedule as Group 1, and on the Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises falling under their purview with regard to:**

- **their administration**
- **the manner of exercise of their powers**
- **their methods of functioning; and**
- **any criteria adopted by them in the exercise of their powers and functions.**

The business, as well as the entities which fall under the purview of the Committee is attached as ***Appendix I.***

### Membership

The membership of the Committee is comprised as follows:

- |                                     |   |               |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------|
| ▪ Mrs. Corinne Baptiste-Mc Knight   | - | Chairman      |
| ▪ Prof. Harold Ramkissoon           | - | Vice-Chairman |
| ▪ Mrs. Carolyn Seepersad-Bachan, MP |   |               |
| ▪ Mr. Emmanuel George               |   |               |
| ▪ Mr. Ganga Singh <sup>1</sup>      |   |               |
| ▪ Dr. Delmon Baker, MP              |   |               |
| ▪ Mr. Jairam Seemungal, MP          |   |               |
| ▪ Ms. Stacy Roopnarine, MP          |   |               |
| ▪ Mrs. Christlyn Moore <sup>2</sup> |   |               |

---

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Ganga Singh replaced Mrs. Verna St. Rose-Greaves with effect from October 16, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Christlyn replaced Mr. Danny Maharaj on with effect from October 16, 2012.

- Dr. Amery Browne, MP
- Mrs. Patricia Mc Intosh, MP
- Mr. Faris Al-Rawi

### Secretariat Support

Secretariat support for the Committee is provided as follows:

|                                |   |                                      |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Mrs. Lily Broomes              | - | Secretary                            |
| Nrs. Jacqueline Phillip-Stoute | - | Secretary ( <i>w.e.f. 01/01/13</i> ) |
| Ms. Khisha Peterkin            | - | Assistant Secretary                  |
| Mrs. Katharina Gokool-Mark     | - | Graduate Research Assistant          |

### Powers

Standing Orders 71B of the Senate and 79B of the House of Representatives delineate the core powers of the Committee which include *inter alia*:

- to send for persons, papers and records;
- to adjourn from place to place;
- to appoint specialist advisers either to supply information which is not otherwise readily available or to elucidate matters of complexity within the Committee's order of reference; and
- to communicate with any other Committee of Parliament on matters of common interest.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

The National Carnival Commission (NCC) is the Government Institution responsible for planning and overseeing the implementation all national events associated with the celebration of the national festival Carnival.

Initially, the Commission (NCC) emerged from the Carnival Development Committee (CDC). The NCC is governed by Act 9 of 1991 which outlines the framework and responsibilities of the Commission. The objectives of the NCC are:

- to make Carnival a viable national, cultural and commercial enterprise;
- to provide the necessary managerial and organizational infrastructure for the efficient and effective presentation and marketing of the cultural products of Carnival; and
- to establish arrangements for ongoing research, the preservation and permanent display of the annual accumulation of Carnival products created each year by the craftsmen, musicians, composers and designers of Carnival.

The NCC is also mandated to perform the following functions:

- ✓ the regulation, coordination or conduct of all carnival activities throughout the country;
- ✓ the development, maintenance and review of rules, regulations and procedures for the conduct of carnival festivities throughout the country;
- ✓ the identification, evaluation and promotion of all Carnival related industries in order to enhance and market their cultural products and services; and
- ✓ the development and implementation of a marketing strategy for Carnival with a view to optimizing the revenue earning potential of the festival and its contribution to the national economy, taking into account:
  - (i) the unexplored potential of Carnival;

(ii) the possibility of marketing carnival products and activities in domestic and export markets;

(iii) the contribution by the private sector to the funding of specific aspects of Carnival; and

(iv) the establishment of closer promotional links between the tourist industry and the carnival industry”.

Apart from this, the NCC activities include the preservation of Carnival, overseeing of fourteen main events and assisting organizations involved in Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago.

As such, your Committee agreed that an investigation into the administration and methods of functioning of the Commission was necessary.

### Objectives

Your Committee identified the following as the objectives of the inquiry: -

- to gain an appreciation of the Commission’s remit under the National Carnival Commission of Trinidad and Tobago Act (1991)
- to determine the NCC’s relationship with stakeholders in Carnival
- to identify the responsibilities of the NCC.
- to ascertain how the NCC is funded.
- to gain understanding of the process used in the erection of the Grand and North Stands
- to determine the challenges faced by the NCC

### Conduct of the Inquiry

The Committee held three (3) public hearing with representatives of the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism and the National Carnival Commission on the following dates:

- (1) Friday April 20, 2012;
- (2) Friday June 22, 2012; and
- (3) Friday November 30, 2012.

In preparation for the hearings, your Committee communicated with the Ministry to solicit initial written responses. These responses were used as the basis for supplementary questions pursued at the hearing.

The Table hereunder gives details of the public hearings and representatives from the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism and the National Carnival Commission who attended:

| Name                       | Portfolio                        | 1 <sup>st</sup> Inquiry<br>Friday April<br>20, 2012 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Inquiry<br>Friday June<br>22, 2012 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Inquiry<br>Friday<br>November<br>30, 2012 |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Mrs. Jennifer Jones</b> | Permanent Secretary              | ✓                                                   | x                                                  | x                                                         |
| <b>Mr. Vel Lewis</b>       |                                  | x                                                   | x                                                  | ✓                                                         |
| <b>Ms. Desdra Bascombe</b> | Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.) | x                                                   | ✓                                                  | x                                                         |
| <b>Mr. Patrick Arnold</b>  | Chairman                         | ✓                                                   | ✓                                                  | x                                                         |
| <b>Ms. Allison Demas</b>   |                                  | x                                                   | x                                                  | ✓                                                         |
| <b>Mr. Don Sylvester</b>   | Deputy Chairman                  | ✓                                                   | ✓                                                  | ✓                                                         |
| <b>Mr. Clarence Moe</b>    | Chief Executive Officer          | ✓                                                   | ✓                                                  | ✓                                                         |
| <b>Ms. Yvonne Smart</b>    | Human Resource Manager           | ✓                                                   | ✓                                                  | x                                                         |

|                               |                             |   |   |   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>Ms. Gloria Balbos</b>      | Finance Manager             | ✓ | ✓ | x |
| <b>Ms. Carol Wolfe</b>        | Corporate Secretary         | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <b>Mr. Gunness Sudama</b>     | Finance Manager             | - | - | ✓ |
| <b>Mr. Edward Metivier</b>    | Commissioner                | - | - | ✓ |
| <b>Mr. Kevin Rampersad</b>    | Commissioner                | - | - | ✓ |
| <b>Mr. David Lopez</b>        | Commissioner/President NCBA | - | - | ✓ |
| <b>Mr. Lutalo Masimba</b>     | Commissioner/President TUCO | - | - | ✓ |
| <b>Mr. Anthony Mc Quilkin</b> | Treasurer Pan Trinbago      | - | - | ✓ |

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committee with regard to the inquiries are attached as ***Appendix II.***

The Notes of Evidence of the hearings are attached as ***Appendix III.***

The draft of this Report was considered and approved at the meeting of the Committee held on Tuesday February 26, 2013.

## **THE EVIDENCE**

Based on the areas of focus agreed to be your Committee and written submission from the entity, hereunder is a synopsis of the evidence obtained at the public hearings.

### **Management of the NCC**

Section 16 (4) of Act 9 of 1991 provides for the “branches of the Commission to be fully responsible for the management of their affairs and have exclusive authority, within the regions under their purview to:-

- a. work with associations and organizations seeking to enhance the Carnival in their regions or to manufacture saleable carnival products;
- b. provide advice and assistance in organizing and administering regional Carnivals;
- c. encourage bilateral exchanges with foreign organizations or associations with the prime purpose of promoting the carnival of Trinidad and Tobago; and
- d. make recommendations to the Commission for the enhancement of Carnival and Carnival related activities in their regions.”

The NCC operates with staff of forty-nine (49) administrative and technical personnel led by the Chief Executive Officer. (see NCC’s Organizational Chart on page 14 of this Report). The staff of the NCC has been with the establishment for periods ranging from five (5) to twenty (20) years.

In an effort to ensure that the NCC retains the ability to attract competent professionals, the Commission employs personnel under different terms and conditions, permanent, temporary, casual or contractual depending on the level and nature of the job to be performed.

In the production of the annual carnival events, the NCC utilizes the expertise, experience and skills resident within the establishment and supplements this by

outsourcing to persons with the required skills, on a short term basis, either as volunteers or paid staff.

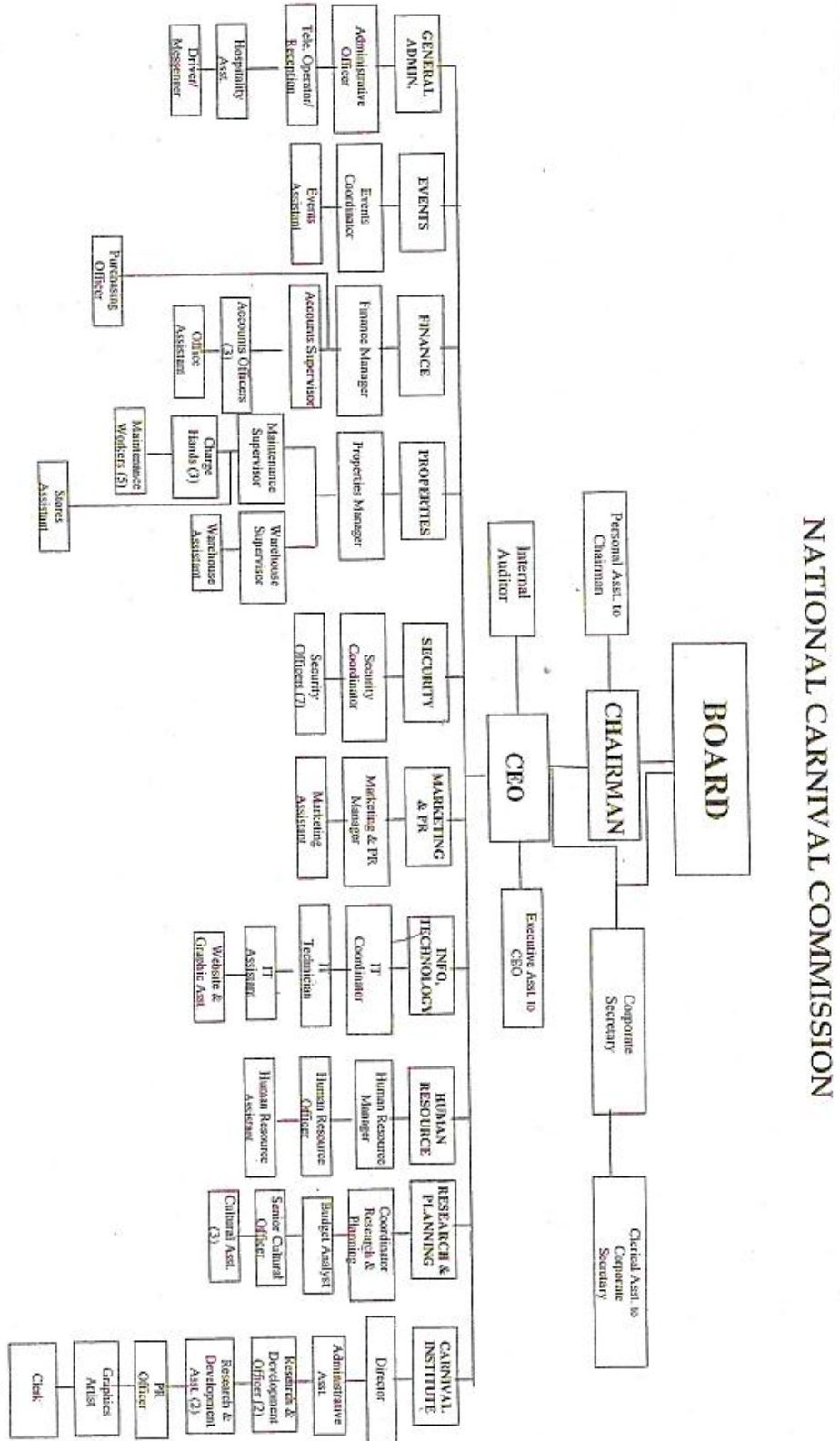
The management of Carnival requires multi-pronged actions and diverse strategies to react to changing situations. In order to treat with the requirements, functions are grouped and allocated to committees of culture aficionados, who volunteer their skills and expertise annually, to ensure that infrastructure, goods and services are provided effectively and efficiently.

The major committees appointed by the Commission are as follows:-

- a. Tenders (Standing Board Committee)
- b. Finance (Standing Board Committee)
- c. Regional Carnival ( Standing Board Committee)
- d. Operations and Services
- e. Parade of Bands
- f. Accreditation
- g. Hospitality
- h. Dimanche Gras

These Committees have traditionally assisted the Commission to oversee construction of all temporary stands, stages, vendor's booths, Health and Emergency Services, crowd control, signage, House Management, and band control as well as the ongoing review of competition rules and training /retraining of Carnival judges.

# NCC's Organizational Chart



04/04/11

## NCC's Relationship with Stakeholders

The following outlines the various stakeholders NCC engages in accordance with their legal mandate:

- a) The Major Interest Groups representing Pan, Mas and Calypso:
  - The NCC is supported by stakeholders who are represented on the Board of the NCC such as Trinidad Unified Calypso Organization (TUCO), the National Carnival Bandleaders Association (NCBA) and Pan Trinbago.
- b) Other Cultural Organizations/Community Groups/Individuals:
  - The NCC maintains an open door policy in its dealings with small organizations, community groups and individuals who contribute to the development of Carnival by providing assistance to many of these entities, in the implementation of their respective projects, either financially or by provision of infrastructure, goods and services.
- c) Promoters
  - Promoters of carnival related events approach the NCC either for endorsements, financial support/purchase of sponsorship packages, for the purchase of advertisement space in their venture, or for a reduction or waiver of the attendant fees for the Queen's Park Savannah facilities.
  - There are no fixed rules governing the NCC's interaction with Promoters. There is however the existence of an approved Rental Policy which defines the process and guides any considerations for waivers/ concessions.
- d) Private Sector
  - The NCC's interaction with the Private Sector whether directly or indirectly, is largely to encourage private sector sponsorship of events and activities or the sale of Rights. For example, for major events the NCC negotiates the sale of Corporate Suites to the business sector allowing suite holders access to the

assigned area to entertain their guests. Amenities to facilitate the activities are provided by the Commission.

- The Commission also markets advertising space in areas of the Savannah as well as opportunities for audio/visual advertising.

#### Other Carnival Stakeholders

The NCC acknowledged that there are other Carnival Band Leaders Associations not falling under the ambit of the NCC such as the National Carnival Development Foundation (NCDF) and the Trinidad and Tobago Carnival Bandleaders Association (TTCBA) which was recently founded in December, 2012. The NCC has worked along with the NCDF on several occasions. In accordance with the NCC Act only one nominee from the organizations that are representative of carnival bands is accorded a seat on the Board and that seat has been held by the NCBA which was the organization which had the most bands at the time of the institution of the Commission.

#### Regional and International Stakeholders

The NCC also engages regionally and internationally with Carnivals. The Commission provides support in the areas of adjudication, management, costuming and other matters relating to Carnival.

#### Carnival in Tobago

The NCC is limited by the Tobago House of Assembly Act which provides in Schedule V that Carnival or cultural activities fall within the ambit of the THA. Its activities are therefore circumscribed to responding to approaches from the THA.

#### **Funding of the NCC**

95% of NCC's annual budget is from a Government Subvention. The remaining 5% is comprised of income generated by the Commission from rental of the facilities, sale of tickets and donations.

Sections 18 to 21 of the Act consider possible challenges which the Commission might face when attempting to raise funds and meet its financial obligations.

Section 22 (1)(4) of the Act makes provisions for the Commission, with the approval and direction of the Minister with responsibility for Finance, to borrow money for the purpose of meeting any of its obligations or discharging any of its functions.

The allocation for fiscal 2011 was broken down as follows:

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Government Subvention | \$ 123,287,840        |
| Other Income          | \$ 1,405,000          |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>\$ 124,692,840</b> |

Expenditure incurred under the major items listed hereunder:

|                                 |                       |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Personnel Emoluments            | \$ 3,759,540          |
| Goods and Services              | \$ 64,577,080         |
| Minor Equipment Purchases       | \$ 1,595,200          |
| Current Transfers and Subsidies | \$ 54,761,020         |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>\$ 124,692,840</b> |

Subsequent to the passage of the Budget and approval of financial allocations Cabinet by Minute No. 1835 of December 23, 2010 agreed that the Grand and North Stands in the Savannah should be rebuilt and other infrastructural works inclusive of the construction of a larger stage in preparation for Carnival 2011 be undertaken.

As a consequence of this decision, additional funding in the sum of **\$61,754,140** (principal and interest) was provided by the government. This funding was disbursed as follows:

|                                 |              |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Construction of the Grand Stand | \$21,000,000 |
| Construction of the North Stand | \$11,000,000 |
| Ancillary Works                 | \$29,754,140 |

Further, the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism approached Cabinet for another loan facility to finance the under-mentioned new initiatives. Cabinet by Minute No. 426 of February 2011 approved the sum of **\$46,056.98** for this purpose:

- additional launches of Regional Carnivals;
- production of the Peoples Band;
- the Carnival Village;
- preparation of Larry Gomes Stadium for the Panorama Preliminaries; and
- increased prizes for 1<sup>st</sup> place in competitions.

Additionally, the Government also provided funding in the sum of **\$20.1** Million to pay arrears to suppliers.

#### Accommodation facilities

With the appointment of a new Board in November 2010, it was determined that the accommodation facilities at #85 A & B, Cipriani Boulevard were unsuitable and inadequate. In light of this, the rent on the premises was subsequently reduced.

In July, 2012 the NCC entered into a two-year lease agreement for a building and annex at #11 Gray Street, St. Clair. The agreement provides for rent at the rate of 130,000 (VE). At present the buildings are being prepared for occupation.)

#### **NCC Monitoring and Accounting**

The NCC tries to monitor every line item and is provided with a detailed account of 85-90% of its funding. Funding is mainly applied to prize money or assistance to groups or individuals and fairly detailed accounts of this expenditure are submitted by these groups.

Similarly, as part of monitoring of Regional Carnivals, officers of the NCC visit different regional Carnival Committees, attend their meetings and have them do evaluations, document them and send them back to the NCC. In addition, Regional

Carnivals are mandated to present audited accounts, there is therefore a holistic approach in terms of accountability for the use of the Government funds.

### **Forensic Audits of NCC and its agencies**

The NCBA submits its financial statements to the Ministry. The question of a forensic audit of the NCBA has not yet been discussed at any lengths at the Ministry or between the Ministry and the NCBA.

The MoAM wrote the Auditor General and has been advised that an audit of the NCCs accounts will be performed first. However the AG also advised that the office is constrained by lack of resources and the audit will be performed in the near future.

### **NCCs Tendering Procedures**

The NCC adopted tender procedures in 2007. The Tenders Committee is one of three (3) Standing Committees of the Board. Sub-Committees of the Tenders Committee are formed solely for the implementation of annual carnival activities.

The NCC is responsible for erection and dismantling of Carnival structures. Tenders for carnival structures are prepared by the design engineering branch of the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure, under the supervision of the Chief Designs Engineer. The recommendations of the Chief Designs Engineer are considered by the NCC Board in arriving at a decision for awarding a contract.

All tendering procedures from the invitation to tender (Open, Selective, Sole Selective), to the award of contract by the Board are managed and supervised by (a sub-committee of the Board).

### **The Carnival Institute**

The Carnival Institute was established in June 2000 as a division of the NCC via Cabinet Minute #261 of February 04, 1999 and became operational in June 2000. However, by June 2001 the Institute underwent changes in relation to its original functions, its relationship with NCC and its line Ministry. This led to the Institute's demise in October 2001. It was reinstated in January 2004. However, it was again closed and has not been reopened. There are three (3) members of staff who have been absorbed into the NCC to assist with other duties.

### **Funding of the Institute**

Funds in the sum of \$1.6Mn have been allocated by the Ministry of Finance from 2005 to 2012.

### **Status of Pan Trinbago Headquarters**

Caroni (1975) Ltd. agreed to lease 3.2376 hectares (8 acres) of land located at Orange Grove Estate, Churchill Roosevelt Highway, Trincity, Tacarigua to Pan Trinbago for the construction of a Headquarters and complex for its activities. The State formerly assigned the parcel of land to Pan Trinbago State in August 2002. UDeCott was engaged to undertake the project. A total of \$5,841,438.71TTD was expended on the project which was only approximately 30% completed. UDeCott was unable to complete the remainder of the work resulting in the project becoming immobilized from fiscal 2009.

Approximately \$16 million went back to the consolidated fund in fiscal 2011 and several letters written to UDeCott to complete the project proved futile. As a result, the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism requested that the project be returned under the ambit of its Ministry's Project/Facilities Department in 2012. To complete

the Pan Trinbago Headquarters \$7 Million TTD was allocated for fiscal year 2012 however, although no funds were expended on the project, it was agreed that UDeCott will continue to manage the construction of the Pan Trinbago Headquarters on behalf of the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism.

### **The Grand and North Stands**

Government agreed to begin reconstruction of both the North and Grand Stands in mid -November 2010. The Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism in collaboration with the then Ministry of Works and Transport sought and obtained funding in the sum of **\$61,754,140** on behalf of NCC.

Bids for the construction and dismantling of the North and Grand Stands were invited via open tender in the newspapers. Four bids were received for the dismantling of the North Stand. Subsequently, the Steel Structures Trinidad and Tobago Limited together with Civ Struct Limited, both firms with over twenty (20) years of experience in constructing and dismantling the North Stand, were selected as its builders.

Scaffolding and Civil Engineering Services Ltd. was contracted to construct the Grand Stand. As well, C& H Associates and the Careng Group were selected Project Managers and Design Consultants respectively for the Grand Stand.

The tendering procedure used for construction of the Grand and North Stands, Queen's Park Savannah were as follows:-

- Contractors were selected through the sole selective mechanism.
- The NCC solicited the recommendations of the MOWI and based on these the Board approved the contractors.
- The MOWI monitored and evaluated the work of the contractors, on behalf of the NCC, recommended payments based on works completed and prepared the final accounts as it related to these projects.

### North Stand structure

- Prior to 1995, when the Queen's Park Savannah was controlled by the Turf Club, the NCC was granted temporary use of the space for Carnival. Demolition of the North Stand was necessary to facilitate horse racing, the annual Military Parade and other sporting events.
- Since the Commission has been given control of that section of the Queen's Park Savannah, the space occupied by the North Stand is still required for the annual Independence Parade and also provides a revenue stream from rentals for cultural and other events.
- If retention of the North Stand as a permanent structure is proven to be a viable proposal, the NCC must also take into consideration the following factors:
  - An alternative venue must be identified for the annual Independence Day Military Parade;
  - There is no demand for seating accommodation for 13000 plus patrons during the year and concert type activities are best accommodated at Queen's Hall or NAPA;
  - The NCC would increase its recurrent costs for maintenance, security and utilities without being able to offset increases by enhanced revenue; and
  - There is greater demand for the rental of open spaces to accommodate cultural, business and social events.

### Regional Carnival

NCC has launched Regional Carnival at La Horquetta/Talparo, Brazil Village.

In 2011/2012 fifty-three (53) registered carnival committees and groups benefitted from a subvention to assist in running carnival activities. The major challenges with the regional committees are:

- To ensure that the activities actually take place;

- To ensure various Committees are accountable for the funds disbursed;
- To ensure audited Statements of Accounts are produced (with a video or pictures of events);
- To ensure that the management capability at the Regional level is enhanced; and
- To ensure that the leadership role is rotated and not entrenched in one group of villagers.

Additionally, the following strategies are necessary to encourage small regional bands to remain in their areas:

- (i) getting Regional Committees to agree to pool resources to hold one (1) large event on Monday/Tuesday;
- (ii) NCC sponsorship of a special prize to be accessed by bands performing within their areas;
- (iii) having national artistes make guest appearances at Regional Carnival events on Carnival Tuesday;
- (iv) obtaining Cabinet approval for increased assistance to Regional Carnival Committees (not in major city / built up areas) for payment of Music/COTT and Police Officers for the main events;
- (v) having some of the regular Traditional Characters make appearances at Regional Carnivals on Carnival Tuesday.

### **Developing Traditional Mas**

Towards the preservation of the art form of carnival the NCC, in 2012, had engaged 7,000 children from schools throughout Trinidad in 17 sessions on activities relating to the preservation of traditional mas which they portrayed on Carnival Friday such as mas making, dance moves and songs.

The NCC has been approached to portray traditional carnival characters such as the Dame Lorraine, the Moko Jumbie; the Pierrot Grenade, the wild Indian; the fancy

Indian; the Black Indians and the Burrokeeets in countries such as Africa and at the London Olympics, England.

### **The Mas Academy**

The Mas Academy was closed on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012. The NCC however is in the process of identifying a new space for the academy.

### **Developing the Steel pan Industry**

The steel pan industry is affected by the following issues:

- ✓ The 11 acres allotted as the proposed site for the Pan Trinbago Headquarters which could be used as a chroming plant or factory remains incomplete although the proposed project was given to UDeCott to complete.
- ✓ Sourcing quality drums-Tuners have been faced with having to tune inferior drums which should not be handled as they could be poisonous.
- ✓ Importing drums: Steel pan drums are imported from countries like Venezuela and Chicago, USA.

### **NCC Copyright**

The NCC does not have any copyright. The NCBA has paid copyright up to 2010 and is in the process of working out and finalizing copyright for 2011 and 2012. Additionally, all moneys that relate to intellectual property which were received from broadcasters go directly into the interest group (NCBA) as they negotiate with the various artistes.

### **NCC's vision for the improvement of the Carnival System**

NCC's vision for the improvement of the Carnival System consists of the following:

- Act No. 9 of 1991 must be amended since it is limited in defining the true scope of the organization and the range of operational possibilities both local and international.
- Better distinction to be made when ascribing legal authority and responsibility for the planning and promotion of major events of carnival to the individual

groups since the membership of the Board consist of representatives of the three (3) Interest Groups, which themselves were incorporated by Acts of Parliament that gives to them very same or similar powers of authority for the running of Carnival as those given to the NCC.

- Legal authority that enacts greater relevance and encourages the striving for higher levels of cultural and commercial viability is warranted. The current Act does not arm the NCC to function in the full spirit and intent of the law.
- Amendment of the Act is critical and urgent and must be undertaken simultaneously with a review of the Acts which incorporated Pantrinbago, TUCO and NCBA.
- The composition of the membership of the Board must be reconsidered and must include representation from other groups such as artisans and designers.
- The NCC to be positioned to strengthen its organization through utilization of technical assistance, training, the introduction of new media and technologies and diversification of financial support.
- The NCC to draw from the Private Sector required resources, through a series of collaborative investments. To manage and improve its approach to doing business the NCC shall as well, develop and implement appropriate policies, procedures and good practices.

In light of their vision for improvement, during the period 2012-2015, the NCC plans to execute the following strategies:-

1. Develop and document a blue print of the National Carnival System which fully documents its activities.
2. Identify new and diverse sources and funding.
3. Build organizational presence through the creation of subsidiary industries and agencies.
4. Develop a framework to secure the legal, financial and social well-being of carnival artistes, artisans and their creative works.
5. Review of the legal framework for the operations of the NCC.

6. Develop linkages and protocols for Joint Ventures, Partnerships and other forms of working relationships locally, regionally, and internationally.

However, one of the issues with implementing strategies identified for 2012-2015 was that there is need to strengthen the management of the NCC to be able to move forward operationally and allow the board to become strategic.

The following programmes and activities were identified as strategies for improving the Carnival System:

- i. Develop Regulations for the Act
- ii. Develop a Legislative Agenda with respect to Act No. 9 of 1991
- iii. Develop and implement the following:
  - a comprehensive Business Plan;
  - a comprehensive Marketing Plan;
  - a Human Resources Plan;
  - a Communication Strategy;
  - a Records Management System; and
  - a Quality Performance Plan that embraces all aspects of its operations.
- iv. Establish a capital programme to continue facilities upgrade at the Queen's Park Savannah.
- v. Undertake professional development and training of staff as well as the hosting of Conferences and Seminars towards expanding organizational capacity at all levels.
- vi. Participate in national, regional and international activities related to carnival as a heritage festival capable of sustaining economic activity in the arts and business.
- vii. Undertake investigative studies, research projects and customer impact surveys.

The major goals over the period 2012 to 2015 were identified as follows:

- Rebranding of the NCC to improve its image, operation practices and the quality of its core products.
- Enhance/upgrade the following functional areas of operations:

|                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Events management     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Create a new face(image) for the Section and rebrand the Products e.g. Re-conceptualize and repackage Dimanche Gras;</li> <li>✓ Improve quality delivery; and</li> <li>✓ Appeal to wider and more diverse audiences by use of technologies.</li> </ul> |
| Research and Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Include Innovation as an area of responsibility with a mandate to provide opportunities and incentives for new craftspeople, ideas and skills.</li> </ul>                                                                                              |
| Human Resources       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Include a formal performance appraisal.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Marketing and PR      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To be brought under the umbrella of Corporate Communications as a new support Division with International Relations and Customer Service as an area with focused responsibilities.</li> </ul>                                                          |

- Establish a section with responsibility for Standards and Quality Assurance.
- Strengthen the capacity and capabilities for executing the Regional Carnival Function phasing in to begin in time for Carnival 2013.
- Collaborate with the Ministry of Education in the area of Visual and Performing Arts as it relate s to the history, costume, music, dance and speech in traditional masquerade.
- Further the research agenda by exploring possibilities for collaboration with universities, local and foreign.
- Provide resources to support expansion of Regional Carnivals and showcasing of the products.
- Create opportunities for small businesses to emerge.

## **Ensuring Quality in the operations of the NCC**

The NCC will ensure that the delivery of its programmes and services satisfies the quality expected by its stakeholders through a process which ensures that effectiveness, efficiency and continuous improvement are built into its operations.

A simple three (3) step approach, adapted from principles and practices of operational excellence, would be employed to ensure consistency and ease of management:

1. Quality Assurance;
2. Continuous Assessment; and
3. Continuous Improvement.

## **Challenges faced by the NCC**

### **Funding for the NCC and Major Interest Groups**

The independence of Interest groups grants them with the responsibility to operate within their approved allocation to ensure that events are viable and sustainable over the long term. However, with a greater level of autonomy there is the possibility of the interest groups becoming less dependent on the State. The NCC on the other hand if given the responsibility to oversee all allocations subsequent to their role change can prevent this issue from occurring e.g. NCC ensuring benefits for those events with social benefits are maximized

### **Assistance to Groups/Individuals**

A small sum of allocation is available for assistance to groups and individuals which is insufficient to promote greater participation by stakeholders in the Carnival and to promote the preservation of the traditions of Carnival.

### **Staffing issues**

There is need for the organization to assess its present capability to determine the staff requirements for optimum efficiency. There is also need to re-tool personnel to fulfill the demands generated by a new functional structure. The Human Resource Sub-Committee is currently reviewing the staff structure as it relates to the goals and objectives of the organization. A Performance Appraisal System is currently being developed and is expected to be implemented by year's end.

### **Research and Development**

Currently, the Commission does not fully perform the function of preserving the history and artifacts of Carnival, this is largely as a result of the lack of the necessary skill capacity, accommodation and equipment to properly maintain and store carnival related historical items. However, a pilot initiative involving the up-dating of the Commission's database on Carnival competition results from 1900 to date. Plans are also to launch a programme to capture the bibliographical data on some eleven (11) Traditional Characters deemed to be exponents of the art form. The establishment of a Carnival Museum to preserve and collect artifact of the major exponent of the act is viewed as critical by the NCC.

### **Operation of Volunteer Committees**

Sub-committees, which are appointed by the Board under Section 8 (1) of the Act, are formed to assist the Board in implementing decisions and executing functions related to various elements of carnival. These committees consist of a Commissioner with the direct responsibility for reporting to the Board, a Chairperson and several members. Committee members are selected based on their expertise, work experience and/or training in the functional area which would be the responsibility of that Committee. Members with skills in engineering, event planning, management and construction are preferred.

Committees are generally constituted by October, and some begin as early as September depending on the area to be supervised. Chairpersons of the Boards are guided by the decisions of the Board and report all activities and decisions taken to the Board through the Commissioner. Services are voluntary and members are paid a small stipend at the conclusion of carnival related activities.

The traditional sub-committees are as follows:-

- Accreditation
- Construction & Services
- Finance
- Launch of Carnival
- Regional Carnival
- Ticketing
- Adjudication
- Dimanche Gras
- Hospitality
- Operations
- Tenders

### **Security**

The NCC cooperates with Security forces to determine the security plan and strategies to treat with the social challenges which threaten the safety of nationals and visitors during the festival. In addition to the police presence at venues/ parade routes, the NCC increases the level of security at areas under the Commission's control via manpower and technology.

### **Content of Shows**

A major challenge with the Parade of the Bands managed by the National Carnival Bands Association NCBA is to manage the Band flow to eliminate or at least reduce the 6-7 hour wait to enter the Savannah. Another challenge which is currently under review is the improvement of the content and production of the Dimanche Gras show to make it more marketable internationally.

### **Provision of Infrastructure**

Another challenge encountered annually is improving the infrastructure to provide for and ensure the comfort of patrons attending the shows.

As such, the NCC does not envisage being able to undertake any upgrade of the Grand Stand facility prior to the start of Carnival 2013 activities. The Commission is currently looking at two (2) design proposals for upgrades to the Grand Stand, which would take these concerns into consideration.

### **Ticketing**

The Commission initiated the re-examination of the processes and decisions governing the design, printing, distribution and sale of tickets for Carnival events in 2008. The NCC plans by year 2013, to increase its sale and distribution of tickets by utilizing the World Wide Web.

### **Adjudication**

The NCC in 2003 undertook the process to systematically review and streamline Competition Rules. The function of adjudication has been performed by the NCBA since 2010 to allow the adjudication process to remain independent of all organizations. The NCC endorses initiatives by member bodies to enhance the adjudication process by the computerization of the judging system and continuous training of judges. The NCC plans to undertake a comprehensive re-evaluation of adjudication system for all member bodies in 2013

### **Development of a Strategic Plan**

Urgent action is required to commission the development of a holistic Strategic Plan which encompasses the ideas and objectives of cultural stakeholders.

### **Route for Mas**

The present route used via Woodbrook or Federation Park poses a challenge for security forces. It was suggested that the other bands can use another route for mas around Port of Spain

### **Spots for vendors**

The NCC is responsible for vending around the Savannah however, vending in Port of Spain, from Memorial Park along the avenue is the responsibility of the Mayor. The NCC has also had conversations to discuss how to deal with vending and a suggestion was to sell spots on the pavements rather than sell booths. As such, the NCC is in consultation with the powers such as the licensing authority and the police who have the responsibility of issuing the permits for the routes.

### **Other Carnival Issues**

- The board determines whether competitions take place.
- There are several large bands with over 1,500 masqueraders; the idea of having specific bands on separate days does propose a great challenge.
- A major problem encountered at Carnival is the long time spent on the stage which creates a congested situation. This is particularly true of larger bands with approximately 2,000-3,000 masqueraders.
- The capacity of the Grand Stand is approximately 6,000 which is not enough considering the number of spectators present at events.

## **OBSERVATIONS/FINDINGS**

From the oral evidence and the written submissions received from key stakeholders of Carnival, your Committee has been informed of the operations of the National Carnival Commission. The following was discovered:

### **Legislative Requirements**

The effectiveness of the NCC's operations is being hampered by the current Act #9 of 1991 since it gives greater autonomy to interest groups in the planning and promotion of major Carnival events. Also, the Act limits the NCC's ability to raise funds through avenues other than government subventions.

### **Development of Steelpan Industry**

The Steelpan Industry is currently being consumed by other markets while Trinidad and Tobago via the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism, Pan Trinbago and the National Carnival Commission are not maximizing the benefits that can be derived from the industry.

### **Live Streaming for Carnival Events and Copyright**

Broadcasting of carnival events is being exploited by entities other than the NCC, the body charged with promoting carnival. Notwithstanding the fact that "works of mas" are included specifically in Trinidad and Tobago's Copyright Act and international agreements like the EU\_CARIFORUM EPA the NCC does not appear to include activities to monetize the constituent elements of carnival on its development agenda.

### **Pan Trinbago Headquarters project**

The Pan Trinbago Headquarters project has been at a standstill for a number of years. As a result, the steel used has been deteriorating requiring immediate attention. Additionally, further inaction will result in the loss of monies already invested in the project to the disadvantage of taxpayers. Although it was stated that the headquarters is expected to be completed in late 2013 there should be a strict

deadline for the contractors to adhere to in order to ensure its completion in a timely manner.

### **Tendering Process used by the NCC**

The current tendering process used by the NCC has been an area of public disquiet and of great concern to contractors. There is therefore urgent need to review the tendering process employed as it appears unfair and unclear. Apart from this, there is great dissatisfaction with the short space of time allotted for tendering which impedes the process of ensuring value for money and ensuring efficient use of state funds.

### **Forensic Auditing of NCC and Associated Bodies**

The need for forensic audits to be undertaken on the NCC and associated bodies is imperative to ensuring that no form of inconsistency lies within the NCC and associated bodies. The Sub-committee endorses the call for a forensic audit of the expenditure of funds allocated to the NCC and its associated bodies.

### **Marketing of Carnival**

The Committee acknowledges the efforts of the NCC to preserve traditional mas, a main attraction for international visitors. However, the Committee recognizes the urgent need to develop a strategy for marketing Trinidad and Tobago's Carnival internationally.

### **Congestion along the Parade Route on Carnival Tuesday**

When the parade of the Bands returned to the Savannah Stage the issue of congestion at the Savannah on Carnival Tuesday returned as well. It seems obvious that seven large bands with over 1500 masqueraders each, in addition to the small and medium bands and individuals whose main desire is to cross the Stage at the Queen's Park Savannah on Carnival Tuesday cannot all achieve this desire within the hours allotted. To restore this parade to the status of a spectator attraction and

hopefully increase attendance and possible pay-per-view clientele, the NCC should consider consulting all stakeholders with a view to rationalizing the time on stage per performance or the format for the judging.

### **The Late Construction of the North and Grand Stands**

Key stakeholders in the carnival have made several complaints about the late construction of the stands before carnival events commence at the Savannah. There have also been complaints about the late construction of other stands located at Adam Smith Square, Woodbrook and at South Quay, Port of Spain. The Subcommittee, however, understands that the NCC cannot commit funds to the project until the budget is read and funds are released to the Commission.

Selective Tendering was done by the NCC based on the technical advice received from the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure on the two main stands and the other stands that are located at the different judging points in Port of Spain.

### **Location of NCC Offices**

There is need for the NCC to acquire an alternative location to relocate their office and those of TUCO, Pan Trinbago and NCBA to achieve cost efficiency with respect to rental for the offices.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Having regard to the foregoing, your Committee offers the ensuing recommendations to the National Carnival Commission and its stakeholders:

### **Legal Requirements**

Act #9 of 1991 should be examined and amended to allow the NCC to:-

1. perform effective oversight and ensure greater transparency in the affairs of its associated bodies.
2. permit the NCC to raise funds through other avenues.
3. review the membership of the Board to allow more involvement of the stakeholders of the Carnival community e.g. NCDF, designers etc.
4. revise the activities of the Standing committees.

### **Developing the Steelpan Industry**

The NCC should explore other avenues to expand the steel pan industry such as purchasing drums for resale while the pan factory project is being completed since a drum costs about \$60 and \$500 to chrome while one pan can be sold for approximately \$6,000 to \$10,000.

### **Live Streaming for Carnival Events and Copyright**

The Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism and the NCC should pursue the obtaining of relevant copyright and assume the responsibility for local and international broadcast of carnival events.

### **Completion of Pan Trinbago Headquarters**

Mindful that immediate attention is required to salvage previous works on the project the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism should be given the responsibility for the completion of Pan Trinbago Headquarters since the former contractors seem incapacitated and hence unable to bring the project to fruition.

### **Tendering Process**

In order to ensure transparency in the NCCs Tendering Process it is strongly recommended that until new procedures are adopted for all government procurement the NCC should strictly adhere to the existing applicable procedures.

### **Forensic Auditing for NCC**

To ensure a strong accountable and transparent NCC a forensic audit should be carried out on NCC accounts for the period 2009-2012 including the monies provided to associated bodies as soon as possible.

### **Strengthening the Leadership Role of the NCC**

To ensure that associated bodies are held accountable for their actions the Committee appeals to the NCC to exercise its leadership position where those associated bodies are concerned and adopt whatever measures may be necessary to ensure that they comply, particularly where annual reports, accounts and audits are concerned.

### **Marketing of Carnival**

The Committee recommends that the NCC develop marketing strategies to promote T&T Carnival across the globe.

### **Congestion along the Parade Route on Carnival Tuesday**

- The resumption of '*mas on the move*' which would allow for a smoother flow of the bands around Port of Spain and environs.
- Bandleaders should be encouraged to have their masqueraders parade in full costume on both days and so that bands could be judged on either

Carnival Monday or Tuesday so all of the bands would enjoy equal opportunity to parade at the Queens Park Savannah and all other venues; alternatively

- Bands that have theatrical performances for their introductions could utilize the Savannah Stage on Monday thus allowing a smoother flow of the bands on Carnival Tuesday. This new arrangement will allow spectators to be able enjoy the mas on both days and may encourage more patrons to come to the stands on carnival Monday and possibly open an opportunity for an internet pay-per view audience.

### **The Late Construction of the North and Grand Stands**

The late start to the planning of Carnival activities has caused most of the delays to the construction of the Stands due to the fact that since the financial year begins on October 01 funds cannot be released to the NCC until late October causing a delay in the tendering process for the construction of the Stands. However, if the NCC and NCBA should begin planning and promoting carnival as a viable profit making industry; the NCC would then have the revenue to start early tendering of the construction of the Stands.

### **Location of NCC Offices**

The NCC should be allowed to utilize the space located under the Grand Stand to house offices for the Commission and its associated bodies in order to reduce the cost of rental.

Your Committee respectfully submits the foregoing for the consideration of the Parliament.

**Sgd.**  
**Mrs. Corinne Baptiste-Mc Knight**  
**Chairman**

**Sgd.**  
**Prof. Harold Ramkissoon**  
**Vice-Chairman**

**Sgd.**  
**Mrs. Carolyn Seepersad - Bachan, MP**  
**Member**

**Sgd.**  
**Mr. Emmanuel George**  
**Member**

**Sgd.**  
**Mr. Ganga Singh**  
**Member**

**Sgd.**  
**Dr. Delmon Baker, MP**  
**Member**

**Sgd.**  
**Mr. Jairam Seemungal, MP**  
**Member**

**Sgd.**  
**Ms. Stacy Roopnarine, MP**  
**Member**

**Sgd.**  
**Mrs. Christlyn Moore**  
**Member**

**Sgd.**  
**Dr. Amery Browne, MP**  
**Member**

**Sgd.**  
**Mrs. Patricia Mc Intosh, MP**  
**Member**

**Sgd.**  
**Mr. Faris Al-Rawi**  
**Member**



# APPENDIX I

## BUSINESS ENTITIES

**List of Ministries, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises that fall under the purview of this Committee:**

**1. ARTS AND MULTICULTURALISM**

Carnival Institute  
Naparima Bowl  
National Academy for the Performing Arts (NAPA)  
National Carnival Commission of Trinidad and Tobago  
National Cultural Commission  
National Theatre Arts Company  
Queen's Hall Board  
Trinidad and Tobago National Steel Symphony Orchestra

**2. ATTORNEY GENERAL**

Anti-Corruption Investigation Bureau  
Central Authority  
Council of Legal Education  
Environmental Commission  
Equal Opportunity Commission  
Equal Opportunity Tribunal  
Hugh Wooding Law School  
Industrial Court  
International Law and Human Rights Unit  
Law Reform Commission  
Tax Appeal Board

**3. COMMUNICATIONS**

Board of Film Censors  
Caribbean New Media Group Limited (CNMG)  
Government Information Services Limited (GISL)  
National Broadcasting Network (NBN)

**4. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

National Association of Village and Community Councils  
Village Councils  
Export Centres Company Limited

**5. EDUCATION**

Local School Boards  
National Commission for UNESCO  
National Library and Information System Authority (NALIS)  
Education Facilities Company Limited  
National Schools Dietary Services Limited

## **6. ENERGY AND ENERGY AFFAIRS**

Lake Asphalt of Trinidad and Tobago (1978) Limited  
National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited  
National Quarries Company Limited  
Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (PETROTRIN)  
Trinidad and Tobago National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited  
Alutrint Limited  
Alutech Limited  
La Brea Industrial Development Corporation  
National Agro Chemicals Limited  
National Energy Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago Limited  
NATPET Investment Company Limited  
NATSTAR Manufacturing Company Limited  
NGC NGL Company Limited  
NGC Trinidad and Tobago LNG Limited  
Phoenix Park Gas Processors Limited  
Powergen  
Trinidad and Tobago LNG Limited  
Trinidad and Tobago Marine Petroleum Company Limited  
Trinidad Nitrogen Company Limited  
Trinidad Northern Areas Limited  
TRINMAR Limited  
TRINTOC Services Limited

## **7. ENVIRONMENT AND WATER RESOURCES**

Institute of Marine Affairs (IMA)  
The Environmental Management Agency  
The Green Fund Advisory Committee  
Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA)  
—Water Resources Agency

## **8. FINANCE AND THE ECONOMY**

Central Tenders Board  
National Insurance Appeals Tribunal  
National Insurance Board  
National Insurance Property Development Company Limited (NIPDEC)  
National Lotteries Control Board (NLCB)  
Trinidad and Tobago Civil Aviation Authority  
Trinidad and Tobago Unit Trust Corporation  
Corporation Sole  
Divestments  
Investments  
BWIA West Indies Airways Limited (New BWIA)  
Caribbean Airlines Limited  
First Citizens Holdings Company Limited  
National Enterprises Limited (NEL)  
Rum Distillers Limited  
The Economy Sugar Manufacturing Company Limited  
Trinidad and Tobago Forest Products Company Limited (TANTEAK)

Taurus Services Limited  
Tourism and Industrial Development Company (TIDCO)  
Trinidad and Tobago (BWIA International) Airways Corporation (Old BWIA)  
Caribbean Investment Corporation  
Trinidad and Tobago Development Finance Limited  
Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance Company Limited  
Caribbean Development Network Limited  
Caribbean Microfinance Limited  
Colonial Life Insurance Company Limited (CLICO)  
First Citizens Bank Limited (FCB)  
First Citizens Mortgage & Trust Company Limited  
First Citizens Investment Services Limited  
Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Agency Company Limited

## **9. FOOD PRODUCTION**

Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago  
Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI)  
Cocoa and Coffee Industry Board  
Livestock and Livestock Products Board  
Caroni (1975) Limited  
National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO)  
Agricultural Development Bank  
Caribbean Food Corporation  
Sea Food Industry Limited

## **10. FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

## **11. HEALTH**

Boards regulating the Practice of Medicine and Related Professions  
Children's LIFE Fund Board of Management  
Dental Council of Trinidad and Tobago  
Drug Advisory Committee  
Eastern Regional Health Authority  
Emergency Medical Personnel Council of Trinidad and Tobago  
Food Advisory Committee  
Medical Council of Trinidad and Tobago  
National Emergency Ambulance Service Authority  
North Central Regional Health Authority  
North West Regional Health Authority  
Nurses and Midwives Council of Trinidad and Tobago  
Opticians Council of Trinidad and Tobago  
Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Board  
Pharmacy Council of Trinidad and Tobago  
Princess Elizabeth Home for Handicapped Children  
South West Regional Health Authority

## **12. HOUSING, LAND AND MARINE AFFAIRS**

Estate Management and Business Development Company Limited (EMBD)  
Land Settlement Agency

Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee  
Housing Development Corporation  
Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago Limited  
Community-based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Company Limited

### **13. JUSTICE**

Criminal Injuries Compensation Board  
Legal Aid and Advisory Authority  
Police Complaints Authority  
Sentencing Commission

### **14. LABOUR AND SMALL AND MICRO ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT**

Boilers Examiners Board  
Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies  
Friendly Societies  
Minimum Wages Board  
National Productivity Council  
Occupational Safety and Health Authority  
Registration, Recognition and Certification Board  
National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited

### **15. LEGAL AFFAIRS**

Law Revision Commission  
Rent Assessment Board  
Prices Council

# APPENDIX II

## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**MINUTES OF THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENT  
APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO AND REPORT ON GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES (GROUP I),  
STATUTORY AUTHORITIES AND STATE ENTERPRISES FALLING UNDER THOSE MINISTRIES, HELD  
IN THE ARNOLD THOMASOS ROOM (EAST), LEVEL 6; AND THE J. HAMILTON MAURICE ROOM, MEZZANINE  
FLOOR, OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT, TOWER D, THE PORT OF SPAIN, IWFC,  
1A WRIGHTSON ROAD, PORT OF SPAIN ON FRIDAY APRIL 20, 2012 AT 9:36 A.M.**

**PRESENT**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

|                                 |               |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Mrs. Corinne Baptiste–Mc Knight | Chairman      |
| Prof. Harold Ramkissoon         | Vice-Chairman |
| Mr. Emmanuel George             | Member        |
| Ms. Stacy Roopnarine, MP        | Member        |
| Mrs. Verna St. Rose-Greaves     | Member        |
| Mr. Jairam Seemungal, MP        | Member        |
| Mr. Faris Al-Rawi               | Member        |
| Mrs. Patricia Mc Intosh, MP     | Member        |

**ABSENT**

|                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Mrs. Carolyn Seepersad–Bachan, MP | Member (Excused) |
| Dr. Delmon Baker, MP              | Member (Excused) |
| Mr. Danny Maharaj                 | Member (Excused) |
| Dr. Amery Browne, MP              | Member           |

**PRESENT**

**SECRETARIAT**

|                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mrs. Lily Broomes          | Secretary                   |
| Ms. Khisha Peterkin        | Assistant Secretary         |
| Mrs. Katharina Gokool-Mark | Graduate Research Assistant |

**ALSO PRESENT**

**Officials from the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism and  
the National Carnival Commission (NCC)**

|                     |                              |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Mrs. Jennifer Jones | Permanent Secretary          |
| Mr. Clarence Moe    | Chief Executive Officer- NCC |
| Mr. Patrick Arnold  | Chairman                     |
| Mr. Don Sylvester   | Deputy Chairman              |
| Ms. Carol Wolfe     | Corporate Secretary          |
| Ms. Yvonne Smart    | Human Resource Manager       |
| Ms. Gloria Balbos   | Finance Manager              |

## COMMENCEMENT

- 1.1 The meeting was called to order at 9:36 a.m. The Chairman welcomed Members.
- 1.2 The following Members were asked to be excused from the day's meeting:
- Mr. Danny Maharaj due to illness
  - Dr. Amery Browne, MP (*absent*)

## CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE NINTH MEETING (January 20, 2012)

2.1 The Chairman invited the Committee to consider the Minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on January 20, 2012. There being no corrections or omissions, the Minutes were duly confirmed by a motion moved by Prof. Harold Ramkissoon and seconded by Mr. Jairam Seemungal.

## MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE NINTH MEETING

3.1 There being no matters arising, the Chairman moved onto the next item on the agenda.

## CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE TENTH MEETING (March 16, 2012)

4.1 The Chairman invited the Committee to consider the Minutes of the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on March 16, 2012. There being no corrections or omissions, the Minutes were duly confirmed by a motion moved by Ms. Stacy Roopnarine and seconded by Mr. Jairam Seemungal.

## MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE TENTH MEETING

- 5.1 The Chairman referred Members to the following matters arising from the Minutes:
- **Page 2 Paragraph 2.4** – Chairman informed the Committee that the Ministry of Health was granted an extension to Tuesday April 24, 2012 to provide the additional information which was requested by Members.

## CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT THIRD REPORT re: *Legal Aid and Advisory Authority*

The Committee accepted two of the recommendations put forward by Mr. Emmanuel George and changes were subsequently made to the Report.

*(The meeting was suspended at 10:11a.m.)*

## **EXAMINATION OF THE OFFICIALS FROM THE MINISTRY OF ARTS AND MULTICULTURALISM AND THE NATIONAL CARNIVAL COMMISSION (NCC)**

### **Re: Inquiry into the Administration and Methods of the Functioning of the National Carnival Commission (NCC)**

6.1 The meeting resumed in the J. Hamilton Maurice Room, Mezzanine Floor at 10:00 a.m. and introductions were exchanged.

6.2 The Chairman invited the Chairman of the NCC to give opening remarks. The Chairman informed the Committee that he would be unable to comment on the period in question since he assumed office in 2012 and as such, the CEO Mr. Clarence Moe made opening remarks.

6.3 The following topics were discussed:

#### ***(a) The Changes to the Mandate of the NCC***

- The NCC still provides the overall infrastructure and determines policy based on its remit under the Act, even though each group has the responsibility for planning its own events. The three major stakeholders within the Commission are the Trinidad Unified Calypsonians Organisation (TUCO), the National Carnival Bands Association (NCBA) and Pan Trinidad whose representatives on the Board allow for the inclusion of all groups in the decision-making process.

#### ***(b) Congestion Along the Parade Route on Carnival Monday and Tuesday***

There are seven large bands with over 1500 masqueraders each, in addition to the small and medium bands whose desire is to cross the Stage at the Queen's Park Savannah on Carnival Tuesday. This, however, results in congestion on the streets. Recommendations suggested by the NCC officials to resolve this issue include:

- (i) The resumption of 'mas on the move' which would allow for a smoother flow of the bands around Port of Spain and environs but generates little revenue due to the smaller capacity stands.
- (ii) Masqueraders should parade in full costume on both days and bands should be alternated on Carnival Monday and Tuesday so all of the bands would not be required to enter the Queens Park Savannah on Carnival Tuesday; or
- (iii) Bands that have theatrical performances for their introductions should utilize the Savannah on Monday to allow a smoother flow of the bands on Carnival Tuesday.  
This new arrangement will allow spectators to be able enjoy the mas on both days and may encourage more patrons to come to the stands on carnival Monday.

***(c) The Late Construction of the North and Grand Stands***

- The Ministry of Works and Infrastructure provides technical advice to the NCC and is responsible for the tendering and awarding of contracts for the construction of the two main stands and the other stands that are located at the different judging points in Port of Spain.
- The reason for the late construction of the stands is due to the fact that the NCC cannot commit funds to the project until the budget is read and until funds are released to the Commission.
- In November 2010 the Government announced the return of the parade of the bands to the Queens Park Savannah in 2011 which only gave the Commission about 2 months to award tenders and construct the stands.

***(d) The Late Payment to Service Providers***

The small contractors who provided different services during carnival period were not compensated on time however, the issue has been rectified.

***(e) Toilet Facilities in the North Stand***

The toilet facilities behind the North Stand were erected for the entire carnival season to facilitate major events such as Panorama Semi-Finals and the Preliminaries of the Kings and Queens Competition which had about 100 contestants.

***(f) The Challenge at the Panorama Semifinals***

- The new mandate of the NCC allows for each stakeholder to be responsible for its own events; Pantrinbago therefore has to be able to prove they are a viable entity.
- The Board recognizes that Pantrinbago's promotion of 'feteing' and partying on the Greens while the steel bands perform takes attention away from the steel pan and is currently deliberating the way forward.
- On the other hand, the revenue generated from this event has doubled from previous years due to the addition of the area called the 'Greens' which accommodates the persons who prefer to party. This has posed a challenge for the Board, should economics take priority over the promotion of pan music.

***(g) The Commercialization of Carnival***

- The NCC has tried over the years to generate profits from carnival; but this has proven to be very difficult. The monies collected from gate receipts are not

enough and the organization has tried to benefit from the television rights, pay-per-view and live streams over the internet. However, due to the lack of proper technology persons were able to tap into the feeds resulting in a loss of revenue to the NCC.

- The organization has also lost revenue from foreign photographers opting not to pay the licensing fee to take pictures at the Queen's Park Savannah but to do it along the route and at the other judging points in Port of Spain which has proven to be very difficult to police.
- Members of the Committee proposed that the NCC should hire marshals to patrol the route to prevent persons from taking pictures without a license or they could charge a fee to persons entering the venue which would include the licensing cost.
- The NCC has over the years funded several cultural groups throughout Trinidad due to the decline of private sponsorship.

#### ***(h) Preservation of the Traditional Carnival Characters***

- Presently the NCC has developed a training programme for school children throughout Trinidad with tutors appointed by the NCC to preserve the traditions of carnival through the young people.
- Students are taught mas costume production from purchasing materials to making the costumes; they also learn to portray the different traditional characters through dance and song. The students then parade throughout the streets of Port of Spain on carnival Friday, this year there were over 7, 000 students. This entire process is recorded on video.
- The Deputy Chairman informed the Committee that requests to the NCC from foreign carnival organisations are for the traditional characters and not the beads and bikini type mas. The NCC has been approached by various countries in Africa and even Europe to develop traditional mas in those regions.
- Trinidad and Tobago has also been invited to portray traditional Carnival Characters at the London Olympics.

#### ***(i) The Development of Carnival in Rural Communities***

- The NCC Act provides for a Regional Carnival Committee which is chaired by Mr. Israfil Ali and based at the NCC's Head Office on Cipriani Boulevard.
- There are Outreach Programmes in several communities. Investigations are carried out to determine if a particular district will qualify to be placed under the Regional Carnival Committee; at present the village of Brazil is under review.

***(j) Rental Fees***

- The rental cost of the NCC's office is currently \$250,000.00 annually inclusive of rental fees for its stakeholders; the NCC's fees are \$111,000.00.
- The Committee suggested that the NCC utilize the space under the Grand Stand for offices instead of renting external offices to which the officials claimed that the proposal is before the Ministry to be budgeted for in the next year. There are plans to construct a mezzanine floor as well with funds received through the IDF which should be completed in 2014.

***(k) The Carnival Institute***

Several administrative changes were made in the organization as well as to the structure of the programmes offered.

***(l) Human Resource***

- The NCC currently has 53 employees:  
Administration 25 persons and 3 temporary employees; 6 permanent security officers and 7 maintenance personnel
- At the Carnival Institute 5 persons are employed;  
On contract there are 6 managers and 2 middle management personnel
- The NCC follows the general contract rules provided by the Chief Personnel Officer (CPO) and in general the public service.

**6.4 The officials were also requested to forward documentation on the following:**

- A copy of the NCC 's Tendering Rules.
- An explanation of the relationship between the Tenders Committee of the Board and the subcommittee on Tenders.
- In relation to the construction of the Grand and North Stands:
  - Procurement documents;
  - A copy of all contracts awarded;
  - Assessment from a quantity surveyor of the actual works performed;
  - A list of all construction, user and legal issues that may have arisen due to the awarding of the contracts;
- A copy of the Organisational Chart.
- An explanation in respect of the claim that NCC employees received additional monies for work performed under their job specifications at the Carnival Village.

- With reference to the information the NCC provided at page 6, provide a breakdown of the term ***Other Income*** and the ***Expenditure of \$46 million***.
- A copy of the budget which was referred to in the document provided but was not attached.
- An explanation on the nature of the issue between UdeCott and Pantrinbago about the incomplete works of its proposed Headquarters at Orange Grove and the NCC's recommendations to rectify this issue.
- The number of contract employees at NCC and the term of these contracts.
- The process of contract termination.
- The rules that govern NCC's interaction with promoters and the private sector in relation to sponsorship.

6.5 The Chairman thanked the officials for their attendance.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

7.1 The Committee agreed that the NCC should return on May 18, 2012 to continue the examination.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

8.1 The Chairman thanked Members and the meeting was adjourned to **Friday May 18, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.**

8.2 The adjournment was taken at 11:57 p.m.

**I certify that these Minutes are true and correct.**

Sgd.  
Chairman

Sgd.  
Secretary

**April 27, 2012**

**MINUTES OF THE THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENT  
APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO AND REPORT ON GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES (GROUP I),  
STATUTORY AUTHORITIES AND STATE ENTERPRISES FALLING UNDER THOSE MINISTRIES, HELD  
IN THE ARNOLD THOMASOS ROOM (EAST), LEVEL 6; AND THE J. HAMILTON MAURICE ROOM, MEZZANINE  
FLOOR, OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT, TOWER D, THE PORT OF SPAIN, IWFC,  
1A WRIGHTSON ROAD, PORT OF SPAIN ON FRIDAY JUNE 22, 2012 AT 9:00 A.M.**

**PRESENT**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

|                                   |               |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Mrs. Corinne Baptiste–Mc Knight   | Chairman      |
| Prof. Harold Ramkissoon           | Vice-Chairman |
| Mr. Emmanuel George               | Member        |
| Mrs. Verna St. Rose-Greaves       | Member        |
| Mr. Jairam Seemungal, MP          | Member        |
| Mr. Faris Al-Rawi                 | Member        |
| Mrs. Patricia Mc Intosh, MP       | Member        |
| Dr. Amery Browne, MP              | Member        |
| Mrs. Carolyn Seepersad–Bachan, MP | Member        |
| Ms. Stacy Roopnarine, MP          | Member        |

**ABSENT**

|                      |        |
|----------------------|--------|
| Dr. Delmon Baker, MP | Member |
| Mr. Danny Maharaj    | Member |

**PRESENT**

**SECRETARIAT**

|                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mrs. Lily Broomes          | Secretary                   |
| Ms. Khisha Peterkin        | Assistant Secretary         |
| Mrs. Katharina Gokool-Mark | Graduate Research Assistant |

**ALSO PRESENT**

**Persons who made Submissions**

Mr. David Cameron  
Mrs. Rosalind Gabriel  
Mr. Michael Aguiton  
Mr. Dune Ali

**Officials from the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism and  
the National Carnival Commission (NCC)**

Mrs. Jennifer Jones  
Mr. Clarence Moe  
Mr. Patrick Arnold  
Mr. Don Sylvester  
Ms. Carol Wolfe  
Ms. Yvonne Smart  
Ms. Gloria Balbos

Permanent Secretary  
Chief Executive Officer- NCC  
Chairman  
Deputy Chairman  
Corporate Secretary  
Human Resource Manager  
Finance Manager

**COMMENCEMENT**

1.3 The meeting was called to order at 9:42 a.m. The Chairman welcomed Members.

1.4 The following Members were asked to be excused from the day's meeting:

- Dr. Delmon Baker, MP
- Mr. Danny Maharaj

**CONFIRMATION OF THE REVISED MINUTES OF THE ELEVENTH MEETING (April 20, 2012)**

2.1 The Chairman invited the Committee to consider the revised minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on April 20, 2012. There being no corrections or omissions, the Minutes were duly confirmed by a motion moved by Prof. Harold Ramkissoon and seconded by Mr. Jairam Seemungal.

**CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE TWELFTH MEETING (JUNE 15, 2012)**

3.1 The Chairman invited the Committee to consider the Minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on June 20, 2012. There being no corrections or omissions, the Minutes were duly confirmed by a motion moved by Mr. Emmanuel George and seconded by Prof. Harold Ramkissoon.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE TWELFTH MEETING**

4.1 The Chairman referred Members to the following matters arising from the Minutes:

- **Item 8.3** – The Committee agreed that the next entity to be examined will be the Ministry of Education. The Committee will focus on Primary School Education: the initiative of the Ministry to include moral, ethical and spiritual values into the school system, counseling and guidance, physical education and the school curriculum.

**DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PERSONS WHO MADE SUBMISSIONS**

5.1 The stakeholders were invited to join the meeting. Introductions were made.

5.2 After some discussions the following perennial problems which affect masqueraders, vendors and bandleaders were highlighted:

- The National Carnival Commission's (NCC) poor management of its stakeholders
- Inadequate infrastructure along the parade route for both junior and adult masqueraders
- Congestion along the parade route on Carnival Tuesday;
- Inadequate consultation with bandleaders;
- The late start of the planning of carnival every year by the NCC;
- The reported lack of accountability and transparency demonstrated by the National Carnival Bands Association (NCBA) with regards to the management of its subventions;
- Poor infrastructure at the Savannah for the Carnival King and Queen Competitions; and
- The NCBA's failure to be innovative and to provide incentives to the public to increase the attendance at pre-carnival events at the Savannah.

5.3 The stakeholders were asked to provide in writing any further opinions they had on the areas previously highlighted.

5.4 The Committee agreed to the proposal that the stakeholders be invited to the next meeting to continue the discussion on matters affecting the NCBA and the NCC.

5.5 Members thanked the stakeholders for their attendance and insightful presentations.

## **EXAMINATION OF THE OFFICIALS FROM THE MINISTRY OF ARTS AND MULTICULTURALISM AND THE NATIONAL CARNIVAL COMMISSION (NCC)**

### **Re: Inquiry into the Administration and Methods of the Functioning of the National Carnival Commission (NCC)**

6.1 The meeting resumed in the J. Hamilton Maurice Room, Mezzanine Floor at 11:01 a.m. and the Chairman asked to be excused due to the late start.

6.2 The following topics were discussed:

#### ***(m) The relationship between the NCC and the NCBA***

- The NCC is the parent body of the NCBA, however, the NCBA was given the authority to administrate its own affairs based on Act No. 9 of 1991. The NCC provides

subventions based on the budget provided by the NCBA; approximately 60% of this allocation is reserved for prizes, the rest is set aside for appearance fees and transportation for various groups, etc.

The NCC also has the responsibility to provide the infrastructure for the different carnival events and is also responsible for some of the NCBA's operational costs for the four months of carnival activities.

- Members highlighted major issues such as the lack of accountability and transparency by the NCBA and the NCC's inability to directly intervene in the administration of the NCBA.

***(n) The need for Forensic Auditing***

- Based on suggestions from the earlier meeting with the stakeholders of the NCC it was proposed by the Committee that all the entities under the umbrella of the National Carnival Commission (NCC) should be held accountable for the subventions received annually. These organisations are the National Carnival Bands Association (NCBA), Pantrintago and the Trintago Unified Calypsonians Organisation (TUCO).
- The NCC also admitted that there was limited monitoring and supervision of the bodies under its purview due to the legal autonomy given to the bodies by the various pieces of legislation. The new mandate of the NCC allows for each stakeholder to be responsible for its own affairs.

***(o) A National Consultation on Carnival with its Stakeholders***

- Currently the Board plans to have a meeting with all its stakeholders and interested persons in order to develop ideas and proposals to improve carnival.
- The Deputy Chairman also highlighted the point that since the last Joint Select Committee meeting aired on national television, the NCC has received a number of suggestions and proposals from members of the public.

***(p) Preservation of Traditional Mas through Regional Carnival***

- The Deputy Chairman of the NCC reiterated the point that was raised at the last meeting with the JSC about a Workshop on traditional mas which was developed by the NCC for school children throughout Trintad with tutors appointed by the NCC to help preserve the traditions of carnival.
- Students are taught mas costume production from purchasing materials to making the costumes; they also learn to portray the different traditional characters through dance and song. The students then parade throughout the streets of Port of Spain on carnival Friday. This year, spectators witnessed what was the largest turnout ever of 9, 000 children from schools and different communities.

- The Deputy Chairman informed the Committee that the NCC receives requests from foreign carnival organisations for the traditional mas characters. The NCC has been approached by various countries in Africa, Asia and South America to develop traditional mas in those regions.
- In addition to the Workshop, the NCC provides a subvention to 53 Regional Carnival Committees throughout Trinidad to support the preservation of traditional mas.

***(q) The Construction of the North Stand***

- The Chief Executive Officer informed the Committee that all the proper Tendering procedures were adhered to in respect of the north stand construction. The Selective Tendering was done by the NCC based on the technical advice received from the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure. The Ministry made certain recommendations and the price was renegotiated which resulted in the organization saving \$1.4 million which was utilized in other carnival activities.

***(r) The Savannah Stage***

- The CEO indicated that the Savannah requires a totally new stage to be built because the materials from the previous stage could not be reused due to the increased size of costumes to over 60 feet wide and the integrity of the steel. The old stage measured 40 feet by 48 feet and the surface of that stage was made of ply wood which becomes swollen when it rains causing masqueraders to fall.

**6.4 The NCC officials were also requested to forward documentation on the following:**

- A copy of the document submitted to the Ministry, re: the report of the Meeting between the NCC and the three representatives of the NCBA;
- A detailed breakdown of the administrative expenses of the National Carnival Bands Association (NCBA);
- A written response on the National Carnival Commission's vision for the improvement of the carnival systems from a legislative and business perspective;
- Clarity on the Tendering Process used by the NCC for the construction of the North and Grand Stands and the stage at the Savannah;
- The NCC's plan to increase the gate receipts;
- List and quantify the benefits of other economic activity (other than gate receipts) generated for the carnival season;
- The NCC's – response to the Committee's request for forensic audits of its agencies;
- The effect that changes of the carnival route and licensing have on vendors;

- The current status of the construction of Pantrinbago Headquarters at Orange Grove;
- The reason why the North Stand is not a permanent structure;
- The reason why the steel used to construct the stage at the Savannah is not reused;
- What adjustments would be made by the NCC in terms of the infrastructure for carnival in order to make the facility more user friendly for the spectators and the revelers;
- How does the NCC intend to make carnival an economic venture;
- With a revolving staff, how does the NCC plan to produce the best possible product for carnival; and
- What are the plans to stimulate regional carnivals throughout Trinidad and Tobago?

6.5 The Chairman thanked the officials for their attendance.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

7.1 The Committee agreed that the NCC should return on a date to be determined.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

8.1 The Chairman thanked Members and the meeting was adjourned.

8.2 The adjournment was taken at 12:28 p.m.

**I certify that these Minutes are true and correct.**

Sgd.  
Chairman

Sgd.  
Secretary

***June 28, 2012***

**MINUTES OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENT  
APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO AND REPORT ON GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES (GROUP I),  
STATUTORY AUTHORITIES AND STATE ENTERPRISES FALLING UNDER THOSE MINISTRIES, HELD  
IN THE J. HAMILTON MAURICE ROOM, MEZZANINE FLOOR, OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT, TOWER D, THE  
PORT OF SPAIN INTERNATIONAL WATERFRONT CENTRE, 1A WRIGHTSON ROAD, PORT OF SPAIN ON  
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 30, 2012 AT 10:00 A.M.**

**PRESENT**

|                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mrs. Corinne Baptiste–Mc Knight   | Chairman                    |
| Prof. Harold Ramkissoon           | Vice-Chairman               |
| Mr. Emmanuel George               | Member                      |
| Dr. Amery Browne, MP              | Member                      |
| Mrs. Carolyn Seepersad–Bachan, MP | Member                      |
| Dr. Delmon Baker, MP              | Member                      |
| Mr. Jairam Seemungal, MP          | Member                      |
|                                   |                             |
| Mrs. Jacqueline Phillip-Stoute    | Secretary                   |
| Ms. Khisha Peterkin               | Assistant Secretary         |
| Ms. Katharina Gokool              | Graduate Research Assistant |

**ALSO PRESENT**

|                        |                               |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Mr. Vel Lewis          | Permanent Secretary (Ag.)     |
| Mr. Clarence Moe       | Chief Executive Officer       |
| Ms. Allison Demas      | Chairman                      |
| Mr. Don Sylvester      | Deputy Chairman               |
| Mr. Guinness Sudama    | Finance Manager               |
| Ms. Carol Wolfe        | Corporate Secretary           |
| Mr. Edward Metivier    | Commissioner                  |
| Mr. Kevin Rampersad    | Commissioner                  |
| Mr. David Lopez        | Commissioner/President (NCBA) |
| Mr. Lutalo Masimba     | Commissioner/President (TUCO) |
| Mr. Anthony Mc Quilkin | Treasurer, PANTRINBAGO        |

**ABSENT**

|                             |                  |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Mr. Ganga Singh             | Member (Excused) |
| Mrs. Christlyn Moore        | Member (Excused) |
| Mr. Faris Al-Rawi           | Member (Excused) |
| Mrs. Patricia Mc Intosh, MP | Member (Excused) |
| Ms. Stacy Roopnarine, MP    | Member (Excused) |

## **COMMENCEMENT**

1.5 The Chairman welcomed Members.

1.6 The following Members asked to be excused from the day's meeting:

- Mr. Ganga Singh
- Mrs. Christlyn Moore
- Mr. Faris Al-Rawi
- Mrs. Patricia Mc Intosh, MP
- Ms. Stacy Roopnarine, MP

## **EXAMINATION OF OFFICIALS FROM THE NATIONAL CARNIVAL COMMISSION (NCC):**

2.1 The meeting commenced in the J. Hamilton Maurice Room, Mezzanine Floor at 10:05 a.m. Introductions were exchanged.

2.2 The areas raised and responses which emanated from the discussions with Officials of the NCC are detailed hereunder:

### ***(i) The PANTRINBAGO Headquarters***

The Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism met with UDeCOTT with respect to the completion of the Pan Trinbago Headquarters. UDeCOTT has agreed to complete the building on behalf of the Ministry and Pan Trinbago.

Based on requests from NCC, a consultant was hired by UDeCOTT to do a comprehensive analysis of the works completed on the Pan Trinbago Headquarters. UDeCOTT has been working with the consultant to review the facility.

A comprehensive plan for the completion of the Headquarter was subsequently sent to Cabinet for its concurrence. The Ministry was unable to identify the original cost to complete the building because a thorough assessment was never done. The building is expected to be completed in late 2013 at a new cost of approximately \$60 million.

### ***(ii) Plans for Carnival 2013***

Early carnival is nothing strange. However for things to be done efficiently a month-and-a-half is required. Construction works, a major aspect in the preparation of Carnival takes about 6 weeks. Discussions were held prior to the new Board's appointment to ensure efficiency in the management of Carnival in terms of ticketing, gate control and security.

### ***(iii) Tenders Rules and Procedures of the NCC***

NCC's tenders rules and procedures were found to be adequate for the purposes of Carnival 2013. There is however room for amendment in order to strengthen procedures.

Subsequent to Carnival 2013, the strengthening of the rules would be part of the overall strategic and operational review.

***(iv) Plans to stimulate Regional Carnival throughout Trinidad and Tobago***

Regional carnival will be launched in the La Horquetta/Talparo constituency.

Stimulation of activities in regional communities goes beyond the NCC's current interventions. However, strategies are required to make regional carnival worthwhile for small regional bands if they are to remain in their areas.

Currently, the details are being worked out at the Regional Carnival Committee level to be forwarded to the Board of the NCC.

***(v) The Savannah Stage***

The NCC is still awaiting word from the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure on the evaluation of the steel to be used in the construction of the Stage.

***(vi) Rental of Offices for the NCC***

The figures concerning rental fees given at the meeting of April 20, 2012 were incorrect in that they included monthly and not the yearly rental fees for NCC's offices at Cipriani Boulevard and Jerningham Avenue. The new figures were submitted on page 12 of the NCC's submission dated October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

The NCBA has offices in San Fernando and Woodbrook. The Woodbrook office housed the Mas Academy which was subsequently closed on May 31, 2012 due to financial issues. The NCBA is in the process of identifying a new space for rent to house the Academy.

***(vii) Subvention from NCC to NCBA for 2013***

95% of NCC's annual budget is from Government Subvention. The subvention from NCC to NCBA for 2013 is approximately \$8.1 million exclusive of funds for payment of utilities such as electricity and telephone.

***(viii) Forensic Audit of the NCBA***

The question of the forensic audit of the NCBA has not yet been discussed at any lengths at the Ministry or between the Ministry and the NCBA. However, the Committee was assured that this issue would be addressed.

The Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism communicated with the Auditor General who has advised that an audit will first be performed on NCCs accounts. The Auditor General has also indicated that the office is constrained by limited resources. As a result the audit will be performed in the near future.

***(ix) Submission of Accounts***

The NCBA submits its financial statements and its annual audited reports to the Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism. The Ministry and NCC are in possession of the audited financial report of the NCBA for fiscal 2010-2011.

***(x) Problems with the NCBA***

Issues raised by Members during the NCBA's election period are being dealt with.

***(xi) Other Carnival Bodies***

The Ministry is aware of the NCDF and has worked along with the organization on occasions. However, the NCBA is recognized as the organization most representative of Carnival Bands. Additionally, there are other interest groups apart from the NCBA and the NCDF.

There is however, a need for more dialogue among the NCC, stakeholders and the wider community. In light of this a meeting with stakeholders, the line Ministry and NCC will be convened subsequent to Carnival 2013.

***(xii) Requirements for NCC's to fulfill its mandate***

The NCC needs to:

- bring all players into one forum and review the Act;
- formulate a strategic plan;
- undertake a business diagnosis to determine the way forward and to identify any strengths and weaknesses.

NCC's is unable to achieve the above because of the absence of a transformation plan which would address the issues with respect to transparency and accountability.

The NCC Act provides an excellent framework in which the organization can effectively operate in collaboration with the various interest groups in Carnival.

***(xiii) NCC's Challenges***

A challenge faced by the NCC is that the Board is forced to operate beyond its means around Carnival because the requisite managerial resources are not available. Thus, apart from the statutory committees, a number of ad hoc committees are formed to do management's work.

NCC's management requires strengthening for the organization to move forward operationally.

***(xiv) Indirect economic activity and Carnival activities***

The NCC desires to realize a social and economic analysis of the contribution of Carnival to the economy. This analysis will detail the number of jobs created and the contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This could result in increased allocation for the proper resourcing of Carnival activities.

***(xv) Development of Human Resource/Scholarship***

Section 18 of the NCC Act provides for the establishment of a fund that could be expended for the establishment of academic, technical and vocational grants. This is beneficial for the enhancement of the welfare of artistes, designers and composers of musical works engaged in Carnival.

***(xvi) Tobago Carnival***

The NCC is constrained legislatively, in that, Schedule V of the Tobago House of Assembly Act specifically provides that Carnival/Cultural activities fall within the ambit of the Tobago House of Assembly. There is therefore little that can be done by the NCC.

***(xvii) Enriching the Art of Carnival***

Beads and bikini are part of Trinidad and Tobago Carnival. However, traditional mas stand out from the rest.

The big bandleaders are from private enterprises. These bandleaders are not interested in the art and theatre of Carnival as they are in selling an experience. Therefore the continued development of regional Carnival with specific focus on the traditional characters is necessary.

This is one of the objectives of the NCC to develop and foster the creative aspect of carnival to the benefit of all.

***(xviii) Moneys collected for Intellectual Property/Copyrights***

All money that relate to Intellectual Property which come from Broadcasters goes directly to the interest group, that is, the NCBA.

The NCC has paid all copyrights up to 2010. 2011 and 2012 has to be calculated and paid.

The NCC has stopped producing DVDs of the parade of the bands due the high production cost and financial losses due to illegal vending of DVDs.

***(xix) Vending***

The NCC is responsible for vending around the Savannah while the responsibility for vending in Port of Spain, the Memorial Park and along the Avenue is that of the Mayor of Port of Spain.

A proposal was made to sell spots on the pavements rather than sell booths. As such, the NCC is in consultation with the licensing authority and the police who have the responsibility of issuing the permits for the routes.

Discussions with respect to vending on the pavement are ongoing.

**(xx) The Routes**

The NCBA is in consultation with the Licensing Authority and the Police with respect to permits for the routes. The Association is also in the process of working out extensions of the routes and removing the utilities and music trucks from the routes.

**(xxi) Duration for Bands crossing the stage**

NCBA rules allocates one (1) hour for each band to cross the stage. Presently, the NCC and the NCBA are working on revising the rules and regulations in order to extend the route to provide more room and space for masqueraders.

**(xxii) Carnival Institute**

The Institute is currently under review and a three year roll out plan was developed, so it should be completed in 2013.

2.3 The Chairman of the NCC was invited to make closing remarks during which he indicated that the NCC will submit outstanding Annual Reports to the Parliament and strive for a greater level of transparency and accountability.

2.4 The Permanent Secretary indicated that with the installation of the new Board the mandate has been changed in order to take Carnival from being an event to an industry.

2.5 The Chairman thanked the officials of the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism and the NCC for their attendance.

**CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE FOURTEENTH MEETING (22/11/2012):**

3.1 The Chairman invited Members of the Committee to consider the Minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on November 22, 2012.

3.2 The minutes were confirmed by Prof. Ramkissoon and seconded by Mr. Emmanuel George.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE FOURTEENTH MEETING**

3.1 The Chairman referred Members to the following matters arising from the Minutes:

- **Item 3.1:** The information requested from the Ministry of Education was received and distributed to Members.
- The Chairman reminded Members that the additional information requested from the Ministry of Health was received by the Secretariat and it will be circulated to Members.

**ADJOURNMENT**

4.1 The Chairman indicated to Members that the next public meeting will be held on January 18, 2013 but an in camera meeting will be held before to finalize Reports.

4.2 The Chairman thanked Members and the meeting was adjourned.

4.3 The adjournment was taken at 12:07 p.m.

**I certify that these Minutes are true and correct.**

Sgd.  
Chairman

Sgd.  
Secretary

***December 09, 2012***

# APPENDIX III

## NOTES OF EVIDENCE

**VERBATIM NOTES OF THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENT  
APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO AND REPORT ON GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES (GROUP I),  
STATUTORY AUTHORITIES AND STATE ENTERPRISES FALLING UNDER THOSE MINISTRIES, HELD  
IN THE ARNOLD THOMASOS ROOM (EAST), LEVEL 6; AND THE J. HAMILTON MAURICE ROOM, MEZZANINE  
FLOOR, OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT, TOWER D, THE PORT OF SPAIN, IWFC,  
1A WRIGHTSON ROAD. PORT OF SPAIN ON FRIDAY APRIL 20, 2012 AT 9:00 A.M.**

**PRESENT**

|                                 |                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Mrs. Corinne Baptiste-Mc Knight | Chairman             |
| Mr. Emmanuel George             | Member               |
| Mr. Jairam Seemungal, MP        | Member               |
| Miss Stacy Roopnarine, MP       | Member               |
| Prof. Harold Ramkissoon         | Member               |
| Mrs. Patricia Mc Intosh, MP     | Member               |
| Mrs. Verna St. Rose Greaves     | Member               |
| Mr. Faris Al-Rawi               | Member               |
| Mrs. Lily Broomes               | Secretary            |
| Ms. Khisha Peterkin             | Asst. Secretary      |
| Ms. Katharina Gokool            | Grad. Research Asst. |

**ABSENT**

|                               |                  |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Mrs. Carolyn Seepersad-Bachan | Member (excused) |
| Mr. Danny Maharaj             | Member (excused) |
| Dr. Delmon Baker              | Member           |
| Dr. Amery Browne, MP          | Member           |

*[J. Hamilton Maurice Room, Mezzanine Floor]*

**10.13 a.m.:** *Meeting resumed*

**Officials of the National Carnival Commission**

|                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Mr. Patrick Arnold  | Chairman                |
| Mr. Don Sylvester   | Deputy Chairman         |
| Miss Yvonne Smart   | Human Resource Manager  |
| Mr. Clarence Moe    | Chief Executive Officer |
| Mrs. Jennifer Jones | Permanent Secretary     |
| Ms. Gloria Balbosa  | Finance Manager         |
| Ms. Carol Wolfe     | Corporate Secretary     |

**Madam Chairman:** Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I am pleased to welcome you today to this session of the Joint Select Committee, at which we will be hearing from the National Carnival Commission. Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to welcome you and invite your Chairman to introduce the members of his team.

*[Introduction]*

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you very much indeed, I am your Chairman, Mrs. Corinne Baptiste-Mc Knight, and I would ask the Members of the Committee to introduce themselves.

[Introduction]

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you very much indeed, Mr. Chairman, may I ask you to make your introductory comments, would you give us an introduction to who you are, what you do for us and how you do it?

**Mr. Arnold:** As I said, I am Patrick Arnold, I understand we are talking about the administration and operation for 2010 and 2011. I became the Chairman in 2012, so the Deputy Chairman, the CEO and the other members here would be able to deal with most of those issues that we need to deal with.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Sorry, we are barely hearing you on this side.

**Mr. Arnold:** As I said I became the Chairman this year, 2012, so I was not around for 2010 nor 2011, and I think the CEO and the Vice-Chairman would be more able to assist.

**Madam Chairman:** Would you then recommend, deputize, instruct one of them to do the introductory statement? [Laughter]

**Mr. Arnold:** Well, I think the CEO, Mr. Clarence Moe.

**Madam Chairman:** Very well.

**Mr. Moe:** I do not know if I can do such a good job by deputizing for a Chairman. I am Clarence Moe, the CEO for the National Carnival Commission and, by and large what we do overall is run Carnival and when we say run Carnival we mean run Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago.

We are responsible by Act 9 of '91, which, really spells out the responsibilities for the National Carnival Commission. What we do can be broken up into several areas. We have a responsibility under the Act for the preservation of Carnival, which I consider to be very important. We also have a number of events that we run, which is about 14 events overall. We do not do that alone, indeed, we are supported by stakeholders who are also members of the board, and when we talk about stakeholders we talk about TUCO which is Trinidad Unified Calypso Association, the National Carnival Band Leaders Association, which is the NCBA and, of course, Pan Trinbago which run the affairs of pan, and we run the events.

There are other areas which we support and that is we have external relationships with Carnivals both regionally and internationally, and we do provide support from time to time in the process of the adjudication, management, help, costuming and so on. That, by and large is the remit of the National Carnival Commission, in a nutshell, that we do there.

**Madam Chairman:** Very well. I do not think that you are aware of the wide scope of latitude that you have given my committee, given the brevity and extent of the scope that you have lead us into.

I would just like to start off the questioning by asking you to explain exactly how your commission understands and interprets its mandates, given the fact that Cabinet has in fact changed the initial mandate of the Act. Because it seems from the information that you have given us, that there are areas that are critical to the good running of Carnival over which you no longer have much responsibility, how does this pan out in terms of your ability to produce under the Act?

**Mr. Moe:** It is possible, because you have the three major stakeholders who have been given that awesome responsibility under the Cabinet Note, who are also members of the board. So, in items of carrying out our remit and doing what we do, they are part of the decision-making process overall. For example, right now one may consider that the stakeholder groups have the responsibility for content, basically planning the events and so on. We still provide the overall infrastructure, and also we set policy and direction in terms of how we do business overall as is required under the Act.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay, you set policy, who determines how Carnival Monday and Tuesday competitions are run? Who determines that?

**Mr. Moe:** Let us take an example the parade of bands. The National Carnival Bands Association may make a suggestion to the board that we want to increase the route of Carnival, they would then take that to the board and the board would have discussions and then we would say, "okay, yes we accept your proposal for

the route.”

So, indeed the content of shows and the content that the interest groups and stakeholders may wish to do—what they may wish to do are brought to the board for discussion, and therefore, setting the direction.

**Madam Chairman:** Very well, so then it is the board which will determine whether competitions take place for the same bands on Monday and on Tuesday or whether in an attempt to give the paying public who come to North and Grand Stand an opportunity to really enjoy Carnival at its best, the competitions are spread out between Monday and Tuesday so that certain bands come on Monday, others come on Tuesday and there is a continuous flow of masquerade for the viewing public, rather than the gyration for six hours outside of the Memorial Park.

**Mr. Moe:** Yes, and there is a number of issues to the whole question of jam lock, that is basically what you are saying. Now, for many years there have been discussions that on Monday some large bands—and we must understand that in Carnival there are only about—in Port of Spain, “eh”. That is the perpendicular—seven large bands, that is a band of over 1,500 thereabout, and the idea of coming on separate days does propose a challenge. What do the other bands do in Port of Spain that would not affect the route of the mas? You go into a counter clockwise direction around Port of Spain; you have Adam Smith, Victoria, the Savannah, downtown on Piccadilly greens. If you take three of those big bands and, maybe, I do not know, how many bands?—I think about 50 bands parade in total in Port of Spain, what do the other four bands do on the alternate days? What happens is, they tend to go to Woodbrook or they tend to go Federation Park and so on, which poses a challenge as far as the security forces see it in terms of the security in that particular area. So, it is a challenge, but it has been receiving some attention, that we should just have mas on Tuesday.

The other thing is that the public keeps saying to us, why can we not have mas on both days, full costume mas on both days? Because what people have done is, most of the bands in order to get around the lock jam on Carnival Monday, they do not put on full costumes, and some of them may not wish to go to some of the venues and they avoid it because they put on T-shirts, part of their mas and so on. So, you do not have a lock jam on Monday, but on Tuesday—the other thing is, that you have a compelling desire by all masqueraders to find themselves on the Queen’s Park Savannah Stage on Carnival Tuesday, if only to display their wear, and that also has an impact on what is happening now in mas.

**Mr. George:** What you are suggesting there is—I want to quote a bit from David Rudder, is that: we seemed to be doomed forever to be at the mercy of the masquerader, on the one hand there of incompetence and the other because there must be a solution, or some other parameter available for which we have no influence. This is what you seem to be suggesting, that it is going to be like this no matter what.

**Mr. Moe:** Well, it may sound that way, but let me tell you what I see as the alternative. If you recall in 2006—2010, we went on the street. In 2006 when we went on the street and mas was on the move and no street performances were required, the mas ended at 5.30 on Tuesday afternoon. So, the question for us at the Savannah in particular, is to stage which everybody says that they want. But if we permit mas on the move, in that, you allow the bands to flow freely across the stage as it used to be in the earlier days, I feel it will avoid some of lock jam that we have now.

For example, right now a large band is required, if they have over 2,000—3,000, they are allowed, if I recall correctly, 90 minutes to perform on the stage, to make their theatrical presentations as would the Mac Farlanes and the Legends require. Now, if after that large band has 90 minutes, there is a medium band that may have about 45 minutes on stage, it means that that band after them would have already waited for one hour. That is the reality of the situation, and I think we must return mas on the move which would avoid a lot of the jam on the stage.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Can I jump in, what is the capacity of the Grand Stand?

**Mr. Moe:** The capacity of the Grand Stand is about 6,000 thereabout.

**Mr. Seemungal:** What you would be doing then, taking out mas from the Grand Stand, is depriving those 6,000 people of their franchise to sit and look at mas in the atmosphere that they are looking at. If you take it out and put it back on the streets, as what you are saying, where would we accommodate these 6,000 people? How safe would they be? What kind of security arrangement would you put in place for these 6,000-plus?

**Mr. Moe:** Okay, I was not suggesting at all that we move mas out of the Savannah. All I am saying is, that we cross the stage as we used to celebrate, section by section without stopping and doing theatrical performances. That may help the situation quite a bit at the Savannah in particular.

**Madam Chairman:** Could I just interject something here? If you say there are seven large bands that are allowed 90 minutes each, quick calculation, 630 minutes, that is 10 and a half hours.

**Mr. Moe:** Absolutely.

**Madam Chairman:** So, when are the others going to cross the stage? Therefore, something must be wrong. This has to be a bad solution.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Just to add to what, Madam Chairman, is saying, maybe a good idea might be exactly what you were saying at the beginning, to make Carnival on a Monday and Tuesday. The theatrical performance can be on a Monday after lunch from one o'clock to whatever time in the night, and they go on. And Tuesday is for parade of the bands and street performance.

**Mr. Moe:** It may be a good suggestion now; however, I always like to look at Carnival as a celebration for all persons. Inside of the mix, you have the group, the traditional mas, that is a group of 15 or 20 persons doing the traditions of Carnival, and they too want their space and their place in the celebration. If we just leave it for the large bands to do that, I think we would have a challenge in terms of the entire mas fraternity and all those who participate in mas having their fair share.

I must say one thing however, that the thing that attracts people to Trinidad now in term of new arrivals, not people coming in from the diaspora, is the traditional mas; the Indian, the jab jab, the fancy sailor. Those are the things that are picking up, and we feel that they too have their place in the celebration on any given day.

**Mr. George:** I just want to get a feel, Madam Chair, through you, from, perhaps Mr. Sylvester or Mr. Arnold, being—I am going to use the word advisedly—new comers, whereas Mr. Moe has been there for some time. Because, as members of a new board, and their impressions of their first Carnival, so to speak, in the hot seat, what their views are?

**Mr. Arnold:** I want to say that, I think one of the problems that I see as having the interest groups and members of the board, because you cannot get away from the fact that they make those decisions with respect to the NCBA does their thing; Pan Trinbago, TUCO, they all wanted—they make their decisions on most of it. For instance Pan Trinbago, we have—when I was there at least—a limit, the bands cannot play for over 10 minutes and so should it be for the mas. Because, we can allow the interest groups to do what they do, we get the blame. We have to organize the shows in a better way, like Dimanche Gras, too long; Panorama, too long; it is not only the mas on the Tuesday.

**Mr. George:** So, what would you do different next year given what you have just said to me here?

**Mr. Arnold:** Well, I am saying we have the right to regulate, nobody said spend 90 minutes. You stand on the stage for 90 minutes you should lose points, you know. What do you do for 90 minutes?

**Mr. Sylvester:** Madam Chairperson, good morning and Members of the Committee, Minister. I was enthused when I heard the Chairperson indicating that Carnival should be paraded for two days. Something I think is worthy of serious discussion, and I think implementation afterwards, because I was thinking, I said, wait, like the Chairperson played this year.

**10.35 a.m.**

**Mr. Sylvester:** She understands quite clearly that in the absence of that Hon. Minister, we will continue with the same problem. I strongly believe and we are about to start discussions on looking at two days of parade, whether it is by lottery system, pulling our straw or what have you, and if you are mandated to parade on Monday, you parade on Monday. Whether you like parading on Tuesday, and if we at NCC under Act No. 9 of 91 we have the remit to indicate how that is done. Then we give the instruction, you parade on Monday no matter what band you are in, it could be the so called big, big band, you chose it Monday is Monday. On Tuesday, you chose Tuesday, it is Tuesday. And then we deal with the other components vis a vis at the time span as the Chairman indicated, how long you can stay and that type of thing. I think that is the way we should go in response to your question.

**Madam Chairman:** I would just like to close off this section of it by asking you to think. If tickets for the parade of bands were not sold as a package, do you realize that there would be a minimal if any income for Monday. Because you buy a ticket that is valid for two days, but Monday the place is almost bare. On Tuesday, a lot of people who come early they were asleep because you keep saying that it is a parade of the same sets of beads, bras, flowers and feathers in different colour arrangements, but basically the same colour for the whole day. Whereas, if you did the same thing over the two days it would be far less monotonous because there would be the traditional bands and the smaller bands that would be coming in between these seven parades of flesh.

So please think about it because I am looking at the spectator's point of view, the masqueraders have a ball any hour, and the hard part about it is that they pay to become the spectacle. It is part of allowing them to enjoy themselves for the two days because when you pay \$6,000 for a costume that is mandated that you could wear on one day, you would be doing them a favor at least they get two days to wear out their beads and feathers. So think about it.

**Mr. Seemungal:** I just want to add to what you are saying. Just coming back to my point earlier, and to add what the Chairman is saying about parading bands on two days and maybe the big bands on the Monday. I understand from the Act one of the mandates of the Commission is to make carnival a commercial and a viable venture as well. Not Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. One of the main focuses of the carnival commission and maybe persons who are mandated to run carnival over the years is to keep carnival in Port of Spain and I only now see that carnival is going out of Port of Spain.

Brazil village for instance, we have over 6000-7000 persons coming out to look at two and three little bands. And the reason for that is that all of these little bands of the rural communities, Rio Claro, Mayaro, Sangre Grande, Arima, they want to come into Port of Spain. Why we do not give consideration to those far-off bands to come into carnival on the Monday and allow them to play in their villages and their towns and homes on the Tuesday?

The bands around Port of Spain and the environment where there are no other carnival venues, allow them to come into carnival Monday—into Port of Spain. And that way I would not be suffering in my constituency for two, three and four little band jumping up with 6000-7000 persons. They would now have a place where they can stay, and they would not be forced to come into Port of Spain to ply for the big prizes. I am sure that next year you all will be providing prizes for the big carnival in the small villages so that you would make it attractive for these smaller bands to stay within their communities. It was adding to what the Chairman is saying. You can give consideration to it.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Madam Chair, I want to focus on the construction of the stage, the North Stand and the Grand Stand. I want to focus on the process of awarding contracts and two, the cost of those contracts. I would focus, Madam Chair, and my first question on the process and then I will come back after others have asked the question, to talk about the cost. Let me preface my remarks by making the following observation: All the years prior to and including 2006 the process for awarding contracts followed standard procurement

procedures. What were those? In the advertisement you put out inviting tenders. Secondly, tenders were open to the public and thirdly award of tenders. For 2006 the tender price for the construction of the North Stand was about \$2.1 million. The job was completed for \$1.8 million.

Having made these preliminary remarks I would now proceed to the first question dealing with the process and it has a number of parts. It is my understanding that for carnival 2011 construction of the Grand Stand and North Stand started in early December 2010. When you start so late the construction time is very short two or three months, you need more workers, you need to pay overtime to complete the job on time, the contractor dictate the pace, greater cost to the tax payers and NCC is put on a spot. Question: why start so late?

The next part, I move on. I understand that the Ministry of Works gave the North Stand and Grand Stand contracts to two contractors whom he thought competent without tendering, thus violating procurement procedures, why was this? I am talking about 2011 again. For carnival 2012 almost the same thing happened. You had four contractors that were selected tendering in this case and only two tenders. So basically you selected whom you wanted and gave out contracts. You gave out the contract in early January this time, and carnival I think was in early March. In fact, the deadline for construction, completion of the construction was early February. In other words you were asking the contractor to complete the construction in just one month. Again the question is, why so late?

The same for the stage; in 2011 and 2012 given to one contractor violating Government procedures, Madam Chair, you would agree with me that the way in which these contracts are awarded create the impression in the public's eye that there is wide spread corruption within the NCC. I await your response. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Madam Chair, before the members of the NCC seek to address that question, Prof. Ramkissoon has in fact addressed an area that I intended to address as well and so that we keep efficiency of time in mind I would just like to supplement some of what she said so perhaps you do not have to answer question twice and that you can do it once. Is that okay with you Madam Chair? Thank you.

If I could firstly indicate that by way of preface to use Professor's word, the document is a commendable document provided to us insofar as it does one thing. It actually lists complaints—and complaints are good before a committee like this but it means that we can hear what is wrong and therefore seek to render assistance. Save for that however, I find the document extremely vague and general, sometimes circuitous in the sense of trying to give information. It is most circuitous and vague in relation to very, very important aspects of procurement, particularly on page 6, 7, 8, 9.

Now, what I would like to ask because I do not want you to seek to answer information necessarily without having had the benefit of all of the material which may assist you and us in interrogating the issues and finding solutions. If I could ask, because your document does not describe if you could provide for us if perhaps Mr. CEO you could perhaps take a note, if you provide for us by way of written response the following documentation:

1. What your tender rules are;
2. A copy of the tender rules;
3. Advice which you have received whether by way of advice sought by the NCC of its attorneys or by way of advice emanating from the Ministry of the Attorney General or other State entity. In relation to, the procurement issue which you specifically addressed at page 8 under V "The erection of the Grand Stand and the North Stand;"
4. If you can provide us with copies of the contracts actually awarded in respect of that exercise;
5. If you can provide with your assessment from a quantity surveying perspective of the works actually performed;

6. If you can identify for us issues arising from the award of those contracts specifically by way of reference, to construction and user issues and any legal issues which may have risen in relation to that;
7. Proceeding further, insofar as, there is a tendering aspect which does not form part of the Boards mandate at page 12 of your document where you deal with sub committees which assist the commissioners, there is a tenders subcommittee listed there. If you could provide in writing, an explanation as to how that tenders committee articulates with the tenders committee of the Board of Directors. I also would like if you could identify the persons—*[Interruption]*

**Mr. Moe:** Can you hold one second?

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** There will be a verbatim note of this so our secretary would be able to select this out for you. If you could also provide us with:

Identification of the persons who comprise your tenders committee for the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and the persons who populate or constitute the tenders committee for that subset which assist the commissioner.

That is the material I would like you to please provide us with under the rubric of written responses to questions. By way of supplementation to Prof. Ramkisson's inquiry, I would like to say that I am totally confused as to the explanation provided under V with respect to the construction of the erection of the Grand Stand and North Stand insofar as 1.0 identifies that there was a serious issue with the award of a tender and then 3.0 the last paragraph says, "The Board agreed in principle to the selection of the contractors as recommended subject to final costings being evaluated by the Ministry of Transport."

So it said we had an issue, it caused concern, but it seems to say—I do not know if it does—we still went ahead with it. So I would like to know what the general explanation is in relation to V and what specifically you did and what comforted you to act in the manner you acted in. Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Mrs. Mc Intosh you had a question?

**Mrs. Mc Intosh:** Concerning funding.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay let us deal with this and then we would come to your question.

**Mr. Moe:** I have noted the concerns and I would try to give some general explanations across the board. I would get to the specifics when I submit the document. I would just deal with some of the issues that I can recall.

One is, we do have a tender procedures adopted since 2007 as a tender procedures and I would make that available. That is followed when we do the normal tenders for carnival. In terms of the project in question and I will provide the data further on when I get to it, the reason why we accepted the project is simply this. Our technical advisors over the years at the National Carnival Commission ever since CDC, has been the Ministry of Works. Indeed the Ministry of Works were the ones who were initially given the funding under CDC to do the infrastructure. So our technical advisor, our consultants and the people who monitor our projects has also been the Ministry of Works. Indeed, now the projects that we have on stream like Downtown, Adam Smith Square Stands, which are major construction works I am talking about. The major construction works are always supervised by the Ministry of Works, that is number one.

The thing is that with regard to the Grand Stand and North Stand. Way in November, there was an announcement by the Government that we would go back to the savannah, which required in a short space of time because the time was of the essence. We had very limited time to get it done. Therefore, the Ministry of Works came and said we would undertake the project, we are prepared to undertake the project and that is basically it. We met with the technical people and they were the ones who had envisaged that they would undertake the project on our behalf, which in our mind at the time did not seem extraordinary because that is what we would have normally done.

With regard to the question of the normal tenders and selective tenders and so on, with regard to the North Stand and Grand Stand we normally would provide the Ministry of Works with the documents for construction and dismantling of the North Stand before my time. I think since 2002 thereabout. The Ministry of Works provided the documentation; we go out to open tender. In fact in the construction and dismantling this year we went out to open tender, that is tender in the newspaper for which four bids were made with regard to the construction and dismantling of the North Stand. Out of that, the Ministry of Works evaluated on our behalf. The tenders that had been received and selected on our behalf, then it was taken to the Tenders Board.

I would wish to provide some more information on the 2011 period in the details that you have asked for. To show however—to emphasize, that in terms of the technical expertise it has always come from the Ministry of Works, they have always had monitoring and oversight of all our projects and therefore it is for us not very strange that they become involved. The thing is that work had started and therefore we must bring it on board.

Prof. Ramkissoon asked a very important thing. Why do we start so late? Because we cannot commit funds to projects until the budget is read and it is something that we have been trying to solicit for years. That even if we have to wait on the budget something ought to be done for the National Carnival Commission because I agree with Prof. Ramkissoon that when we mobilize late we have these attendant costs, we have seen it all the time but we have to find a way around that budget that funds are provided well in advance of our September-October, framework in order to do what we have to do. And that I could say.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** I thank you very much Mr. Moe. The question again, I can understand it was running late in 2011, when I think there were major changes, but I cannot understand why it ran late in 2012. My understanding is that in 2012 four contractors were preselected and two tendered, so I do not know if you advertised in good time or you advertised at all.

The question of running late, not getting sufficient funds. You are the NCC. You operate throughout the year. You have an office or offices. Granted that the budget is presented in September and when you wait for September and you get approval then you find yourself with just four or five months to do things. But if I were you and your commission, I would operate differently. What I would do is I would come up with all my plans in terms of tendering, go through some of the procedures, advertise and then you can open the tenders and you wait until September and as soon as approval is given, then you make your offer to the contractor. This is what I would do.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** I just want to say to Prof. Ramkissoon that that may create a legitimate expectation in law which you can be sued for when they find that you have no finance. So that would be a very pleasurable occasion for lawyers. However, when I come back to my second question not supplementing this, with the Chairman's leave, I will come to that.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Madam Chair, you offered the contract to anybody, you do the ground work.

**Mr. Moe:** I cannot offer a tender.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Oh! You cannot, my apologies.

**Mr. Moe:** I have to have the funds in hand before I can make an offer. That is the unfortunate thing.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Why, therefore, I imagine that your budget from year to year are not going to vary widely. The parameters are not going to be that different from year to year.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Double budget in one year and then have a surplus and then move it.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Yes. There are ways.

**Mr. George:** You cannot do it under the rules that govern your operation with the Ministry of Finance and its allocations and so on. That is just a fact of life. That is how the exchequer arrangements work. They cannot invite bids until they see the money. And you cannot keep money for the next year from one year.

When you do not spend it goes back to the Consolidated Fund. That is the way that the system operates. You cannot do anything about that.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Granted these constraints there must be a way out to the problem. There must be a way out.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** The solution would lie in the expression of interest route. This is why I ask you for the tender documentation and list it in the manner I did so I could properly interrogate and not be unfair to you how this structure would lend itself to improvement because you could have expressions of interest, a properly constituted prequalification list of persons. You could in your tendering process as well have a whole of entity tendering under bulk purchases which I see you have mentioned to in a very veiled way. This is why I told you it was vague, that there could be a bulk purchasing aspect done—a procurement aspect done in a different way.

But regrettably, I do not have a full picture of how you operate. I have seen the legislation, I have not seen the Cabinet Note reference and then the amendment to it, but the problem is I have seen the particulars of how you have done it. So that the appearance—I am sure this is not the actuality, necessarily, but we hope that it is not. It is one where ever there is darkness things may go wrong. So we want to shed some light on it. The one supplement that I have asked you to provide us with is your organizational chart if you can please, so that we can track the line that responsibility looks like.

**Mr. Moe:** Certainly I would be prepared to do that. In fact we have the organizational chart and most of the document. I must say with regard to carnival 2011 we have the signed contracts and so on with regard to the North Stand and Grand Stand although, though be it that it was executed a little later on because we want to ensure that everything was proper before we award contracts, but certainly we would provide you with all documentation and if only to ensure you that I do not believe at the NCC at this point in time that there is anything on toward in terms of how may we operate. We may be a little bit not as perfect and efficient as we ought to be.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** If I could just supplement by telling you, my particular vested interest in asking because there is a joint enterprise between Government and Opposition to look at the procurement legislation. So that the information is going to be very, very timely when you look at the substance which carnival provides on many fronts for Trinidad and Tobago. It is noteworthy that Walt Disney, the Magic Kingdom moves, one million people a day in the Orlando district effortlessly. There are systems which we could borrow. They obviously procure in a particular way. We are not necessarily reinventing the wheel.

The second interest that I note is that under our copyright legislation there are works of mass included specifically in our copyright Act. So there is a whole revenue generation side which can potentially be realized from the television rights with respect to it if we wanted to open that arena. But I am interested because of the public procurement discussion which we are having, it helps for us to understand because we are looking at the areas that are not technically governed by the Central Tenders Board Act as this institution is. So I would like to understand what your procedures look like and the 2011 carnival is a good test marker to understand whether it is working or not or how it can be improved.

**Mr. Moe:** Certainly you have my support in that regard.

**Mrs. Mc Intosh:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Through you to the Chief Executive Officer, I am concerned about contracts but particularly about payment to small contractors and people who provide services, for example, maintenance services, security services, building of stages, et cetera. I know up to yesterday such persons had gathered for hours outside FCB Maraval awaiting payment and I do understand that they were paid very late after many hours. I understand some are still not paid. My point is that NCC did receive a substantial budget to manage carnival this year. And I do believe—I stand corrected—that it was as much as you received last year. Given that last year you did have some major capital expenditure in respect of the

construction of the Grand Stand and the new North Stand, I do not understand why this year that you do not have such capital expenditure, why it is that people were paid so late and had to wait so many hours and be agitated to get their money and people who also supplied booths, I understand some of them have not been paid as yet. Probably you have a reasonable explanation for that. Why is it that we have this delay in payment especially for people who rendered services in the carnival village?

I would also like to make another point. It is my understanding that there are employees of NCC who rendered services in the carnival village, who received adequate and significant compensation for the jobs to which they are assigned in the NCC, but yet, because of duties in the carnival village they received quite exorbitant cheques for those duties and I am only asking why is this so, because those duties should have fallen under their duties as employees of the NCC.

Another issue I have, there were a number of toilets and tents installed in the area of the North Stand and they were left there. These toilets are installed in groups of 10 with massive tents over them, et cetera. They were left there for the entire carnival season. Now I understand that you cannot install them the same day and take them back the same day granted that the North Stand was only used for one major event and that was the Panorama semi-finals. But these toilets were installed and left for the entire season incurring quite a substantial cost. Why was this? If one major event was held in the North Stand, why were these facilities not removed and I understand it is quite costly. Those are my major concerns I have others but when we meet again. Thank you.

**Mr. Moe:** Just let us deal with the latter. It is not just one event in the North Stand. You have the kings and queens preliminary, semi-finals all assembled behind there and there is where we need the toilets from preliminaries which is the Wednesday, after the semi-finals and the main show right through the season. So it is just not that one event because in the preliminaries you have 100 kings or queens coming on alternate days and having to use those facilities. So it is just not that one event.

**11.05 a.m.**

**Mr. Moe:** In the history of NCC last year, even 2010/2011 whenever it is—we have never had that challenge, it is only this month that we have encountered that challenge which today I understand is corrected.

With regard to the payment of employees of the NCC working, I am not really aware of that. And, please allow me some opportunity to check that. I am really stunned by that one. It may be people who may be around, who may be specially employed, because you take on people for the Carnival season under short-term employment, but certainly, I cannot say definitely.

**Mrs. Mc Intosh:** No, Sir, these are employees.

**Mr. Moe:** Employees of mine?

**Mrs. Mc Intosh:** Yes.

**Mr. Moe:** Okay.

**Mrs. Mc Intosh:** I would be so glad if you could investigate that and give us some sort of feedback.

**Mr. Moe:** Yes, I will do that.

**Mrs. Mc Intosh:** Thank you.

**Mr. George:** Madam Chair, just one question which is just a little piggy back on what my colleague, Mrs. Mc Intosh has spoken about.

In the back of the North Stand or to the west of the North Stand on the day of Panorama, there was a fete. I heard the Chairman speak to the issue of the various interest groups being responsible and taking responsibility for organizing their events. But, given what is happening to pan, one would have felt that the focus would have been on the pan, on Panorama day. There was organized simultaneously—all I could call it is a fete, to the north and west of the North Stand on that same day. Is this going to be a pattern or will the

experience of this year and the disorder—for want of a better word—that occurred on that day be something that would be replicated or would that be something that we would have learnt from and perhaps not have next year? Because one would think that Pan Trinbago would be the lead organization in promoting pan rather than have simultaneously a fete which distracts attention from the pan. So people would come to fete and not just come to hear pan—just a question.

**Mr. Moe:** Just let me see if I can respond to that. There is a push at present to tell the interest groups, your events and activities must be viable. That you must be able to at least increase the levels of revenue, because the shows and the events that you put on have the potential for raising higher revenues.

What has been brought to them is, if you recall that when the Grand Stand was moved from the Queen's Park Savannah there was no space, they created an area in that very same space where you had people coming there—when they had no North Stand—and picnicking.

I must tell you, although we have had challenges this year with regard to security—and I think, I support, Sen. Al-Rawi's suggestion that in Disneyland they could do it better—you follow—with regard to security and the issue, this year has generated the greatest level of revenue that we have ever seen, indeed it was almost doubled.

Now, I do understand the challenge which is now receiving the attention of the board and that is, is it pan or is it party, is it economics? And that is now receiving the attention of the board to see the way forward for next year 2013. And that is the challenge. Revenue that has been generated, it is phenomenal, I must tell you. It is quite a jump in terms of the revenue generating capacity of that.

On the other hand, the North Stand can only seat 7,800 and standing 9,000. That is approved by the fire services. If you multiply that, that is all the revenue you can generate if it is packed to capacity. So, those are the things that the board is currently looking at.

**Madam Chairperson:** Miss Roopnarine.

**Miss Roopnarine:** Thank you, Madam Chair. My issue really goes back to the one of procurement raised by Sen. Al-Rawi and Prof. Ramkissoon just a little while ago. I just wanted to add that, Mr. CEO, you had said, that it was quite normal that your agency, NCC, would seek advice from the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure. I really want to add for the benefit of the wider community and Members that it is quite normal for State agencies and Ministries of the Government to seek input from the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure on construction issues, because the Ministry is staffed with a very competent division which is the Construction Division which deals with particular construction issues. So, I really just wanted to put that on record.

I also wanted to ask the question on page 8, under 2.2. You would have noted that a particular contractor would have worked previously on the North Stand; could you just tell us when this would have been?

**Mr. Moe:** The North Stand contractor you are talking about? The North Stand contractor over the years, and that is prior to our dismantling the Queen's Park Savannah has worked for, I would say 10, 15, 20 years putting up the North Stand and taking down the North Stand. He is extremely experienced, and I am sure when I provide Mr. Al-Rawi with the answers to his questions about selective tendering and why we choose them—Look at our position. Here we are struggling against time as we always are—I understand, Sen. Ramkissoon in that regard—we need the best and most experienced who are able to do it in the shortest possible time.

Indeed, I recall in one year—I think it was 2004 or 2005 he was asked to put up that North Stand in about 18 days. And he did it, completed it. So, experience has to be brought to bear on our construction. And we do that because of time.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Could I say that we are all on equal pages. There is absolutely nothing wrong with selective

tendering, using the best, you are experienced in this field. Procurement as an issue is a management tool. It is about value for money. It is not only about the popular conception of corruption. That is one aspect of it. It is the management tool side of it and it is making sure that there is value for money in respect of it.

The thing about this exercise for us, I would think, is that Carnival is a perennial thing. That being the case, the question is about providing you, and I know that we are all probably going to come to the same issue when we come to interrogation in relation to management and the tools for management.

So, I just want to allay your fears. It is not that anyone is witch-hunting you; it is that the recommendations are going to help us, to help you, to help us. If I could be as circular as that.

**Mr. Moe:** I did not really feel that it was a witch-hunt. Believe me, I welcome this interrogation. It is for years we have not been before one of these committees. We are in the business of making this festival an industry and that is my ultimate goal.

**Mr. Sylvester:** Madam Chair, through you, as a backup to what the CEO said that this type of conversation is what we are eager to experience because it does contribute to the development of the Carnival as a true business, which all of us want it to be. I really appreciate the point, Mr. Al-Rawi *vis-à-vis* Disney World and those types of experiences. So I am saying, we understand the point, we understand it is not a question of witch-hunting, we understand here it is a question of developmental discussions. I just wanted to make that point.

**Mr. Seemungal:** I want to move away from the procurement and those issues, which after you provide the written documentation we may come back to it. I want to move to a point where Carnival has over the years been seen in Trinidad and heard about all over the world as the biggest show on earth, but yet, the Government and the people of Trinidad inject some \$125 million per year. Well, I have seen it over the last year; I am not sure about last year's budget.

The question is, when are we going to see Carnival as a real commercial venture, whereby NCC would be earning income on its own and the subvention from the Government will start dwindling to a point whereby you can operate solely on your own?

And, secondly, what programmes do you have in place to ensure that the traditional costuming mas—you have pointed early o'clock, that one of the things that is attracting tourists now to this country is traditional mas. What programmes do you have in place to develop the traditional mas or costumes as you see it?

And thirdly, what programmes will you be implementing or do you have in place and or implementing in rural communities to develop the mas and to move the mas totally away from Port of Spain and bring it into some of these rural communities where it is now becoming a family oriented day or two, whereby families come out in their thousands to join each other in hands and celebrate the event?

**Mr. Moe:** Let me just leave that question to the deputy chairman who really looks at regional Carnival to give you an insight as to our initiatives and what we do.

**Mr. Sylvester:** Thank you, Mr. CEO. Through you, Madam Chairperson, I remember you made a passing remark to the bikinis and the beads just hanging, and how long they will gyrate. Regional Carnival: Carnival Friday, you may see thousands of children as you have seen parading the streets of Port of Spain, these children—this year we had over 7,000 children from schools right through Trinidad. They have been schooled by tutors whom the NCC appoints. They do 17 sessions—I am dealing with the preservation of the traditional mas here—leading up to Carnival Friday.

The children make the mas themselves, they learn the dance, they practised the dance, and they practised the songs and they are happy to come out and parade on Carnival Friday. And, for the first time the children went up Fredrick Street and crossed the stage on the Grand Stand Queen's Park Savannah with moving Carnival. It did not take hours.

The point I am getting to is that we at the NCC are very serious about preserving our art form particularly our traditional mas. We are not happy with people constantly saying, some of our regional people, that we want to see the Brazilian type Carnival in Trinidad. The mas that people are asking for our there—yesterday, I think about three people from Africa came, different countries in Africa came to the NCC to discuss us bringing traditional type mas to Africa. The same applies in Europe, in England, even at the London Olympics they are looking for us to bring some traditional Carnival characters. The Dame Lorraine; the Moko Jumbie; the Pierrot Grenade—the long time old mas we used to see—the wild Indian mas; the Fancy Indian; the Black Indians and the Burrokeets, that is what is exciting people now. And that is the product—because you mentioned the economics of it—that would sell. Yes, we have to market it properly.

Yes, we have to go with the advice of people like Prof. Ramkissoon, Mr. Al-Rawi, several MPs here and the Chairman, we have to take this advice at the NCC—and Mrs. Mc Intosh. We do not feel we have a repository of data and we know everything. We have to listen to people like you, who have lived in this country for all these years. And some miss this when they come back. Even in the Carnival Village we had people saying, look at this, this is what I knew, long time Carnival; a Moko Jumbie dancing here and a Blue Devil, this type of mas is what people are looking forward to and we at the NCC, charged with the responsibility under Act 1991 to carry out the mandate of developing the Carnival, will so do for the benefit of our people.

**Mr. Seemungal:** I just want to come back on the point of commercializing the venture. Television rights, when you go sometimes to the Oval of the ICC games it is empty, but yet they can pay for the sports and they can bring the players on, because most of them are sold by television rights throughout the world. Are we moving in that direction or where are we with respect to that type of commercializing the venture?

**Mr. Moe:** For several years we have tried a number of things. They said that most events now, the revenues to be generated and the profits to be made are not made at the gates, it is made under TV rights, Pay-Per-View and so on. And, for several years even up to 2010, we made an approach to have it broadcast Pay-Per-View all over the world working with CNMG and it has not proven to be as successful as we would want it. There were a number of issues. One is the technology, in that people were able to capture the signal send it onto their own feeds and do all sorts of things, because live streaming is where it is at.

There is another issue that has seemed to have risen its head over the last few years, that private sponsorship is on the decline for most of the cultural groups and undertakings that we have, save and except for one or two of them in the country. We are not seeing the level of interest by the private sector. I would admit that maybe the content needs to be reexamined and this year we are doing that, but certainly, we are not seeing that interest. For example, whereas photographers and we are talking about copyright and rights of people. Photographers 10 years ago would clamour to come from abroad and take pictures at the Queen's Park Savannah. Now, they all prefer to circumvent those rights by going on the street and taking the pictures. That is a new culture. What do we have to?

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Well, you have a remedy. If I could tell you from an international comparative copyright perspective, our copyright law is an amalgamation between the French, the American legislation and English. But, we have a very unique concept as a work which is covered by copyright protection and that is called a work of mas. It does not exist anywhere else in the world, not even in Brazil. Under that work of mas you could be inventive. Because I have often wondered, you know there are economic rights and moral rights associated with copyright. The economic right involves the right of exploitation and that allows you to charge a fee in relation to certain things. One of the tools available to the NCC—and I am being very intellectual here, you would have to look at this in a larger way—is to say that insofar as there is a coordination and a work of mas that you could charge a form of right, a fee, in relation to photography, a licensed event; so that there is some form of remuneration for it. It is actually done in Walt Disney as well.

There is an intersection of a copyright interest insofar as the creators of the works would have moral rights and certain economic rights, it may be a joint enterprise right. So you can deal with the street performance position, it is hard to police. *[Interruption]*

**Mr. Moe:** That is the point.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:**—however, it is capable of certain aspects of policing insofar as any work that is produced would have originated from an event. It is just a concept, I often wondered why we put in a work of mas into that end, but it does form a tool that you could perhaps think about how you may want to deal with it.

**Mr. Moe:** Just following up on that, Mr. Al-Rawi, since we are sharing. The thing is, we have no control over the route. You know they say, “The road made to walk on Carnival Day” and so on. We do not have a control on the streets. If they come to the Queen’s Park Savannah they would be charged a fee, they would go to the interest groups and we would charge them whatever is necessary. If you notice most of the pictures now, there are somewhere around Independence Square or you would see them at Adam Smith Square and on the street, Ariapita Avenue. That is where they go. They do not come to us. They prefer to stay out. Now how is that affected? Hear how it is affected. They would not come to record the Kings and Queens Preliminaries in the Queen’s Park Savannah because I catch them there. I catch them at the venues.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Could I say this, it is an important point, I do not want the national community who views this to understand that anybody here is interested in raising the cost of Carnival even though it is a revenue generating activity. It roots back to the concept of procurement because if we can engage in better procurement to assist those who produce works of mas by bulk buying and by positioning, et cetera—because there is a lot of similar items that are purchased—without affecting—and here is the delicate balance—the natural competition for business men. Because it is right that those invested in the industry should make a return on their investment. But the balance that I would like to throw out to you is going to be the manner in which we can achieve a reduction of cost for those who participate whilst ensuring that revenue is earned without being monopolistic or unfair in competition. And that is a serious discussions to be had, but perhaps time does not permit it.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Maybe we can just add, just to close up this point. Maybe you can consider while raising funds and recycling the funds into the country maybe some Carnival marshals like what we are doing with the traffic police right now. So those are things you can consider. Maybe amendment to the legislation might be necessary. But you can consider those things and do not leave it as a closed venture and say nothing can be done about it. There is always a solution. One million people passing through Disney World every single day, they cannot take photographs as they want, they must get a licence for their camera.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Or the entrance fee takes care of it.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Exactly, so there is never a shut door with respect to coming up with ideas.

Just the last point because I do not want to monopolize, just coming back to the deputy chairman, Mr. Sylvester’s point. You are before a live listening audience right now, so maybe you can tell them where they can come and apply if they want to access some of those courses or some of those programmes that you are issuing through the NCC.

**Mr. Sylvester:** Under the Act there is a Regional Carnival Committee which is chaired by Mr. Israfil Ali—*[Interruption]*

**Mr. Seemungal:** The location and the number.

**Mr. Sylvester:**—based at the NCC Cipriani Boulevard. But, we do outreach, we go to several communities. As a matter of fact, as we speak now there are some officials doing some investigations in Brazil, which is in your constituency to determine whether you would qualify to be a regional Carnival committee in that area. So we are going into all the crevices of the country, irrespective of whatever groupings there are to develop the mas out there in the countryside.

**Madam Chairperson:** Thank you.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Madam Chair, I want to turn to page 7 in the document. Page 7, income at the top. And, I note there that under “other income” is about \$1.4 million—page 7, the document. I would like to have a breakdown, so we would have an idea where your income is coming from and maybe we could come up with suggestions as to how we can enable you to increase the income. And there are some suggestions already coming from Members here. So, if you can probably provide us with a breakdown of that other income, where it came from, we would really appreciate it.

We note here that the Government subvention is about 99 per cent and the other income is about approximately 1 per cent. I have no doubt that we would be able to increase the other income to a higher percentage. I would like to come up with one suggestion. Where are your offices? I understand that you have three groupings within NCC. You have TUCO, Pan Trinbago and is it CDB or NCBA rather?

**Mr. Moe:** NCBA.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Now where are these offices? Do you have three separate offices? And if you do have three separate offices, then my suggestion to you, I have noticed that you have a lot of space under your Grand Stand, why do you not utilize some of that space under your Grand Stand and save the rent? I would like to know, for example, what is your total rent per year for all those three spaces?

**Mr. Moe:** It is in the report.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Okay, it is in the report, I will check it again. But my suggestion is, can we make better use of the space you have under the Grand Stand. Can you for example, erect a museum? Sometimes I have friends from abroad and I want to show them a bit about Carnival but Carnival is not on. Where do I take them?

**Mr. Moe:** It is true.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** So these are just some suggestions. The offices, I think you can probably take up. What is the rent, though? The rent is here, per year?

**Mr. Moe:** If you look at our entire budget it will be under rental of—

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** If I could just say, Mr. Moe, we did not get the budget it is referred to, I actually asked for clarification.

**Mr. Moe:** You did not get the budget?

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** I actually asked for clarification.

**Mr. Moe:** My apologies.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** It is referred to in the document and I was going to ask if you could have provided us with that when the appropriate time came.

**Mr. Moe:** I do have it, I am sorry.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** But, on page 7, there may be a typographical error in the penultimate paragraph. It says here \$46,056.00, if you could confirm what that figure really ought to be.

**Mr. Moe:** No, it is \$ 46 million—\$46,087,963.50; forty six point zero million.

**Madam Chairperson:** What is the figure?

**Mr. Moe:** I am going to give it to you now. It is \$46,056,989. It was a typographical error.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Madam Chair, can you give me at the top of your head, if you remember, with respect to the rental per year, how much does it cost you per year approximately?

**Mr. Moe:** I would say about \$250,000 in rental per year.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** For all three offices?

**Mr. Moe:** Yes, that I can remember. It may be a little bit more. *[Interruption]* No, but we still pay for rental and that is why I wanted to clarify the point. The interest groups are separate independent entities legally. We accommodate them by paying some of their rent, but NCC, the body, rents and our rent is about

\$111,000 a month.

I must say, however, in following up on your suggestion that we go under the Grand Stand, right now before the Ministry in our budget this year, we have received proposals already. And, we are looking to source this through the IDF as a new project to make a mezzanine floor in the Grand Stand. If you have noticed the Grand Stand is rather high and would easily accommodate. So we have been looking at it but we do not see that being completed until 2014, thereabout. Even if we get it in the budget and we do the detailed designs and so on and then go out to proper tender, we do not see that before 2014 being a reality.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Yes, but it is a step in the right direction.

**Mr. Moe:** Yes it is. But we have thought about it already.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Madam Chair, on page 8. I wonder if that is a typographical error, page 8, 1.0 for Carnival 2012. Should that be Carnival 2011?

**Mr. Moe:** Oh yes, sorry about that—in three places.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Just to add to what Prof. Ramkissoon is saying. Every day I pass by an abandoned building in Orange Grove. What is the status of that building now? And why is it like that? It looks like an eyesore at least on the highway.

**Mr. Moe:** I have to turn to the PS who directly oversees the project.

**Mrs. Jones:** That project falls directly under the UDeCott and we seem to be having a lot of difficulties with all our UDeCott projects. Last fiscal year we got, I believe, about \$16 million roughly, and, I believe all of that money would have gone back, because we cannot really somehow get the UDeCott to assist us. We have written several letters to UDeCott. So, one of the ways forward is to probably pull the projects back into the Ministry. Probably go to get a Cabinet decision on it—*[Interruption]*

**Mr. Seemungal:** Ministry of Works might be able to help.

**11.35 a.m.**

**Mrs. Jones:**—and put back into the instrument.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Madam PS, could you provide us in writing, in the subsequent report: what the nature of the issue with UDeCott is; what recommendations you have in relation to it because when we lay our report in Parliament, it has an effect?

**Mrs. Jones:** Yes.

**Mr. George:** Let me add to that, Madam PS, just to be a little more proactive rather than reactive and with a focus on getting the things done rather than explaining why it was not done. Meet with the UDeCott people, meet with the Chairman and talk with people. There must be a way and we have to develop these kinds of relationships that you meet and talk. The idea is not to purchase a piece of paper; the idea is to get the job done. So, just a bit of—I hope that I am knocking on open doors there. Meet and talk, it might open the doors for us.

**Mrs. Jones:** We have tried but we will try again.

**Mr. George:** I am saying that, again, as a former public servant, you know, who use to get his things done, if I may pat myself on the back, and who used to talk a lot to people when the phones breakdown, you have to walk and go to the person; you cannot say, “Well, the phone breakdown, ah cyah call, ah cyah get in touch with yuh.” In that regard, before this session is out, I want to say thank you very much to Mr. Moe, the CEO, for his responses today and he is a tribute to what a good public servant is.

**Madam Chairman:** We are not finished with him as yet.

**Mr. George:** No, but I want to say it before.

**Mr. Moe:** I can take it.

**Mr. George:** I am taking the opportunity because sometimes we forget. I have to say to him that he did respond excellently today, and I want to congratulate him. He epitomizes what a good public servant is. I

have to say congratulations to him and thanks very much.

**Mr. Moe:** Just to add since you have been paying me some kudos, someone mentioned to me today that there is some site meeting down there today at the pan [*Inaudible*] to discuss that. Is it?

**Mr. Arnold:** I do not think it is Monday. It was put off until Monday and I think there is another postponement until—we were supposed to go there today.

**Mr. Moe:** Because we have to be here.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Maybe by the next meeting, you will have something concrete for us.

**Mr. Moe:** Yes, because the discussion with UDeCott has begun.

**Madam Chairman:** Gentlemen, there are a couple of areas that I want to go back to. Mr. Sylvester, I believe it was, spoke about the outreach and the fact that the children are being taught to make mas with the emphasis on the traditional costume.

Now, I recall the genesis of the Saturday children's Carnival was getting the children involved in Carnival, making their own bands, et cetera. It has evolved into something much bigger than that, to the extent that I am not sure if the school bands are really doing what was meant for them. Have it as part of the teaching curriculum so that the children learn to do these traditional costumes, but is it sort of like part of maths curriculum because they have got to know how many yards it takes, the cost of it, how much wire, et cetera. Is this a part of the training to make the costume? The logistics, the business side of it: Whether, the extent to which that is a part of the training because this is what makes it a business?

**Mr. Sylvester:** Madam Chairman, as a matter of fact, that has to do with the traditional workshops separate and apart from NCBA's competition on Carnival Saturday. The traditional workshops, under the direct auspices of the Regional Carnival Committee, the children even go along with the tutors and the teachers to purchase the cloth and look at the measurements. We have been there. Do we have it on film, Mr. Moe?

**Mr. Moe:** Yes, we do.

**Mr. Sylvester:** They are involved in all aspects because they are being trained already, not only to produce their mas, but to be directors of mas at some point in time. Yes, they are involved from the beginning to the end.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Excellent.

**Madam Chairman:** Next thing, we talked about the Carnival streaming live and wanting to involve pay-per-view. But, as someone who has been on the receiving end of pay-per-view—paying to view—when I pay to view something, I want total entertainment. That is, I must not only be entertained by what I paid for, I must be able to understand.

Now, if what is streaming live is the same commentary that I get when I sit down in front of my TV, I would be very honest with you, I am not going to pay for that. If you are going to seriously go for pay-per-view, you have got to have your announcers do the research. When a band is coming on, they must be able to tell the people what this band is about and explain the various sections of the band. It is a matter of dealing with the bandleaders and being able to understand what is going on.

When you have a lull, then you should use it as a means of projecting Trinidad and Tobago so that instead of selling sweet drink in that two minutes, you have pictures of the Coral Reef, ASA Wright and various other tourist attractions in Trinidad and Tobago so that you are literally selling a whole package that is of interest. But, when you are selling supligen in-between, it means that the people are going to go and get something to eat. If you are selling the reef in-between, you will have them captured for the complete ten hours. So that we have got to look carefully at what we are going to be presenting if we are presenting a pay-per-view package.

The last thing that I want to ask about is the Carnival Institute. I think we will have to invite you back because there really is a lot more stuff that we need to rap with you about.

**Mr. Moe:** Please do.

**Madam Chairman:** Your Carnival Institute. Now, I have said this before, I am a knock-about, but the Carnival Institute is not on my beat. Why?

**Mr. Moe:** That is a tough one but I will try to answer it. It is one of those products that we produced here in Trinidad called the “On and Off”. If you know the start with Dr. Liverpool, we started something, then we disbanded it and then we tore it apart. Then we came with Pat Bishop and we started a new vision and look to hook this into UTT—I am just giving you in a nutshell—and then she passes and it is moved from one administration to another and so on, and you are left without that sense of development and direction. I think that is what we are looking at in 2013 because you would be amazed at the good work that they have done in the preservation of costumes; the good work they have done in getting materials.

In the earlier days, some of their seminars were some of the best people that they have brought together. I think I, too, support what you are saying, Madam Chairman, we have got to do something about that and we are looking at it very seriously in terms of staffing and in terms of management. I think I do share that concern.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could I indicate that I have, I think, two more areas?

**Mr. Moe:** Two?

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Yes, please. The first area is with respect to employment and the second area is with respect to the relationships between third parties as described in your document. With respect to employment, I notice that the NCC runs with employees on contract. The Minister said, I think, on behalf of all of us, Mr. George, the compliment which we would all have on the manner in which you have embraced the questions today and that you have assisted us but he complimented you as the true public servant. Employment via contract and public servant are two different things.

**Mr. Moe:** Yes.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** What I am concerned to do is to understand how the employment relationship between the NCC and its staff operates, because security of tenure, remuneration and other aspects may deal with the issues of incentive-based performance. There are a lot of discussions right now about how the manipulation of contract issues can affect institutions. I am being very polite when I say it that way.

So, if you could provide us in your written responses with the number of employees—remember my last request was for your organizational chart—supplementary to your organizational chart would be: the number of employees that you have, those who are on contracts, the length of contracts and the termination mechanism with respect to contracts. Because you may have a contract for three years and find out it is terminable upon one-month’s notice, or you may have people who are continuing on contracts just by the way of monthly contracts continuing ad infinitum. So that is the area that I am looking to interrogate.

With respect to the relationship between third parties, I noted on page 3 of your document that there is a relationship between promoters and the private sector. The relationship with promoters is that the NCC assesses how it will support promoters on an individual basis. What I am interested in is understanding—if you could provide me with the answers to this in your written interrogation—what rules govern how you assess promoters? So, I am looking for the general rules with respect to promoters so that we can understand how predictable the event will be.

The second area under private sector really says that the NCC rarely, if ever, approaches the private sector for assistance in funding and that it interacts with the business community. Again, I am looking to establish what are the rules that govern your interaction? What is your rule of engagement with respect to this area? Because that is a source of revenue generation that we can probably use to reduce the subvention provided by Government. But, the first one, the issue of the promoters, is the one that is of more interest to me because that is where we are giving our subvention out to promoters and there may even be, as you say,

trade-offs. So, what I am trying to understand is how that relationship is governed? Thank you.

**Mr. Moe:** I would provide that one in written form. But, I think, with regard to the first part of the question talking about human resources and the contract, I ought to allow the Human Resource Manager who is here to give you some insight before we give you a written document.

**Ms. Smart:** Madam Chairman and members of the Committee. My name is Yvonne Smart. At present, the NCC has 53 persons employed. In administration, we have 25 persons permanently employed and three temporary persons. We have a security and maintenance complement at the NCC. We have six security officers and they are also permanently employed and seven maintenance personnel.

At the Carnival Institute, we have five persons employed. We have on contract: six Managers and two middle-management personnel—the Budget Analyst and a warehouse person.

In terms of when Mr. Moe submits his paper, I will put in it for you, the length of contracts and some of the relevant terms. I need to say that we follow the general rules that are enforced in the contracts awarded by CPO, and, in general, the public service.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Thank you.

**Ms. Smart:** You are welcome.

**Mr. Ramkissoon:** Just one request for the next time. On page 7, expenditure amounting to about \$46 million, I wonder if we could get some more details as to how the \$46 million-plus was spent.

**Mr. Moe:** We will provide that. It is a breakdown and it had specific—in the note that went to Cabinet, it was specific in terms of the areas in which we ought to create expenditure but I will provide that.

**Mr. Ramkissoon:** Thank you.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Madam Chairman, this is a question that I want them to think about for the next time we meet. This is a question that I want you all to think about; maybe you do not have to answer on this occasion but on the next occasion. The steelpan industry—the manufacturer of steelpan is fast dwindling away from Trinidad and Tobago. China is moving as one of the biggest steelpan manufacturers industries and a lot of places in the world and yet we cry to have invented the steelpan. What are you doing to ensure that we create more opportunities and avenues whereby we can take this product and make it into a big industry in this country? You can think about it for the other occasion but if you can answer it, that is fine.

**Mr. Moe:** I will think about it. I was going to invite the Chairman to make a statement but he may take up most of your time with regard to that in terms of the passion in where he feels about where the pan is going. I must tell you that wherever you go in the world and you beat a pan, I can tell you, they just simply think it is a wonderful instrument that we have invented as a people. It is really unbelievable and we should do much better.

**Mr. Arnold:** The industry is being kept back by a lot of issues and I have been speaking about it for a long time. Firstly, because the site—11 acres of land—is still there looking at us. At this point, we would have had a chroming plant, or factory, located there beside the office. There is also the problem—I have written time and time again—about, just imagine, since Vanleer left Trinidad, the tuners here have a lot of problems locating drums of good quality and you have to import drums. In fact, I used to import drums from Venezuela, Chicago—you have that type of problem.

In fact, as we speak, most of the tuners are dealing with inferior drums that they should not even touch because if you go by one of the tuning places, you will find drums with a skull and cross bone, that means there is poison and they should not be handling those at all, because these days pans go to the schools and so on.

But, we are not providing the infrastructure here for a proper industry and it is not for matter of talking or trying to get it done, we need to deal with the issues. First of all, I am hoping that the 11 acres of land up there will not be there looking at us for the next how many years and that is—you do not want me to

really deal with it because the things that I might say would not be nice to some people, but it was left there. It was taken away from the people who started the project. The guy died and we got local contractors who would have completed the building a long time ago but it was given to UDeCott. When you pass there, if all of us pass there to go to the airport, you would have seen Pan Trinbago headquarters, UDeCott and that was there since way back when.

**Mr. Seemungal:** It is about six years ago.

**Mr. Arnold:** Longer than that and they left it there. Two local contractors were sourced and I took the estimates to the Ministry. It would have been completed a long time ago for a less cost than it will be today. At that time, they gave it to UDeCott.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Mr. Arnold, during your conversation, you made an interested point and that is “we”. You used the word “we” are not doing enough to promote the steelpan industry. Who is this “we” and who can “we” rely upon as the committee to determine who is this “we”.

**Mr. Arnold:** The “we”, at the time, had to be the Government of the day because they are the ones who did not complete the building.

**Mr. Seemungal:** What about now?

**Mr. Arnold:** When they gave it to UDeCott, the Chinese were there. There was a container that they slept in and then they were taken to the old airport when the first Summit came about, and after that, they went to NAPA and the building stood there.

There would have been the chroming plant, drums and everything. But, outside of that, it could be done and it still could be done. As we speak, you know, as you said before, there are tuners all over this world now.

**Mr. Seemungal:** I am a bit confused. Is it that the steelpan industry—there are about six or seven steelpan, if you want to say, manufacturers or builders in La Horquetta, for instance, and one of these pans are within \$6,000 to \$10,000 per pan—a drum that is costing \$60 and \$500 to chrome but they are selling at that rate. So, why are we waiting on a building that is unfinished? Why we cannot be more innovative and rent a warehouse to do these things? Why are we sitting and just waiting and saying, “Well, the Government did not provide” and we are not providing. That is the “we” that I am looking at.

**Mr. Arnold:** Yes, that could be done too. But, if you really want to—

**Mr. Seemungal:** China is taking over the industry right now; right now we are importing the technology.

**Mr. Arnold:** The people who make the pans, they do not have chroming plants; they do not have pan—what do you call it?

**Mr. Seemungal:** Right now, they cannot even afford to buy. That is the next question that I was coming too. Why does the NCC not purchase these drums and then sell them back? So, those are the things that we do not wait for Carnival to come around to do. You can consider those.

**Mr. Arnold:** Well, if you want us to go that way—

**Mr. Seemungal:** No, I want you to advise me because you are the technical committee; we are just here.

**Mr. Arnold:** As we speak, there was Trinidad and Tobago Pan Works created since 1998 and do not ask me what has become of that because it was under Pan Trinbago.

**Mr. Seemungal:** So what is the way forward? I mean, I have asked questions and I did not get—

**Mr. Arnold:** If you want NCC to take it over, we can.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Policy.

**Madam Chairman:** Mr. Chairman, we are going to wrap this session up but we have enjoyed having you so much that we want a repeat of this. At the next session, we will discuss largely the information that you would have sent for us. It would be helpful if we could get it in about 10 days so that we would have time to ruminate and absorb all the information that you are going to give us.

I thank you very much for what has been for me—and I think I speak for the committee after, Mr. George—for a very enlightening and enjoyable session. Thank you.

**Mr. Moe:** Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Next time will be on May 18, 2012.

**Mr. Moe:** Could I get back to you? I just want to make sure that I have all the information so that I would not want to be inaccurate as what happened today.

**Madam Chairman:** Do not tell us that you were inaccurate now. We will meet on May 18 and you will get us that information.

**11.58 a.m.:** *Meeting adjourned.*

**VERBATIM NOTES OF THE THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE OF  
PARLIAMENT APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO AND REPORT ON GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES (GROUP  
I), STATUTORY AUTHORITIES AND STATE ENTERPRISES FALLING UNDER THOSE MINISTRIES,  
HELD IN THE ARNOLD THOMASOS ROOM (EAST), LEVEL 6; AND THE J. HAMILTON MAURICE ROOM,  
MEZZANINE FLOOR, OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT, TOWER D, THE PORT OF SPAIN, IWFC,  
1A WRIGHTSON ROAD, PORT OF SPAIN ON FRIDAY JUNE 22, 2012 AT 9:00 A.M.**

**PRESENT**

|                                 |                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Mrs. Corinne Baptiste-Mc Knight | Chairman             |
| Prof. Harold Ramkissoon         | Vice-Chairman        |
| Mr. Emmanuel George             | Member               |
| Mrs. Carolyn Seepersad-Bachan   | Member               |
| Mr. Jairam Seemungal            | Member               |
| Mrs. Patricia McIntosh          | Member               |
| Miss Stacy Roopnarine           | Member               |
| Mrs. Verna St. Rose Greaves     | Member               |
| Mr. Faris Al-Rawi               | Member               |
| Dr. Amery Browne                | Member               |
|                                 |                      |
| Mrs. Lily Broomes               | Secretary            |
| Ms. Khisha Peterkin             | Asst. Secretary      |
| Ms. Katharina Gokool            | Grad. Research Asst. |

**ABSENT**

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Dr. Delmon Baker  | Member |
| Mr. Danny Maharaj | Member |

*Stakeholders enter meeting.*

Good morning to you all and my apologies for keeping you waiting, but we had a little housekeeping to settle before we got down to this business. Could I just ask each of you to give us a—unfortunately it would have to be a brief introduction to your main concerns, because we are committed to meeting with the NCC in, let us say, the next half an hour. So my apologies for cutting you short but, please, bear with me. We have had your submissions which we have been able to internalize, so that if there is anything that you would like to add to these, you can now go ahead and share this with us. Just introduce yourself as you start. Can we start from the end? Mr. Cameron?

**Mr. Cameron:** My name is David Cameron, bandleader of Trini Revellers and the public relations officer of the National Carnival Bands Association. The submission I did was in respect to the advertisement in the media about the enquiry into the NCC during the period 2010—2011, but I expanded on that a bit, because the NCC operation is similar the last eight or 10 years, or maybe more. So what I did in my submission is, I spoke about the NCC's relationship with stakeholders in Carnival and, as you may know, pan, mas and calypso have representative members on the board of the NCC. So therefore we are supposed to have a close relationship.

With the NCC, it has not been a bed of roses because people had their own agendas, and in the end why I am here is because the National Carnival Bands, which is mas, we have been at the end of suffering over the last decade, and you would all know about the facilities, the infrastructure, for mas is lacking. We

could start from the Savannah to Adam Smith Square in Woodbrook to downtown Port of Spain, to Piccadilly Street areas with the Up-town Carnival. The amenities and the accommodation even for the personnel need to be upgraded. And I just want to draw a little example quickly. If I take the parade on Carnival Tuesday and you start at the Savannah; you go through the Savannah, you get down to Woodbrook, when you get down to Woodbrook area you are supposed to have no vendors between Alfredo Street and Fitt Street—that is about, say, 300 yards—so that you will have a free flow. There are barriers and the spectators will stay behind the barriers, but then you have no supervision, no security, so spectators, of course, come onto the road for a better vision and it prevents the bands from flowing through there. Any Tuesday after six o'clock, try and shuttle home your drinks trucks, because within the last five years there are people coming into the area just to hop the truck and get what they could get and what not. So we bandleaders have to ensure that we shuttle our trucks out of there.

There are two sets of judges in downtown. One is the NCC/NCBA group and the other one is the Port of Spain City Corporation Downtown Carnival. So we have one set of judges in one stand and the other set of judges in the other stand. So they tell the bandleader, you have to make two presentations in this little area about 30 yards long, and it is difficult, because, I mean, you want to make a proper presentation; you want to make one presentation. So judges must be in a common area that they could judge the competition properly. And I am just hitting snippets now, because of the time. Piccadilly Street, it is wide and acceptable but to get out of there is a problem, and that is why many bands hold back from going down into Piccadilly Street.

If perhaps you do not start at the Savannah and you start at Adam Smith Square, or downtown, or Piccadilly, or you leave out Piccadilly and you head for the Savannah, that is chaos, because you are reaching up—if it is Charlotte Street or Abercromby Street or Frederick Street you may reach there around one o'clock but be prepared to wait until six/seven o'clock to get in the Savannah. It is terrible. So, therefore, we are saying, yes, we have this problem for years. Bandleaders and interested people in mas must get together with the stakeholders to come with a proper plan in order to minimize. They will have a little while to wait to go into some of the points, but to minimize, because six hours in one area is terrible.

**10.10 a.m.**

**Mr. Cameron:** Then I would go on to the funding.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Have you had any meeting at all over the last two years with the NCC, the band leaders in particular?

**Mr. Cameron:** Well, the National Carnival Bands Association may have had meetings. But, there is a concern among the membership about the way we are represented. So you have a committee now calling themselves the “Concerned Members of the NCBA.” We have met with the NCC in recent times, about three or four times within six weeks, because we cannot take it anymore.

This is the time bands are planning for 2013 Carnival. The NCC is nowhere near ready, till in November to launch Carnival which is a waste of time. We are saying—and I am expanding on your question—launch Carnival at least at the end of September and have mini launches in Toronto, Broward and Notting Hill. We do not have to send people. We can send the costumes but we would get the people over there to model it at cocktail parties for two or three hours, all the media and the travel agents and what not. Our High Commission offices could be involved and let us look at marketing Carnival.

But, to do that, we here must be ready too; the stakeholders, the Ministry of Tourism, the TDC, the NCC bands and what not. It is a collective effort, real collective effort. Carnival is big business but somehow or the other it is a last minute operation for us. And, I am going over the last ten years, there is no change.

Let me just get back to the funding if I can do that. The method that is in place is that the bodies

make up their budgets and forward it to the NCC. They in turn will forward it to the Ministry of Finance. However, being an executive committee member of the NCBA and watching the way the officers in charge handle a budget, it is pathetic. It is just a matter of inflating prices, creating a budget and submitting it to the NCC. That in mind, I feel very hurt to see colleagues in my area doing that kind of thing with a budget. It needs proper attention. A budget must be almost real.

Okay, you submit a budget for \$12 or \$14 million. No Government is that stupid to hand out \$12 or \$14 million just like that if it is not justified. So you would find the budget for the last five, six years would be \$7.7 million but out of the \$7.7 million, \$6.6 million are for the prizes. So that is allocated, you cannot do anything else with that. So there is a little control there. The rest of money is to handle your staffing and your shows and what not. The shows are pathetic.

The Kings and Queens, it has almost diminished to a volume of maybe for the most 1000 persons watching one of those shows. The product is not there. You need to have a high profile product. We need to have a Kings and Queens Show finals by itself maybe Carnival Friday and Dimanche Gras will be this big extravaganza that will have representation from the different bodies. So we need to look at these things.

I know it is a lot because we could talk for hours on this subject. It is a passion that we have with it. We are being hurt every year so you will find that it will come out in a tone. I am sorry about that.

One of the items that you all listed there was the erection of the North Stand. Now, I did not have much liaising on that. But, all I can say at this stage is that we have got to justify to ourselves whether we did the correct thing. When you go into that Savannah on Monday or Tuesday, the Stands are empty. What has happened, with evolution the people have gone into the Savannah, lined the path between the American Embassy to the Old Casuals Corner so you would see people there with their cars and they open their trunks with their food and with their this and that. You go down to Woodbrook, a tremendous crowd right down the Avenue. And you go downtown and Broadway is lined with people. So there has been a change. Now to get back people into the Savannah to patronize the Stands you have to look at a different scenario— incentives. We have got to study it properly. I go there between 8 o'clock to say 10.30 p.m. for the last period of time and there is nobody.

So I am just giving a brief but these are the problems, just a touch of the problems that we band leaders are suffering. And the NCC plays an integral part in monitoring and coordinating the activities for Carnival.

My last point is back to finance. Not one year I could remember the authorities auditing the accounts of these bodies—let me deal with my body, NCBA—and it must be done because this taxpayer's money we are talking about. Not one year and that is their responsibility. Ladies and gentlemen that is my brief.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you very much indeed.

**Mrs. Gabriel:** Good Morning everyone. My name is Roslyn Gabriel. My passion is Carnival but in particular junior Carnival. My submission today was made upon a question I heard Madam Chair ask in the first session, on what is being done for children in school teaching them the Carnival skills? Having heard the reply to that question, I made my submission.

I think it is a big shame that the children in school today are not really being taught any Carnival skills whatsoever. It was in the early 1970s that Carnival Arts was in the school curriculum. But, it was taken out and left up to the principal in charge of each school as to whether they would bring a Carnival band or not. Well, based on the various religions and whether there was a PTA or a parent who liked Carnival, a band would be brought or not brought in the schools. Shortly after the Carnival Arts came out of the school curriculum, private bands were allowed into the Carnival Saturday Parade and the school bands diminished. In a recent check, there are about 100 private bands on Carnival Saturday to about 30 or 25 school bands.

So I would really like to see something happen where we could introduce our children in schools once more into the Carnival skills teaching them wire bending, the various arts, the elements of design and so on. That way maybe we could help with the crime situation, get the children involved in something that will interest them because not all children are academically inclined.

In addition to this, I would like to add that the NCBA started a Carnival Academy to teach these said skills but it has now been shut down. I think we need to do something concerning this.

In other areas of junior Carnival I would like to state clearly that the infrastructure for junior Carnival is unacceptable. On a Carnival Sunday—the Sunday preceding Carnival Sunday when we have our Junior Kings and Queens Parade you could pass at 9 o'clock in the morning and see the stage being knocked up and kids in their costumes waiting in the streets to parade.

The infrastructure is the direct responsibility of the NCC and too often the children of our nation are just sidelined and not respected. They start to knock-up the stage midnight, the night before. I do not think this really should be allowed to go on any longer. The reason we are here is because we are all fed up. We are all fed up of how our mas is disrespected and treated.

So we are here because we need to make a statement. We need to see the junior Carnival, the senior Carnival—I endorse everything, Mr. Cameron said. My band on Carnival Tuesday got stuck on Abercromby Street from 10.30 a.m. and I never got on the Savannah stage till 10 past 8 Carnival Tuesday.

I need to say here that to get the band inside the mouth of the Savannah was a literal war. It was war. It was nothing short of that. There was no security. There were bands coming from the Charlotte Street side pushing and bands coming from the Frederick Street side pushing. It was utter chaos. The marshals who were in charge were totally inadequate. It was really, really hard. We had to actually turn our music off as we got off the stage because literally you get swamped with non-masqueraders. So we had to walk home from the Savannah to our mas camps or wherever our trucks had to park.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** [*Inaudible*]

**Mrs. Gabriel:** Same thing. Nothing has changed. This is why we are here today. Nothing has changed. We are desperate. Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Aguiton.

**Mr. Aguiton:** Thank you. Good morning folks. Apart from the paper that I submitted, my concern is the extremely poor quality of our Carnival over the last few years. We have really degenerated into “crap”—excuse me, forgive my words. With the exception of a few bands every year Carnival look like last year's bikinis worn over. It really has degenerated into a different colour set of feathers and strings with the same old bikini. I pray that they would stop blaming Brazil because that is not Brazil's Carnival.

I base my discussion on the fact that the Carnivals I have witnessed over my many years in Trinidad and Tobago and in other countries. I lived in Brazil for several years. I know Brazil's Carnival inside out. What you see of a little section of a 7,000 band of some people either in bikini or no bikini at all is a very small section in any band in Brazil.

As I explained to some of my colleagues the band could be playing priest from Mount St. Benedict and you would find a little section of the bikini ladies—small—and a little section of the bahiana women dressed like Carmen Miranda. Some of you all are old enough to remember Carmen Miranda in her big flair skirt and the fruits on the head. Every band has those two sections in it regardless of what they are playing.

But ours is just rehashed last year's Carnival. It is an insult. Monday is a bigger insult because is not even, “ole mas.” because, it was a very organized thing in our culture years ago with humor and a theme. This was really an extension of J'ouvert. Monday is an extension of J'ouvert—the whole day. It is an insult to nationals to ask them to go to the Savannah on a Monday to look at what is going across the stage. And a worse insult to ask tourists to come and pay to go and see that. That does not speak well. It does not

promote our Carnival well.

Parade centre. My paper is based on discussions I had with the NCC since 1988, when there was promise to build a proper parade centre in the Savannah. It has never materialized. We have cowsheds. Well, we went from cowsheds to containers now on stilts, I think. It is really garbage. And we keep every year with this nonsense headline in our newspaper, talking about the “Greatest Show on Earth.” We are not the greatest show on earth. There are many other carnivals that are far superior to our Carnival. We are not the greatest show on earth.

Brazil built a thing called the Sambadrome, 90,000 capacity parade centre for Carnival. They build it in a poor area in Rio and under the seating they built schools for the poor children in the area. The parade center is wide enough—designed that way—that after Carnival it is marked off and they have tennis, badminton, volleyball, basketball they play all the sports. It is long enough and wide enough to accommodate those sports the rest of the year. So we are far, far out of league here. We really do not know what we talking about.

We say this is a great art form and we have not come up with a plan. Every year we treat Carnival as though it is coming as a surprise. Like we did not know Carnival was coming. All of a sudden we wake up and we say, “A-a” but next week is Carnival?” Then we start to get organized for Carnival. Terrible! Terrible! Terrible!

We could do a lot with Carnival to stimulate the economy of our country. The only part of Carnival that has no preliminaries is Parade of the Bands everything else has preliminaries—except Parade of the Bands. If we were to start four weekends before, three weekends before the main Carnival weekend with preliminaries of the bands. The bands pick, as you register to play in the category large, medium, small for which Saturday you are going to play. I am saying which Saturday—the logistics have to be worked out but which Saturday you are going to parade in the preliminaries. And the Sunday we leave it to do something with the children. Thank God for Roslyn and the children, that is the future of our Carnival.

But, we could be advertising just think of the economic impact if we do not tell people Carnival is just Monday and Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. But we have a month of Carnival. These are the things that are happening every weekend: airlines, hotels, Old Oak Rum, Carib Beer, all the doubles and shark and bake vendors everybody is in the business for four weekends before the final Monday and Tuesday. What we do is we eliminate, so when you come down to the final Monday and Tuesday you pick 12 bands in the three categories small, medium and large and six will cross the stage on Monday and the other six will go downtown. Tuesday we flip flop. Those that went downtown will come to the Savannah.

You just cut all the jam session and the traffic and the congestion downtown by a high percentage. Because not everybody trying to get through the stage on Monday or Tuesday. You go and play mas on the Foreshore. Those that did not qualify in the preliminaries go play anywhere you want but do not come here by the Savannah because you did not qualify.

So we just got rid of all the congestion. We just presented a better quality show on Monday and Tuesday. We combined the judging of down Town with the Savannah so there is only one band of the year. So there will be no downtown band of the year and uptown band of the year. One Band of the Year so you must go to bought places to be judged. You must come out in your full costume. I end my case for the time being.

**Madam Chairman:** A nice case.

**Mr. Aguiton:** I thank you.

**Mr. Ali:** Good Morning ladies and gentlemen my name is Dune Ali from the band, “Just Friends.” I am also from a group called, “Concerned Members for the NCBA.”

What I have sent to you here are two different proposals which look into the running of the NCBA

who is part, actually, of the NCC. The subventions that come to the NCBA are given to them by the NCC. The NCC as a body is supposed to monitor the NCBA in everything that they do as far as the accounts are concerned, as far as all their activities and this has not been done. The NCBA, I hate to say the word—I do not know, I think I have five minutes in which to speak and it is quite impossible to go through what I have here. I have provided you with all the information that I have and maybe I do not know if at some other time we can come back and go over this.

**Mr. Seemungal:** List two major concerns.

**Mr. Ali:** Corruption in the NCBA. That is where it is. I will just quickly look at things. I have provided you with documents where we have an operations manager who draws cheques to his name for \$440,000.00 to pay people in a Carifesta show. Who draws \$440,000.00 in cash, in their name to pay someone? That cannot happen.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Your strong recommendation is forensic auditing.

**Mr. Ali:** Definitely forensic audit. I will go to a next simple one again. Awards Function Queens Hall, 2007: \$87,000; 2008: \$137,000 and 2009: \$240,000.00. Queen's Hall rental: \$5,000 for the night.

On the day of the children's presentation we have the snacks which are provided by Republic Bank. On the adult night they pay for hospitality. Tell me, how in heavens name can they spend \$240,000? This does not include prizes or anything like that. This is just the cost of the Award Function.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** How is that body constituted?

**Mr. Ali:** This is the big problem. I have also provided you with a second report on the constitution. I have provided you with copies of the constitution to see the problems that we are going through and how they can keep themselves in office because the constitution runs contrary to the laws of Trinidad and Tobago. You have parts in this constitution which says, "If a member applies we do not have to give him a reason why we did not accept this member." Their subventions are in the figure of \$8 million this is a public authority now under the NCC. They are just doing what they want. You need to read and I am sure you are going to pick many things up. Legal fees: an association of this level has in four years legal fees totalling \$892,000. What does the NCBA that they have to have legal fees of \$892,000?

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** [*Inaudible*] [*Laughter*]

**Mr. Ali:** "Mr. Lalla get in before you." Income and publicity and promotions we have \$285,000. I do not know if you all are around Carnival time and see any ads anywhere, for any shows anywhere, for any publicity anywhere. That is tremendous amount of money spent on publicity. I will pass other little things on to you.

The accounts are badly written. They are done by a firm in Trinidad. I do not what is going on. You have accounts payable 2009 and under accruals you put, "other" You have to explain all account payable. You cannot put "other." It says that in 2010 and also 2011.

The games that are played with the money of the masqueraders. Since, I have been in the NCBA, I have never been on the executive but I am a member as I have a band. No one outside there knows what the prizes are. You do not know. Nobody knows. You just happen to come and register and they tell you go into this classification or that classification. At the prize giving the first, second and third places are presented with a trophy. But there are cash prizes up to 10 in some cases. No one knows if they won. So every year we have a tremendous amount of money in uncashed, written back cheques. So they do not go to the masquerader, they do not print something in the newspaper like the Ministries do and say well we have stale dated cheques here, come and collect your cheques. They just leave that money.

Let us go to the accumulated fund. Year 2007 they have an accumulated fund of \$629,000. What kind of normal business running could have an accumulated fund of \$629,000?—because you have kept prize money. And then they use that money in the accounts to write off of their deficit of the operating year. This is just total games.

**Member:** Creative accounts.

**Mr. Ali:** The money belongs to prize winners over the past years who are totally unaware they have won a cash prize. Our loving and caring board members prefer to return the prize money to the accounts to offset losses incurred instead of publishing in the print media a listing of uncollected cheques. As I stated just now, please note, full results have never been published. So many prize winners remain unaware that they have won a prize. It is left to the competitor to call or visit the NCBA office to inquire if they have won a prize. The NCBA does not advertise nor inform the members of the number of placings and prizes that are available in various competitions.

We have various things like assistance. We have where the NCBA offers assistance to bands. A senior band would get \$5000 and a junior band \$1500. But, we have a member of the NCBA, the secretary who writes a letter to the President asking for \$50,000 to pay his DeeJay. This is totally unfair.

**Madam Chairman:** What was the response?

**Mr. Ali:** There is a copy of the letter in your file. I use the words, “alleged to be written by Mr. Browne” but it was done. Traditionally, when one request assistance you hope that the matter is considered but in this case it seems to be pre-approved. If you would read the letter it would say, kindly make cheque out to so and so. It did not say I am asking for assistance in order to assist me with my band. It says kindly make cheques out to so and so. What does it mean, that it is pre-approved>

Let us go to National Insurance Board I have a document I have given you there with the National Insurance Board had just written to them in March showing that they are due nearly \$400,000. There is a total indebtedness to the NIB of \$456,208.79 at the present time. That comes from penalties and everything else.

I come to a little problem here that I must bring to your attention. There is a gentleman by the name of Mr. Arden Knox. I do not know if any of you know him or heard of him. He has been in mas for 26 years. He has worked in NCC and in NCBA offices. This gentleman was sent home as per attached letters which I have enclosed. On reading the letters you will see what was said. He was given \$15,000 and told we had no severance benefits or anything in place. He then went to the NIS office to enquire to get his NIS payments. He was told we have no NIS payments. They made payments but it was put towards the arrears so there is nothing in the office at the present time for anybody who attains that age to collect their NIS. This man is presently destitute. You can concur to that right now.

**Members:** Yes.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** You can sue.

**Mr. Ali:** Well, what you are going to sue with. You forget what you fellas cost.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** No seriously, he has not sued.

**Mr. Aguiton:** No.

**Mr. Ali:** Well, he is there waiting.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** When you say nothing was in place there is the Severance and Retrenchment Benefits Act, which is law.

**Mr. Ali:** You have copies of that in your file, the letters as written by the NCBA. I wonder if I picked up a copy here. Yes, I did.

**Mr. Ali:** I know you all may be running out of time.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Madam Chair, sorry to interrupt the presentation and hopefully he will be allowed injury time. I am concerned that upon my not so timely arrival this morning for matters in other areas which I hope to be excused for. I receive a package on my desk. I know that we were lucky to have participation by the persons before us this morning and we thank you them for the short notice attendance. But, what I am concerned about is the time frame for really proper consideration and interrogation of the documents provided.

What we are hearing right now is deserving of a session which is by far longer and which may perhaps be one in need of ventilation in the public fora and not in camera alone under our ability to call for and examine and invite submissions.

I do not know if this is something that we wish to discuss after our guests depart or not.

**Madam Chairman:** Yes.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** However, Madam Chair, I just wanted to put that on position because I think it is unfair for the gentlemen who has kindly collated so much information for our attention to be confined to the time frame that we have permitted and indeed the opportunity downstairs after. And, I say that also in the context of having just quickly glanced PKF as the chartered accountants and auditors having done financial statements for the company. I looked quickly to see if there was a qualification of statement from the PFK audit of the 2009 accounts and I am not seeing one which causes me great concern. So, there clearly is need for a greater drill down to be fair to all involved in the process. I am just asking for your guidance at this point on that.

**Madam Chairman:** We would have to look into this a little further because this body of documentation we got this morning.

**Mrs. Broomes:** We got one copy yesterday.

**Madam Chairman:** You got one copy yesterday, so that it could not have been disseminated earlier. But, it puts a slightly different complexion on some of what we need to do. So we will thank our stakeholders. Give them the assurance that their submissions have disturbed us considerably.

**Mr. Ali:** I know we have run out of time but I just want to make one quick little point here.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Sorry to interrupt. Madam Chair, apart from thanking for time I am sure all of the members present would like a further opportunity with these persons in particular so we could understand.

**10.40 a.m.**

**Madam Chairman:** There is where I wanted to go by asking them whether they would be available to speak with us again, because it is obvious that we are not going to conclude the NCC today.

**Mr. Ali:** After making 1,600 copies yesterday, definitely I will be back. [*Laughter*]

**Madam Chairman:** Well, we thank you for that.

**Mr. Ali:** Well, I just want to throw a little one in here again—Statement of Comprehensive Income—this is 2011. You start off with income and you name all the types of income that you have—accreditation, community events, copyright. This is money that the NCBA receives all the way down to subvention from the Government of \$7,374,000. Then, you list expenditure at the bottom—normal proceeding. When you go to shows and parade of bands, they put a figure net and they say, “Go to note 6”.

Let us go to note 6 which is on the back page. It again shows: shows and parade of bands; net income: less expenditure. So the correct cost of the parade of bands is really \$2,456,909, and not the net figure shown on the front page. But, hear the problem: why have I noted on “income” the name of the income, but on the back page, I just put income. Is there such an income? Where does it come from? Why it is not detailed? Income from where? Is it a balancing figure that the auditors put in to make the accounts look correct? This continues throughout, and there is no breakdown of the bands, the cost and what goes on. There is a tremendous amount of things that we can come back with.

**Mrs. Gabriel:** Madam Chairman, may I?

**Madam Chairman:** Sure.

**Mrs. Gabriel:** I do not think that I would like to leave today without letting you all know that an election is imminent in the NCBA. It was already called in a snap fashion on May 28, and we were able to go to court to stop that election. It is now called for July 17. I just want you all to know that we have put together a slate to try to get rid of the current board because we are fed up of what is going on. So, I just wanted to leave

everybody with that thought—that an election is due in the NCBA.

**Madam Chairman:** In other words, that there is hope.

**Mr. Ali:** Okay, in your package—package no. 2—which I dealt with the Constitution and I also dealt with elections, when you have time and you go through it, you will see that we went to court to get a financial list. They refused to give us a financial or a non-financial, we had to end up going to court to get this list. When we got the list, on receipt of the list, we noted 43 new individuals were accepted to the NCBA.

On further examination, we noted that 42 of the new members were accepted on Thursday, May 03 and paid their subscriptions by May 07—all on the same day. In other words, we have 42 new members from all over the country who have all just found out that they got approved, and found their way to the NCBA office to pay their dues to become financial. One member—the 43rd member—got his own on May 21 which was dated May 08 and postmarked May 14. You now see that it was hand-carried or there is definite collusion here, as I will explain. It is not strange that 42 other persons domicile in Tobago, Chaguanas and San Fernando, were able to get their approvals by Monday, May 07, and promptly paid their subscriptions on the same date? This is an extreme case of voter padding. *[Laughter]* On viewing the applications of the 42 members, we noted that they were all proposed by members of the present board. Fair elections cannot be held because the nomination and election process is handled by the incumbent board.

As stated in Cabinet Minute No. 2007—whatever, the role of the National Carnival Commission is responsible for auditing, accounting, monitoring subventions, and most of all, coordination of all activities. Then the NCBA should be responsible for handling the election process so that we can be guaranteed a free and fair election. I have also given you copies of the financial and non-financial members, and I have also highlighted that they have all paid on the same day.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Ali, let me ask a question: am I right in my understanding that there are, amongst others, some popular band members who have been debarred from membership of the NCBA with no plausible reason? Nothing?

**Mr. Ali:** Yes, we have Mr. MacFarlane, Peter Samuel, Roland St. George's Band. But, you see, again,—*[Interruption]*

**Mrs. McIntosh:** They have applied and been refused membership of the NCBA.

**Mr. Ali:** I have given you copies of the Constitution, and I have asked you if you have time to read certain clauses, which I have put to you, which runs contrary to the laws of Trinidad and Tobago. It is definite discrimination.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** If your slate does not succeed, well, we are back to square one?

**Mr. Ali:** The slate does not succeed, but—after reading this, and after going into this, if this body does not decide to have an enquiry into the NCBA and the possibility of a forensic audit, we are back then, leave it and let it run. You are giving \$8 million to a group who just controls Carnival—I will show you here later on, you will read, there have been no meetings. Rosalind, has there been a meeting?

**Mrs. Gabriel:** We have not had any general meetings for at least three years.

**Mr. Ali:** Junior or senior.

**Mrs. Gabriel:** Junior or senior.

**Mr. Ali:** We are not part of the decision-making. They make their own rules; they run by their own rules; they have statements here where “We do not have to answer you”.

**Mrs. Gabriel:** If I may speak? I would like to add that if this slate wins the election, it would be by miraculous means because the members that have been joining the association on May 07, when we look at them—I am in Carnival for 35 years—we do not know a name.

**Mr. Ali:** A whole ghost gang area. Rosalind, you could also fill them in on the last AGM which was on December 15.

**Mrs. Gabriel:** On December 15, there was an AGM, if there were nine legitimate bandleaders in that AGM, there were a lot. The rest arrived in maxi-taxis; we knew not where they came from. We were trying to stop the passage of the accounts because the Treasurer did not sign it, and they got up and passed the accounts. They said, “We are the power here and we could pass the accounts.” It passed and we were hopelessly outnumbered.

**Mr. Ali:** I have one little question: Is the NCBA a public authority based on the fact that they received \$8 million in subventions? No.

**Mr. Seemungal:** NGO.

**Mr. Ali:** Well, there is our big problem.

**Madam Chairman:** Ladies and gentlemen, we thank you from the bottom of our collective hearts. Not only for being here, but for promising to come back and help us to resolve this because Carnival is important to this country.

**Mrs. Gabriel:** Thanks for having us.

**Mr. Ali:** Thank you very much.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Very, very insightful.

**Madam Chairman:** Ladies and gentlemen, let us adjourn to downstairs.

**10.48 a.m.:** *Meeting suspended.*

**11.01 a.m.:** *Meeting resumed.*

**Madam Chairman:** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, please excuse us for the late start but our meeting upstairs ran a little over time. We are here with you now, and I want to welcome you back to continue our discussions. Without further ado, I will turn to Mrs. McIntosh because, you want to get away early?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Well, not so early. Good morning. Patricia McIntosh, Member of Parliament for Port of Spain North/St. Ann’s West, welcome. Through you, Madam Chairman, I will be addressing the Chairman of the NCC. Mr. Chairman, as NCC being the umbrella body of the major stakeholders involved in the staging of Carnival—stakeholders such as, let us say, TUCO, Pan Trinbago, NCBA—I am sure that it is incumbent on the NCC to ensure transparency and accountability in respect of how the public funding is disbursed to these bodies is spent.

Mr. Chairman, for too long these interest groups, especially the NCBA, have not been held accountable—truly accountable, for the subventions that they receive from the Government on an annual basis. Through the NCC—I am going to look at over the last three years—the Government has given in excess of \$23 million in subventions to NCBA, and this is over, as I said, the past three years. This \$23 million—I will say it is exactly \$23,663,705 to be exact—represents Government’s funding, taxpayers’ money, not sponsorship. If we look at: page 3 of the Financial Statements of 2010, page 4 of 2011, and page 3 also of 2009, we will see that in 2009, NCBA got \$8,021,226; in 2010, they got \$8,067,749; and in 2011, they got \$7,574,730. Mr. Chairman, I feel that, in the best interest of the country, every single cent of taxpayers’ money should be properly accounted for, and that the NCC, as the governing body, has the responsibility to ensure that this done.

In this regard, I should like to refer to Cabinet Minute No. 2007 of August 07, 1997, Madam Chairman to the Chairman, which gives the NCC that authority and that remit, and I would like to refer to it. It is headed “Arrangements for Carnival 1998 and beyond, Note CDCWA, 19749 together with the recommendations of the Minister of Finance as embodied in the comments of the finance advisory committee, and the recommendations of the Finance and General Purposes Committee was considered. Cabinet agreed:

- (a) That in order to approve Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago, in 1998 and beyond, each Carnival body organization be administratively responsible for its own area of production of Carnival

as indicated hereunder.”

It goes on:

“Role of the National Carnival Commission”.

And this is what I am particularly interested in. I am particularly interested in two of the items, one is auditing and accounting of these bodies, and the other is monitoring subventions—just what I just spoke about: monitoring subventions. Now, it was brought to my attention, Mr. Chairman, that the NCC did, in fact, call or invite the NCBA executive to a meeting to answer questions concerning transparency and accountability in respect of the operations of the NCBA, but they did not show up at the meeting. The executive did not show up at the meeting, and since then, the NCC has not convened another meeting with the NCBA executive.

We have here—we got some more this morning—the Audited Financial Statements of the NCBA for 2009, 2010 and 2011. Now, if we look at page 4 of these Audited Financial Statements, we have Statement of Comprehensive Income and we will see that, if we look at shows and parades of bands, it guides us to Schedule 6. When we look at Schedule 6 and we expect to see a breakdown, there is none. I am concerned that there is an income; it does not say how we came about that income, whether what was from Government subvention, what was from sponsorship—it does not tell us, and the breakdown says, “We do not know how that expenditure came about.” And, of course, there is a deficit in some cases. But, we do not know how this expenditure—there is no breakdown of the expenditure.

In addition, there are other areas where this occurs. In 2009, the same thing occurred, if we look at page 3, it is the same thing. We are guided to shows and parades of bands, we are guided to Schedule 10, and it is the same thing; absolutely no breakdown.

Over the past three years, for shows and parade of bands alone, we had an income of, from the NCC, in excess of \$3 million—as a matter of fact \$3,110,992—and we had expenditure over three years of over \$6 million.; a total loss over the three years of \$3,206,707, but we have had absolutely no accountability for these figures nowhere. I have looked through the financial statements, I have poured over them—you could see all my pourings and my writings, etc.—I have gone all inside looking at them, and I have seen nowhere in these financial statements, over the past three years, any breakdown to account for how the income was accrued, how much was received from Government and how much was received from sponsorship. But, more importantly, there was nothing to show how the expenditure was actually incurred, and to tell us where the extra \$3 million is coming from to deface this loss. Now, I am not saying there is no rationale for everything, but I think that every cent of the taxpayers’ money should be accounted for in the interest of transparency, clarity and accountability.

The same thing applies if we look at, Mr. Chairman, the prize-giving function. I looked at it throughout the various years, but I am looking now at 2011—last year. It is the same in all; we can look at it. It is a function. Now, as a principal, I have held many functions in terms of prize-giving, achievement day, you know, etc., at Queens Hall. So, you have a rental of Queens Hall of \$5,000, yet, for 2011, the prize-giving function cost \$224,291,000. I mean, what was the rest of money spent on? Taxpayers should know that; that is taxpayers’ money. What is that money spent on? In 2010, it was \$273,000,047, and the rental of the Hall is just \$5,000. How was the rest of that money spent? We need to know.

Then you have the prizes and trophies. I know the prizes cost a lot, but I really feel that it might not be such a cumbersome adventure to give us the figures of how the prizes in the various categories, you know, what they cost. I have done this over and over at a school with almost 1000 children, and you have about quarter of them receiving prizes, but we had to do our expenditure, and show how the prizes went. Whether there were trophies; how much it would cost to get them trophies, medals, books—whatever we are giving, we have to show that. We had to account for the moneys we spent, Government’s money, taxpayers’ money,

in the schools, and I find it not acceptable at all that this has not been done. We are talking \$6 million here.

**Madam Chairman:** Could I just ask you to define the question that you would like to put to them because I, personally, have lost track of it.

**Mr. Seemungal:** “Yuh lost everybody!”

**Mrs. McIntosh:** I am asking for a breakdown; there is no breakdown. That is my point, and I am showing it by the items because I did a little study on this, and I have been looking. There is no breakdown in the expenditure.

**Madam Chairman:** Excuse me, the document that you are dealing with—is it a document that was delivered to us from the NCC?

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Madam Chairman, if I may assist and this is in answering with your enquiry because Mrs. McIntosh had the responsibility, and has done a lot of work on a certain avenue. If I could explain?

**Madam Chairman:** Okay.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** To you, Mr. Chairman and to members listening, good morning, and thank you all for being here. If I could put on record my extreme satisfaction for the documentation which you provided us, which was requested of you on the last occasion, you have dealt with it in a wholesome fashion. What my colleague is referring to is a package of information which we have been looking at in the committee session before meeting you.

That committee session involved conversations with certain persons interested in Carnival from different areas—citizens of this country, persons involved in Carnival. On one aspect, we dealt with children’s Carnival, in another aspect, we dealt with general observations as to the greatest show on earth. And then, a particular aspect that we looked at which we are drilling down to, from Mrs. McIntosh’s perspective, has to deal with the National Carnival Bands Association of Trinidad and Tobago.

Of course, you are aware, and this is now for members of the listening public, that Act No. 27 of 2007 is the Act which incorporated the corporation of the NCBA—National Carnival Bands Association of Trinidad and Tobago. It is a very generic form of incorporation by an Act of Parliament. It establishes this NCBA; it gives it the power to receive property; it has certain powers to do the best things in the interest of coordinating Carnival; and, very importantly, it provides that it can have its own rules, etc.

The NCBA receives a subvention from the Government of Trinidad and Tobago on an annual basis. On average, \$8 million a year, as Mrs. McIntosh has put out, showing some \$24 million in the last three years. The point that we are driving at right now is that insofar as this committee’s mandate under the Standing Orders provide, this committee has the power to investigate, and to send for persons, papers, records, etc. in a very wide ranging fashion. As we are enquiring into the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism, and one subset of that is the National Carnival Commission of Trinidad and Tobago, that National Carnival Commission receives subventions from the Government, and applies subventions to the NCBA to the tune of roughly \$8 million a year.

What we have noticed in that one aspect are a host of observations which my learned colleague has just provided to you, which in a nutshell, translates to a lack of accountability and/or explanation. Because, it may be that it is accounted for, but it may not be properly explained, and until we have an interrogation into that process and answers to it, we and the national community and the taxpayers, as my colleague has put it, would be at a disadvantage.

So, my colleague’s line of explanation this morning, she having dived into some of the observations that she has noted on the accounts in particular provided by Mrs. PKF, are that there appears to be need for better explanation. The accounts, as we flip through very quickly, do not appear to be qualified accounts. Mrs. PKF, are very reputable accountants and auditors, therefore, so insofar as there is not an apparent qualification to the accounts, we need to have explanation through the aegis of this committee.

So, that is the run-up to the wicket in terms of explaining where we are. My colleague is referring to the documents provided to the committee including the accounts, and the first thing that has popped out is a massive flurry of question marks. We are hoping to have the committee's assistance, the NCC's assistance, in putting each question mark down. So, if I could return us now to Mrs. McIntosh, who will, I assume, now list out for you the areas that she would perhaps wish you to report on in relation to the affairs and subventions of the NCBA.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Yes, well, I was doing that and when I began, I asked the NCBA, I was putting it to NCBA—the NCC, sorry—that they, the NCC, as the umbrella body, is responsible to ensure accountability and transparency in the way the Government's funding is disbursed.

I was particularly interested in how it is accounted for in the case of the NCBA, and I was referring to the Audited Financial Statements. I was drawing it to your attention because I feel that you have to get involved and ensure that these moneys are probably accounted for. So, all the areas that I was referring to, it was to the Audited Financial Statements of the NCBA over the past three years. I am looking at the past three years. We could go back and back but I am looking at the past three years. I was just pointing out some of the items that are totally not accounted for.

As my colleague said, PKF is a very reputable company, but having said that, there are a lot of irregularities here—very troubling irregularities. While some areas have no breakdown, this is not consistent because we have an area like Office Administration expenses. In all the financial statements, you have a total breakdown; a complete breakdown; I have no quarrel with that. But in many other areas, and areas where the expenditure is very, very large, it is just a lumber of money. It must be troubling to the taxpayers, and I put myself in that category, as to how this money is actually being spent. As I said, again, every cent of taxpayers' money must be accounted for. You, dear, gentlemen and ladies, are the ones responsible to see that this is done.

**11.20 a.m.**

**Mrs. McIntosh:** This is not—I want you all to get this very, very straight—a political issue. This is a national issue and this is something we have to get to the bottom of. This has not been happening now. This has been happening for quite a long time. I have looked at other statements. I have not drilled on other statements. I have looked at other statements.

I would like to refer to a case in 2007, and this is slightly different. This is all about the NCBA. This is the NCBA—*[Interruption]*

**Madam Chairman:** Excuse me, excuse me, excuse me, Mrs. McIntosh. We have a little problem here.

**Mr. George:** “Dey know we on tv yuh see.”

**Madam Chairman:** We cannot—no, we going there—expect this group of people to be accountable for happenings in 2007, when they were not there. We gave them no notice about it.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** I accept that.

**Madam Chairman:** Further, we are talking about a document which I do not know has been shared with them. That is not fair.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** All right. Okay.

**Madam Chairman:** Now, what I am thinking is that where you were going, is to ask them exactly what oversight have they been lending to the audited accounts of the stakeholders under them specifically, the NCBA. I think that would be a fair question and from the answer to that, we can now proceed to determine exactly what their relationship is, was and should be with that organization. Am I in the right direction?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Yes, I was going there.

**Madam Chairman:** Very well.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** And while they did not have—*[Interruption]*

**Mr. Seemungal:** Madam Chairman, with due respect to my colleague we one hour—[*Interruption*]

**Madam Chairman:** Hang on.

**Mr. Seemungal:** And she has been speaking for 22 minutes now.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** And I am ending.

**Madam Chairman:** Excuse me—

**Mr. Seemungal:** No, man!

**Madam Chairman:** The question has been rephrased and put to the NCC. They will tell us about their relationship, specifically with the subventions.

**Ms. Mc Intosh:** I do understand from Madam Chairman, that you cannot be responsible for things in 2007, but in your present capacity I would like when you get all the documentation to go back to see how far. That is the point I was saying. It is not about now. It is something that has been happening in the past. That is why I brought that. As I said, it is not a political issue; it is a national issue that we have to get to the bottom of.

**Madam Chairman:** Mrs. McIntosh, I do not think you understand exactly where I am going. You no longer have the floor, the NCC has the floor to answer the question specifically about their oversight of the NCBA.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Madam Chairman, there are just three—

**Madam Chairman:** Hang on, let them answer first and then we will—

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** There are three points that will assist you, Madam Chairman and—[*Interruption*]

**Madam Chairman:** No. Let them answer. They have been listening for a long time.

**Mr. Arnold:** Good morning, on behalf of the NCC.

**Madam Chairman:** Good morning to you.

**Mr. Arnold:** With respect to the meeting held with the NCBA, we invited them because of complaints from a few of the executive members, and at this point, I think Mr. Sylvester will continue with respect to that meeting. On the other issues, the CEO would explain.

**Mr. Sylvester:** Good morning, thank you Madam Chairman for the opportunity to address this august body. Hon. MP, Mrs. Patricia McIntosh indicated that she had received some complaints and what we were doing about it and if we knew about it. As a matter of fact, before I say what we did, I do agree with her 1,000 per cent that in the culture here and in the NCC, it is not about politics, not at all. We employ people. We do not have to ask what political persuasion you are of, that is not our business. Our business is serving our people in culture in Trinidad and Tobago.

Having said that, I want to address the specific question you raised, vis-à-vis that meeting that the chairman referred to. Yes, there were some complaints made to the NCC in writing. We do not have privy to all the details, which you have but we are very au courant with what was happening and yes, we did call the President of NCBA and every member of his board individually. Three turned up and we asked specific questions relative to some of the issues you have raised and the response was not too satisfactory to us who from the three who were present and we prepared a document and forwarded it to the Ministry. We are still having discussions, with members of that executive who did not attend the meeting, in an attempt to continue the working relationship, because we understand at NCC we are the parent body.

You were quite right, Sen. Al-Rawi, when you referred to Act No. 09 of 1991, as it also relates to Act No. 27 of 2007. Yes, we are the parent body. Yes, we have a responsibility. Yes, we know what the mandate is and yes, we have been speaking to them.

I refer now to the CEO who will deal with the financial aspect of that, but in general terms, we recognize and we agree with you, we are in charge and we must show that we are in charge. So, I agree with what you said relative to the mandate and the CEO will touch on that issue. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

**Mr. Moe:** Thank you, Deputy and thank you for your intervention. You would recall that the first document, I raised a flag that and that flag was let us look at Act No. 09 of 1991. In between Act No. 09 of 1991, was another decision that gave autonomy, it was us not an Act, to the groups. That is funds would be provided—and I am not making an excuse for monitoring nor supervision I am just saying what had happened—and after five years' time they would be autonomous and go on their own way and not having to seek recourse to the Government for subventions. That has brought about a problem of day to day management. You would recall, in the first document I mentioned that we need to return to Act No. 09 of 1991 and what it allows the NCC to do. Now, there is something called practice, which has been going on and I support what you have said.

Now, when you look at the financials and you do not see a qualified statement, it may very well be the details are there and I may very well be able to go in—I do not have the document before me—and see what those details are. Let me just give you how we looked at the monitoring. First of all there is a budget and the budget that they submit are really in two parts. Please recall that NCC provides all the infrastructure directly. So, the most that they get is for administration of the shows and events that they will have, moreover to pay prizes and fees, right, appearance fees and transportation and all that, to the various groups. I would say, from my knowledge, about 60 per cent of that is in prizes really, of that have \$8 million. We do provide them with some administrative operational cost for the four months of carnival.

They do receive sponsorship and other assistance and donations that they would have received, but I cannot account for it now, because I do not have the document before me, but I feel confident not—it is good to look at a financial and opinion say okay that is a financial statement. But what we really want to get at is the day-to-day operation of the entity; how they spend this money in detail. That, you do not see in a financial. If you see what I mean. PKF can do this. They could say: Yes, I can account for all the funds. But when it comes to drilling down, I feel NCC would not have been as forthright in what they did over the years and that is because there is a perception of complete autonomy which has, from administration to administration, changed and which has continued to erode the authority of the NCC as I see it. That, we would love to change and that is why I referred to Act No. 09 of 1991.

**Mr. Seemungal:** What is the position now?

**Mr. Moe:** Well, we look at the Government subvention. The Government sends us in money, we look at it. What is it for, prize moneys? Okay, give me a break. At the end, when pay it out, send me a listing of the prizes. Appearance fees, who got appearance fees. That, as far as in terms of how we can account for Government part of it. If you see what I mean.

Let us say they want to have, as you referred, a prize distribution of that, now you say \$240,000 I think was the figure. *[Interruption]* You used that as an example and I would be forthright in this—There have been, over the years, a view of how you should have a prize distribution. Two schools thought, thought number one, we should have a small group of people come together and we just hand out 200/300 prizes. It is not small thing. It is a very large undertaking. If you see the number of trophies that are presented, both in terms of juniors and in terms of seniors. Now, once school thought says we would have a small prize distribution, but then you leave out the traditional mas characters who tend to be slighted. I am just giving you one of the reasons. Therefore, when you are having a prize distribution, you have to have all. It is not a small event. It is an event where you have to make those who are in the traditional aspect of the mas, as important as those would have received parade of the bands. That is a challenge that they face. I am not saying that is the reason because I have not drilled down into the figure but that is how I feel.

**Mr. Seemungal:** I want to intervene to add to what I was saying. In terms of the autonomy of the various groups, that is what I was referring to, was is the position with NCC's take on what is happening with respect to those groups that you feel still have that autonomy over them? In other words, can you call them to

account for every single dollar that you gave them that they have spent?

**Mr. Moe:** Yes, we can ask. We could ask them because as a parent body, we can ask. We may not be able to dictate how they spend it. That could only be done by managing your subvention. You might say no, no, I would not give you that for that, not this year, next year. That, we have not really done. I am saying, that is what we can do it. We can account. We can ask them to account.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. CEO, do you actually receive from the NCBA, a breakdown of expenditure? You say the financial statements might not necessarily have a breakdown, although in some areas there is a breakdown, so it is not consistent, if you look at them when you get them. But in the areas where there is no breakdown, could you demand a breakdown, or have you been getting, over the years, a breakdown, since you have been in office?

**Mr. Moe:** In areas that we consider to be extremely important. And the ones that we consider to be extremely important are appearance fees, making sure people are paid for their prizes. We have looked somewhat—while you see the breakdown in administrative expenses is because we want them to account. Do not mix your telephone bill with mine, do not mix the infrastructure provided with mine, that kind of stuff. So you would see that kind of detail, but certainly I would anticipate that if we ask them, we would get the kind of details that we require.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** May I ask that you—

**Mr. Moe:** I will do that.

**Madam Chairman:** Dr. Browne? Sorry, I thought you had asked your question just now.

**Mr. Seemungal:** I want to move away from NCBA and we can furnish those. We have spent over 34 minutes on NCBA. I want to deal with parade of the bands on Carnival Monday and Tuesday. There are various schools of thought that over the years the parade of the bands—we have touched a bit of it the last time on the last occasion—if not chaos down town, has been very chaotic in its run up and into the Grand stand.

There are various thoughts and one came from stakeholders who we had conference with earlier that's why do we not hold a preliminary stage of the parade of the bands and preliminary sessions by eliminating some of the bands that actually came downtown. You would recall, on the last occasion, I said why do we not zone the bands? And some of the bands stay, especially those of the rural communities coming into Port of Spain on the Monday and stay in their rural communities, Arima, Sangre Grande, wherever on the Tuesday. But if we do not put some kind of thought into the parade of the bands—

The second question, which I am coming to is: when last have we held stakeholders meeting with the various stakeholders, not just the corporate body and you invite the president and secretary of the various bodies to represent, stakeholders who are really interested and have some public consultation as what is the future of carnival in this country?

**Mr. Sylvester:** Thank you, Minister. We, at our retreat in Tobago, discussed these issues. As a matter of fact, the position you just enunciated is another school of thought and we, at the present moment, as recent as the board meeting before the last, are preparing to discuss in more detail—I remember we discussed it at the last meeting we had here—to pull together all the stakeholders interested parties to come with ideas. People are sending document to us right now. Every day we receive documents at the office, relative to improving the parade of the bands. I must thank this committee for that because it is coming out of our last discourse people are now saying: “Listen, I have this idea. I heard what you said from the Joint Select Committee. I have this idea. I have that idea.” So, we will be coming together sooner than later to flesh out these sort of issues and to come to up with a right position. As I have said before, Minister what you just said is one of the schools of thought amongst many. We would look at it and come up with something more presentable and the public would be involved, in terms of that type of consultation. We would call everybody

and work that out.

**Madam Chairman:** Dr. Browne.

**Dr. Browne:** Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. I want to thank the members here. I see my old neighbour, Mr. Arnold. I have a few questions but I would want to begin by focusing on your characterization of yourselves as an entity, as a parent body. As you know this Parliament, as lawmakers, we have been focusing a lot more on the relationship between parents and children and even finding ways to hold parents more accountable for the deeds and actions of their children.

I really wanted to endorse some of the questions that came before. I think it has alerted you, those questions have alerted you, to some very serious concerns, not only from members of the NCBA but also from parliamentarians and Members of Parliament and I want to suggest that the revelation that you made that a request went out for a meeting with the board members and only three turned up. I would think that in itself is an instant trigger for serious concern and action. One of the things that I would like to put on your agenda at the NCC is the role and recommendation of a forensic audit of all the entities under your purview. I would suggest, beginning with the NCBA and the others as well. I would not list them out, for the purposes of today's discussion, but beginning with the NCBA because there appears to be a crisis. When you say there is politics in NCC and no politics in culture there are different ways in phrasing that. There appears to be some organizational politics going on. At the end of the day, that is going to affect the culture. That is going to affect the use of taxpayers' dollars and that is where we are all very, very concerned.

I have a question about—there have been observations that carnival is very much alive and well in Trinidad and Tobago and on the other hand, you hear the sentiment that real carnival is either dead or dying. Some of Peter Minshall's words have remained with me for several years when he characterized what we are seeing on an annual basis as “a meaningless river of sequins and feathers”.

I heard the response that there is discussion with stakeholders at this time and at some point there will be a national consultation, et cetera. But, these ideas are not new at all and these concerns are also not new. My thing is that we always seem to be pushing back the goalpost year after year and carnival seems to come as a surprise to various administrations and boards year after year. And, at times that is used as an excuse for some very abrupt decisions or abrupt announcements of changes.

As the persons at the head of this, the parents of this entity, this key aspect of culture, I am concerned. I would like you to share with us some of the innovations that you currently have in mind, with regard to the resuscitation of the traditional carnival. A lot of people are looking at the children's mas as a source of hope but, again, year after year, we seem to be seeing the same thing and it is getting worse. Carnival is coming up in a shorter time than many of us might wish and will we be seeing something different in 2013 or pretty much is it going to be the same; meaningless river of sequins and feathers with the expectation that sometime in the future, that innovation and that sea change is going to occur? That is just one of my concerns, Madam Chairman, but, in addition, to put on the NCC's agenda, the role of a forensic agenda, the role of a forensic audit. Let us not bear around the bush. The sum of \$24 million is not a small amount of money. I want to endorse Mrs. McIntosh's submission.

**Mr. Arnold:** I do not foresee things being the same next year. That is why very early, right after carnival, we held a retreat to see that things change. We have read all the comments from the last paper where everybody complained about different aspects of the carnival and we intend to improve on them.

I think what the CEO said before, with respect to—before 1996, NCC was responsible for the carnival, in a sense. Since the interest groups were given their shows to run and they took it out of NCC's hands at that time, I think it was around 1997, and they gave them authority to run the shows. Although they are part of the board, if they are part of the board and they still could do what they want, the whole board gets the blame but then they go on their own and they do what they have to do. We say we do not want this

and they ignore you because they were given authority to run their own shows. I think that is one of the main problems. The NCC is not really in charge in that sense, which we are trying to change, but they are members of the board.

**Mr. Sylvester:** I wanted to respond to Mr. Al-Rawi.

**Madam Chairman:** Mr. Al-Rawi. Follow.

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** Mr. Sylvester, could I ask you to pause for one minute? I promise to be no longer than a minute, perhaps. If I could have from you, this is by way of a request for provision of written information, because I find that very satisfactory, in terms of a response mechanism. I view this committee as providing a golden opportunity to better something in a nonpartisan way. I have said that before. We have the ability to have you tell us what concerns you, as opposed to justify what has gone right or wrong in the past and under present domain.

My simple case is as follows: I am hoping that you will be able to tell us what your mechanism or proposals, as the parent of the many aspects of carnival, a parent with limited rights as you have quite properly put forward. What, as a parent, you see the mechanism for reform ought to be? In other words then, if you had your wish list to lay before us, we could do something with it and that wish list would be: I view carnival as Carnival Trinidad and Tobago Limited. I am an entity with control as Walt Disney or Magic Kingdom has from year to year, as I told you, they have moved a million people a day. What would I want to do in a best-case scenario?

I would tell why the timing is so critical in your presentation of a wish list and that could, be legislative proposal for reform. That could be business proposal for reform. That would allow us the opportunity in the current conversation that we are having in the national community, with respect to procurement of services and of goods and that comes into the context of the whole debate between centralized versus decentralized performance.

Clearly, the 1991 legislation and the 2007 legislation was meant to deal with the dynamic of the view that people were being stymied in development in innovation by having a centralized approach through the NCC and they sought to have a decentralized approach. It maybe apposite to our best interest now to have a hybrid system, but surely the data that we are seeing now demonstrates that where there is darkness there maybe confusion and room for mischief.

If you as a body in your retreats and otherwise could recommend to us in a short position, it does not have to be complicated; “ladies and gentlemen, we wish to have legislative reform of the following type. We wish to have business reform of the following type. Here is why you need to give us a greater subvention.” Because, remember this is a precursor to your annual budget and the allocation. Carnival can be big business on an annual basis, for people in Trinidad and Tobago by allowing the business of innovation and entertainment and production and food and services to flourish. The question is: How do we use the golden tool that we have, successfully from year to year and successfully throughout the year? And it may also see the birth of framework procurement or whole of government sector procurement of goods and services.

I would summarize what I wish from you, in terms of a written response. Could you please tell us what your vision for improvement of the system, from a legislative point of view and from a business point of view, would ideally be, so that we can then articulate that for you, knowing as I estimate that you are probably going to come back to us again, subject to direction of my learned Chairman. Knowing that you would be coming back to us, I am not holding you to a response now. If we can have it in a short written response we can probably discuss it after. Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** That was a five-minute minute. [*Laughter*]

**Mr. Al-Rawi:** My apologies.

**Mr. Sylvester:** Thank you, Sen. Al-Rawi. Just going back to Dr. Browne's concerns, I want to allay some of his fears, in that in the regions, and I alluded to it the last time, we have 53 regional carnival committees. And we give out the subventions to the respective committees. Imagine a committee receiving \$55,000 to run carnival in Talparo, but they have to pay police \$20,000. They have to pay for a lot of infrastructure. We try to help them; 53 regional carnivals. Fortunately, Dr. Browne, we have the workshops by the children where they conduct 17 sessions before carnival, where the children learn, not only to make their own mas, but they learn how to manage mas and manage business in carnival, as I told the Chairperson last meeting. On Carnival Friday they parade. Last carnival was the largest traditional carnival parade in the history of Trinidad and Tobago, over 9,000 children from all communities and many schools.

Even in London, they are asking for traditional mas for the Olympics. That is what they are seeing coming from Trinidad. They love the traditional mas. In China, when I passed through there, they did say that want to see this type of mass with—they call it village mas. They said that there.

Right now, Nigeria is asking us to come to link our traditional type mas with theirs, so too is Columbia. Is that not so Mr. Chairman?

**Mr. Arnold:** Yes.

**Mr. Sylvester:** So too is Cuba. So, people seem to be attracted by the traditional mas. MP Browne, it will not be very soon, a river of beads and bikini but the true traditions of our mas coming back from the rural community into the city.

**Dr. Browne:** Just as a follow-up. You were correct, I am somewhat reassured that at least the brains are heading in that direction, but I may have completely missed the connection between what is happening out there in the periphery, which is important, and the need to change the center of it all. I hope I am not detecting from the learned Mr. Sylvester, any sense of complacency that the centre does not require immediate and urgent attention. So, while the community mas is great, while the appreciation from other countries is great, my concern is the appreciation here in Trinidad and Tobago and some of these same children who are playing the additional mas in the children's carnival, their aspirations and the opportunity for them to continue to do so, appears to be limited and has been limited for some time.

**11.50 a.m.**

Because when you graduate and “yuh playing big people mas” in Trinidad and Tobago, you are basically putting on a bath suit, a bikini, some ribbons and feathers. So I think that is where a lot of the energy has to go, otherwise we may be just lulling ourselves into a false sense of security.

**Mr. Moe:** Permit me, Madam Chairman, to try to bring another dimension in follow up to what you are saying. When I left this body the last time: “I say we got to do something about it.” So I began to meet privately with a number of stakeholders, in particular big bands, the ones of 5,000, the bikini and beads, and I said, I believe each event has a shelf life, an event has a shelf life of five years, six years, unless it is modified, changed and transformed, these things will happen. I may not like the direction which you have with this bikini and beads, and I feel the only leverage I may have at present is the incentive I give to you through prize moneys, that I see as my first leverage. And “dey say, we not running de band, is de masquerader, if I doh have bikini and beads, dey going by de next fella with de bikini and beads.”

So, I am saying, there is not only the control that comes from the NCC, but there is a movement that is different, where a band leader used to control his band, but they are now saying, the masquerader is the one who really controls how the band operates, that is a strange thing that is happening. So if even I penalize them they say, “We do not necessarily want the band of the year moneys, that is no incentive to us.” That is the reality, that is one of the realities, and it is that we have to address. *[Interruption]*

**Madam Chairman:** Could I just interject here to ask then, why are they asking for more money for band of the year?

**Mr. Moe:** Because it serves the purpose, it is only a title, but there are those who are not interested, absolutely not interested. The business is—each section is a business in some of them, and each section makes its own money, and that is that, that is the reality. We certainly need dialogue in terms of that. Sometimes I consider it a transitional phase as we had historical mas, then we went to creative, and then we went to creative topical. We are now in the phase of bikini and beads which perhaps will change, because the creative juices are being lost at the moment. But if it is the masquerader who is driving the thing, who says, I do not want clothes, then we do have a challenge in that regard.

**Madam Chairman:** Mr. CEO—*[Interruption]*

**Mr. Moe:** Yes ma'am.

**Madam Chairman:** I have been listening to you attentively and you know what goes through my mind? If you are not in control, there is no need for an NCC. *[Laughter]*

**Mr. Moe:** Well, could I respond?

**Madam Chairman:** “Yeah,” have a go. Have a go.

**Mr. Moe:** I will have a go. I can see relevance because let me explain to you, there is need for some measure of control, Government must support the efforts of carnival. Carnival is something that brings credit to this country.

**Madam Chairman:** Should!

**Mr. Moe:** Should. Should. Should bring credit to this country. In fact, there is a great deal of interest outside in our form of carnival and, therefore, there is always need for a body which is going to organize, construct, think and create policies that will govern the festival, but there is a reality that one has to face. There is a type of person now who plays mas, he is not the guy who plays with copper of years ago, he is a person who says I want to be free. A standard in your hand was an important part of your costuming maybe 10 years ago, today nobody wants a standard, that is the reality of the masquerader that we have and we have to change that culture. I am hoping that the NCC would be able to assist in that regard of change in that culture.

**Madam Chairman:** I am glad you see a role for the NCC. *[Laughter]* Professor?

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Madam Chair, let me start off by saying that I fully endorse Dr. Browne's call for forensic auditing for all bodies under the NCC. I fully support that. I get straight to my question, there are a few components; they are all related. Let me start off by saying that my major question, the last time we met, dealt with the process of awarding contracts with respect to the construction of the Grand Stand, the North Stand and the stage. I now want to focus on the cost, and I want to refer to a document you circulated: The Administration and Operations of the NCC for the period 2011 and 2012, page 7.

The first part of my question, the projected cost of the construction of the North Stand was about \$11 million, what was the actual cost and who did the construction? The second part of the question, the projected cost of construction of the Grand Stand was \$21 million, again, what was the actual cost and who did the construction? It is my understanding that in 2011 a new North Stand was built from scratch with new steel for about \$11.2 million, that is to build, dismantle and store in a warehouse. In 2012, the same stand, just to erect, dismantle and store cost \$5 million. It was, I understand supervised by the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure, but payments were not dealt with by Ministry of Works and Infrastructure, my question is, why? Is this the norm? It is also alleged that the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism approved this amount of \$5 million, but NCC negotiated with a contractor for about \$3.6 million to complete the job, what happened to the savings of \$1.4 million? The North Stand to erect, dismantle and store yearly will cost taxpayers about \$5 million, does this make economic or any sense at all? Will it not be better to leave a permanent structure?

And the last part of the question, I now come to the stage. The current carnival stage which is

erected on scaffolding tubes is rented for \$3 million annually, while the stage that was originally built with steel is, I understand, in cold storage in a warehouse for which rent has to be paid. Question, why is the latter not rehabilitated and used to save the taxpayers about \$2 million? I was told it can be rehabilitated, erected, dismantled and stored for about \$1 million. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you. Let me help you a bit, if you could give us a brief audit and then a written.

**Mr. Moe:** Let me give you a brief and then a written. Let us deal with the North Stand. I got the impression that you are suggesting if I have it right, that the North Stand was done without any oversight, this last contract here by the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure, and that is not correct. All the documents that went out to tender, we invited people. Selective tendering was done by the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure, it was evaluated by the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure, and they made recommendations. We thought cost was too high and we decided that we would negotiate with the contractor to bring that cost down, that was the submission that happened under the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure.

With regard to construction of the Grand Stand and the North Stand—[*Interruption*]

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Before you go there, what happened to the saving of \$1.4 million?

**Mr. Moe:** It would have been applied elsewhere. I am saying, once there is savings, we apply it elsewhere. I am saying, yes, but if it is a \$2 million saving, we might apply it to other things we would have wanted in carnival. It is a pool of funds, you try to create savings, and it is applied elsewhere. I mean I cannot say exactly where, but I know it was applied elsewhere.

With regard to construction of the North Stand and Grand Stand, in my submission under 3, I tried my best to give you a complete breakdown of how the process took place, how the contractors were selected and not only that, I also provided the documentation that gave you the actual cost of the North Stand and Grand Stand. In fact, if you look at your documents that we have provided, I have provided you with the signed contract and the contract agreement. You will see in one of my submissions the final contract sum that was agreed upon by the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure, for the North Stand and Grand Stand, and they are in the submissions here. So you could look at page—I think from pages 3, 4 and go right down to the assessment of work 5, ending on page 5, which provide I think—and not only that, all the supporting documents would say what is the final cost. The final contract is before us—the final contract for both the North Stand and Grand Stand.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Can you just tell us what was the actual cost of the Grand Stand?

**Mr. Moe:** Okay. Let me just give you—[*Interruption*]

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Just the Grand Stand.

**Mr. Moe:** Just let me give you—I am going back to the original document if I have it here—\$46,087,963; that is the cost, and in the documents you would have seen that based on the value—[*Interruption*]

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** So, there was a major overrun because the projected cost was \$21 million.

**Mr. Moe:** I cannot say it was a major overrun, again, you are fast tracking, and when you are fast tracking your designs must keep pace, it is only after you have done all your designs and your bills of quantities, that is what has happened. So, initially, to get the funding to start the project, they went out with an estimate which was prepared by the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure in collaboration with the NCC in having that done.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** But it has to be a major overrun, you are talking about a projected cost of \$21 million and the actual cost was \$40 something million, that is over 100 per cent overrun.

**Mr. Moe:** Twenty one million dollars was a figure not based on drawings or bills of quantities that was the whole thing; it was not, when we put the full scope of the work in that, you wanted lounges and you wanted different configuration, that is what it ended up as, and all the details are here for us. I do not think it was a major overrun. I think it was an under estimation at the time because of the details not being there, and you

are fast tracking.

**Madam Chairman:** Could I just ask, what exactly went out to tender?

**Mr. Moe:** Well, nothing went out to tender. There was a selection of contractors who had worked in the savannah before. Let us take the North Stand, for example, it was built by Civ Struct Limited and Steel Structures Trinidad and Tobago Limited, who had worked on the North Stand before. Again, I point out that we had 90 days to get the works done, and that went out to Steel Structures Trinidad and Tobago Limited, people who have had experience in putting up the North Stand. It was done in conjunction with the Civ Struct Limited which over the years have been putting up and taking down the North Stand. So that is how it went under the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure and in collaboration with us.

**Miss Roopnarine:** Madam Chairman, may I please say something?

**Madam Chairman:** Yes, please.

**Miss Roopnarine:** I think we need to be very careful in how we are delineating responsibilities of particular Ministries, and I say that because I represent a Member on this committee, I also represent the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure and, therefore, we should make it very clear in this committee that the Ministry Works and Infrastructure does nothing with tendering in the NCC. The Ministry of Works and Infrastructure provides to the NCC technical support and technical expertise as we do for any other Government agency and Government Ministries; the responsibility of the tendering procedures lie within the NCC.

**Madam Chairman:** I fully understand what you are saying, and I think I understand what Mr. Moe is saying, which means I do not understand what the situation is. *[Laughter]* Because I am hearing that the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure gives technical support, I am reading that the construction is to be executed by the NCC and its tender committee, right? Then I hear that the board of the NCC met with officials of the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure to be advised of the status of the project. And then there has to be legal advice on how to bring this from the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure into the commission. You understand it is not understandable?

**Miss Roopnarine:** I follow what you are saying.

**Madam Chairman:** You do?

**Miss Roopnarine:** Yes. I am saying from my knowledge in the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure, we provide technical expertise, if NCC would like to say something that defers to that view this morning, by all means. From where I sit, the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure provides technical support because, Madam Chairman, we would have to get involved with specifications and those kinds of things, which the construction branch of the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure usually handles on Government projects. So, NCC would need to tell us, what is their role in terms of tendering and the award of tenders? As far as I am concerned, the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure is an advisory arm in terms of the technical expertise and the technical specifications on this project. So, I think that is a question that should be directed towards NCC.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Madam Chair—*[Interruption]*

**Madam Chairman:** Please.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** I would just like answers to two other parts of my question. Why do we have to spend \$5 million every year with respect to the North Stand and the same thing with the stage? You have an old stage which can be rehabilitated, what are you doing about it?

**Madam Chairman:** It is not big enough.

**Mr. Moe:** Maybe I should answer the second question. Just let us say that the stage is not big enough and the steel has not been used for a while, it will really require, in my own estimation, a totally new stage. The stage we had before was 40 feet wide or 48 feet thereabout. The costumes we have now are 60 feet wide so,

therefore, it will require a totally new stage in terms of how we do it. The ease of construction, the surface is another thing, the old stage has a ply surface and when rain falls the ply becomes swollen and the masqueraders fall; those are the issues with that, so it will require perhaps an entirely redesign of what exist.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** You can explore that, certainly you can explore that.

**Mr. Moe:** Certainly we can explore that, I am not saying we cannot.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** And what about the North Stand, why do you have to spend \$5 million every year?

**Mr. Moe:** Well, we have a mandate from Government, in fact, what has happened is that, the masqueraders as I pointed out on the last occasion when I was here, the masqueraders said: “We want to go back in the savannah and we want to have a stage and a North Stand,” and in response to that the Government said: “Okay, we will build a North Stand again.” If you would recall, the NCC over three, four years was in the northern greens, a plain surface covered with some flooring and we would go forward with that, and I think it created an issue also in terms of party and pan, and that is how it is. It was in response to the feeling of the masquerader that you should be in the savannah again, it should have a North Stand and you should have a stage.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Why not a permanent North Stand?

**Mr. Moe:** One, the area itself if you know it is multipurpose and, in fact, that is the site for the national parade, that is one of the major issues why it comes down, it comes down every—I would love to leave it up.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Where was the first national parade? Where did it take place?

**Mr. Moe:** That I cannot recall, please.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** It was not in the savannah.

**Mr. Moe:** I cannot recall, but that has been the site for a number of years.

**Madam Chairman:** We so love having you here—[*Laughter and crosstalk*]

**Mr. Moe:** I love to come here.

**Madam Chairman:**—we are going to ask you back. The next time you come we need to understand clearly the matter of the tendering process, et cetera. We would like to understand what thoughts you have in terms of adjusting the infrastructure for carnival for which you are responsible to make it both user friendly for the consumer, the spectator and the reveller who provides the spectacle.

We would want to go into what plans you are considering to make carnival an economic venture, to give some economic stimulus to it. We hear talk about these millions and billions of dollars that come in every year. I personally have no doubt that carnival generates, in the economy as a whole, this amount of money, but what plans do you have for instance, for increasing your gate receipts, because your gate receipts are less than a million dollars over the entire period; not good enough.

And there are some other things like staffing. Carnival is not something with a shelf life, but your staff has shelf life. We want to think in terms of how do you produce the best possible product with staff that would likely to be revolving?

We also need to find out your reaction to our need for forensic audits and proper supervision, particularly in terms of the transparency and accountability of the agencies that are your stakeholders.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** Madam Chair, if I can add to one thing that you are saying there.

**Madam Chairman:** Sure. Yes.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** About the economic side that you are speaking too, if possibly we could as well—I do not know if it has been done already as I was not here at the last meeting—get some idea if you could quantify the benefits—quantify some of the indirect economy activity which may not be such as your gate receipts and so on, because there are other economic activity that you generate through carnival. Do you have some way to quantify that? And if you cannot, if you could even as well, when you quantify those tangibles, if you could give us a list of the intangible.

Secondly, Madam Chairman, when you spoke about how they are going to stimulate carnival, if I could just make a plug for the city of San Fernando. You know we have a rich history in San Fernando. This year we had a very good showing for carnival. But what are you really doing in terms of that policy change, as well, to stimulate the carnival for San Fernando? If you could just add those points to it, I would be most grateful.

**Madam Chairman:** If you could extend San Fernando to all the zones because San Fernando is not the only thing. And you know we suffer from the lack of a Tobago body here, we have heard nothing about Tobago, please, let us know next time.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Talparo.

**Madam Chairman:** Talparo, yes. Now, you have mentioned earlier that the NCC sent a document to the NCBA about their accounts, et cetera. Could we have a copy of that so that we can know exactly how this is evolving?

**Mr. Moe:** I am not so sure I said that. I cannot recall saying that. I know the document that was sent was out of the discussion that they had with the interest groups, they sent a document to the Minister for his deliberations, but in terms of their audited accounts—*[Interruption]*

**Madam Chairman:** Oh, we will have to get the Minister to share that with us.

**Mr. Moe:** We can do that. I mean, I do not see any reason why we cannot. No, I do not see any reason.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay, yes, very well. Go ahead.

**Mrs. St. Rose Greaves:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The first thing I want to say is that I was a little put out in terms of the process—documents we got this morning took centre stage here without any discussion or shared perusal.

**Madam Chairman:** These things happen.

**Mrs. St. Rose Greaves:** That threw me because it seems to me as if those documents were taken as true and, therefore, they went forward. That being said, however, I think it is important for us to—when we are discussing carnival to have an understanding of carnival, and sometimes I do not think people who talk about carnival truly understand the history of carnival, the trends in carnival, that we have come from a time when almost every band played sailor mas, over and over and over. We moved from pan, we moved to brass and now we have hardly any pan or brass, I see we are moving back to pan a little in terms of mas. We have to understand the change and the trends.

A very important word came up in the discussion, in terms of freedom. Carnival is about freedom and sometimes I think we are trying to contain something, the worst thing you can do is try to contain it. You have to try to facilitate and manage, so freedom. What does carnival really represent? There is a class dynamic to carnival that we do not speak of, and we must pay attention to that class dynamic.

I am not thrilled with bikinis and beads and mostly because I probably would not want people to see my body in bikini and beads *[Laughter]* but we have to recognize—and I want to offer my Ministry's service here, there must be an agendered analysis of what carnival is. The masqueraders are women, the children's mas is about us, almost every aspect of carnival except where the large money is, is about women. I want to suggest that we are a part of whatever discussions—in terms of helping you to understand the gender dynamics of this thing call mas, and the question of freedom as it pertains to women's bodies and the need for bikini and beads and everything else.

That being said, I just want to go very quickly—we cannot—and also the economic aspect. What is happening to our vendors? And our vendors are mainly women again, poor women. How does the carnival affect them in terms of the route and in terms of issues of licencing and protection?

I heard big business is usually worried about how they get security. What happens to the vendor on the street? We have to treat with that. Carnival is about people first. I think it was Dr. Browne who

mentioned or it might have been somebody else who talked about the preliminary masqueraders, so that bands would be selected to parade [*Interruption*] No, it was said here this morning. I am not sure who it was. Sorry, Dr. Browne, but I know it was said here.

Carnival is about people, you cannot try to tell people that they cannot come in town and parade on a carnival day on a stage. We have to remember you could facilitate and you could manage. The worst thing that we can do—remember that word freedom, remember the history of carnival, and I am suggesting—and we are saying that the NCC is not in control, and I am asking in control of what? The NCC can control its mandate in terms of people's freedom or their choice of masquerader or their choice of band, or what costume they want to wear, those are things you can influence, you can perhaps guide, but you never try to control. "Doh" even attempt to control those things. Again, I want to say this needs a lot more discussion and I cannot understand we are having a discussion on carnival and I am not hearing calypso.

Madam Chairman said she did not hear Tobago, and I am saying I am not hearing calypso. There are fundamental things that must be included in any discussion on carnival, calypso, pan, communities, people, people, people. Traditional mas you should not even have to try to justify why traditional mas should be involved in anything, they should never be at the bottom of the ladder, because it is on their shoulders that we are standing. I thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Just before I give the floor to Mr. Seemungal. Let me remind you there is a requirement to produce annual reports, you may not be directly responsible, but your organization has not submitted reports between 2007 and 2011, could you have this situation remedied? I understand it might be difficult because your contractees may have disappeared—[*Laughter*] but hopefully they will have left the information somewhere on your premises, these reports are required. Mr. Seemungal?

**12.20p.m.**

**Mr. Seemungal:** The steel pan and steelbands are a major part of carnival. Are they under your purview control as well?

**Mr. Arnold:** As I said before, none of the groups are really under our control at this time. They were given their shows to run some years back. In the early days, the NCC was responsible for the shows. They even got the gate receipts. Now the interest groups run the shows and keep the gate receipts. It is a complete change from how it used to be.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Could I ask, through you, Madam Chair, if you could use your good office and make an enquiry on what is the status of the white elephant down at Orange Grove. It is really a sight that—

**Mr. Arnold:** You mean the—

**Mr. Seemungal:** —the steel pan shed that they were putting up about 10 years ago. Can you, by way of writing, rather than try to—

**Mr. Arnold:** Maybe we would have to explain that a little because that was not—I was there in Pan Trinbago at the time. We started it with the funds from the O'Halloran Settlement where the Ministry of Culture—they got the \$7.5 million, which they placed in Royal Bank; never came to Pan Trinbago and we got an estimate from Mr. Sander. At that time there was a contractor, Nambi. He started the project, but the Ministry of Culture paid the bills. He died and we got two local contractors. Their estimate to finish it was \$5.5 million, but it was taken away and given to UDeCott. Their bill was whatever it was, but it was out of our control at that time. They had the Chinese living up there in a container and so on. After that, when the Summit came along, they were taken away to the old airport and they never came back. It was just stopped.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Thank you for the explanation. We heard the same explanation on the last occasion. If you can, maybe, enquire as to what is the current status of it and when it can be—because I do not think we may have time to call in Pan Trinbago on a session like this. Maybe, through your office, you could use the NCC and enquire as to what is happening. It is on the way to the airport. It is on the way back from the

airport. Tourists come in, they look at the site and I am sure many Trinidadians know that site. It is right in the glare of the highway.

**Mr. Arnold:** I was trying to explain before that it was taken out of Pan Trinbago's hands. If you pass there any day, you would see Pan Trinbago's headquarters, UdeCott. Since then—maybe the Permanent Secretary might be able to explain—but it is completely out of Pan Trinbago's hands.

**Madam Chairman:** We were told this was now in the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism's budget for this year.

**Ms. Bascombe:** The Pan Trinbago headquarters is one of several projects, which we have been experiencing difficulty getting completion from UDeCott. Additionally, the TUCO Convalescent Home, the **PANCOMBING** factory, just to name a few; but that project has now been put back on the front burner. In fact, we have submitted a Note for the consideration of Cabinet to recall those projects I just mentioned, under the ambit of the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism and our Facilities and Projects Department would take action. That Note was submitted to Cabinet and is currently engaging the attention of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. So, there should be some light at the end of the tunnel.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Can we be comforted that there may be some roof over that building; some galvanize, maybe, over the building at least by the end of this financial year?

**Ms. Bascombe:** Then we have to look at things like the integrity of the steel after being exposed to the elements for a number of years, but it is on the front burner.

**Madam Chairman:** Before I hand the floor to Dr. Browne, Madam Permanent Secretary, the news is not good. Absolutely every entity under your Ministry has all of its reports outstanding, that is, its annual reports. I think you need to have a little round table with your people and tell them that the Committee has tried not to embarrass you in public, but would like to get their reports.

**Ms. Bascombe:** I will become Acting Permanent Secretary in the Ministry from Monday because our Permanent Secretary is on pre-retirement leave from the 25th, which is Monday.

**Madam Chairman:** So I am talking to the right person.

**Ms. Bascombe:** You are talking to the right person. Hopefully when we have another conference, I will tell you what we have done.

**Dr. Browne:** Yes, Madam Chair, you almost took the words out of my mouth because I know we are beginning to anticipate our next session with this team. The one word I am taking away from all of this is the word "responsibility" because the nation is relying on you at NCC to fulfill a very important role and we would never want to get from you a sense of helplessness or a sense that you are not in control.

While we have to be realistic, your responsibility with regard to coordination, with regard to oversight, with regard to being a conduit for funding and many other things, is a very important responsibility to a festival that is very important to this country. I want to encourage you further, in your role as visionaries as well as in that interface with us and with the national public, to provide just that texture, as visionaries for the future of this aspect of national life.

There is talk of freedom, but with freedom comes responsibility and that applies from the masquerader right up to the National Carnival Commission. So, I am looking forward to future interactions and responses to some of the questions.

**Mr. Moe:** I want to thank you, Dr. Browne. Just to say that, these meetings are encouraging for me. They are positive. As an administrator over a number of years, I have welcomed them because they put into the public domain the kind of support that we are getting from our leadership. That is important for us.

The topics you have raised, we might have raised them privately. We might have tried, but hearing this voice, this kind of support and interrogation, is why I look forward to the next session and the one after that and the one after that. *[Laughter]*

On a serious note, it helps the country. It helps the carnival. This is not negative for me. This is positive and I welcome the interventions that you all have made.

Thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you very much, indeed. I assure you that you will not be coming again and again. We want to share the wonderful experience with other entities. [*Laughter*]

**12.28p.m.:** *Meeting adjourned.*

**VERBATIM NOTES OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENT APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO AND REPORT ON GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES (GROUP I), STATUTORY AUTHORITIES AND STATE ENTERPRISES FALLING UNDER THOSE MINISTRIES, HELD IN THE ARNOLD THOMASOS ROOM (EAST), LEVEL 6; AND THE J. HAMILTON MAURICE ROOM, MEZZANINE FLOOR, OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT, TOWER D, THE PORT OF SPAIN, IWFC, 1A WRIGHTSON ROAD, PORT OF SPAIN ON FRIDAY NOVEMBER 30, 2012 AT 10:05 A.M.**

**PRESENT**

|                                 |                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Mrs. Corinne Baptiste-Mc Knight | Chairman             |
| Prof. Harold Ramkissoon         | Vice-Chairman        |
| Mr. Emmanuel George             | Member               |
| Mr. Jairam Seemungal            | Member               |
| Mrs. Carolyn Seepersad-Bachan   | Member               |
| Dr. Amery Browne                | Member               |
| Dr. Delmon Baker                | Member               |
| Mrs. Jacqueline Phillip-Stoute  | Secretary            |
| Ms. Khisha Peterkin             | Asst. Secretary      |
| Ms. Katharina Gokool            | Grad. Research Asst. |

**ABSENT**

|                        |        |
|------------------------|--------|
| Mr. Faris Al-Rawi      | Member |
| Mrs. Christlyn Moore   | Member |
| Miss Stacy Roopnarine  | Member |
| Mr. Ganga Singh        | Member |
| Mrs. Patricia McIntosh | Member |

**OFFICIALS OF THE MINISTRY OF ARTS AND MULTICULTURALISM AND THE NATIONAL CARNIVAL COMMISSION**

|                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mr. Clarence Moe      | Chief Executive Officer     |
| Ms. Allison Demas     | Chairman                    |
| Mr. Don Sylvester     | Deputy Chairman             |
| Mr. Vel Lewis         | Permanent Secretary         |
| Mr. Gunness Sudama    | Finance Manager             |
| Ms. Carol Wolfe       | Corporate Secretary         |
| Mr. Edward Metivier   | Commissioner                |
| Mr. Kevin Rampersad   | Commissioner                |
| Mr. David Lopez       | Commissioner/President NCBA |
| Mr. Lutalo Masimba    | Commissioner/President TUCO |
| Mr. Anthony McQuilkin | Treasurer Pan Trinbago      |

**Madam Chairman:** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, sorry that we are a little late. Can I ask you—having invited you, we are very happy to have you here with us, some of you for the first time, some of you are repeat offenders [*Laughter*] but I welcome you all. Can I ask you to introduce your contingence since a lot of you are new.

*Introductions by the entity.*

**Mr. Lewis:** Again, I want to thank you, Madam Chairman, for welcoming us to this meeting. We have come prepared to deliver whatever answers you might require of us, and of course, whatever information that you would seek from the operations of the NCC and the Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism in general. Thank you, again.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you very much indeed. For the benefit of the new members, I would ask our Members to introduce themselves.

*Introductions by Members of the Committee.*

Can I just—[*Interruption*] please.

**Mr. Lewis:** Madam Chairman and members of the Committee, my great apologies, I skipped over our CEO, Mr. Clarence Moe. [*Laughter*]

**Mr. George:** Do you normally do that?

**Mr. Lewis:** I do not. [*Laughter*]

**Madam Chairman:** Mr. Moe, I thought that you were being protected. [*Laughter*] But now, I am relieved. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank you for the answers that you gave us to a number of questions that we had asked. I think that some of the Members are not completely satisfied with the responses. Can I just be sure that your new Chairman and new members are all on the same page with the information that we have been given?

**Ms. Demas:** Yes, we are, Madam Chairman.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you. So can I ask whether any of the Members would like to lead off on the basis of questions that had been asked and responses received? Just remember to press your microphone in order to start speaking, take it off when you are finished, and identify which question in particular you are dealing with. Thank you.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Thank you, Madam Chairman. First of all, let me welcome the new members to this Joint Select Committee. Also let me, on behalf of my constituents, extend congratulations and thank you for choosing La Horquetta/Talparo, especially Brazil Village, as one of your regional launch for Carnival 2013. That event, Madam Chairman, is on December 8th. So I think that these forums, they are bearing fruits—[*Interruption*]

**Madam Chairman:** No advertisements and promotions. [*Laughter*]

**Mr. Seemungal:** These forums actually are bearing fruits so the rest of the country can take note and they can visit Brazil Village on December 8.

Madam Chairman, I just want to verify—just a bit because today, we are fortunate to have someone from Pan Trinbago, and that question with respect to the facility down at Trincity, it is still a burning issue to me and the national community because it is really an eyesore, and to see taxpayers' dollars being wasted like that. Steel structure has been up for the last number of years and like there is no end to that project at all. So, I would be very happy if you can give us an update as to what is happening with that project in particular.

The second thing is that maybe how your Carnival 2013 plans are coming along because we have a very short season this year, and many of the complaints from us and other Members would have been the preparatory aspect of it, and following the practice and procedures with respect to tendering and other requirements to have the infrastructure ready on time.

So, I would like an answer, first of all, with respect to the pan tent that you are constructing or the pan headquarters.

**Mr. McQuilkin:** Good morning, Madam Chairman and Members.

**Mr. Lewis:** Thank you, Member. I would want to take the first question and then I will pass on to Mr. Moe, the CEO, to tell you a little more about the Carnival—sorry, the Chairman to tell you a bit more about the

Carnival preparations for 2013.

With respect to the Pan Trinbago headquarters, yes, we all agree that it has become a bit of an eyesore. Unfortunately, a number of things were not done for the completion of the headquarters. The Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism has recently met with UDeCott and UDeCott has agreed to complete the Pan Trinbago headquarters on behalf of the Ministry and on behalf of Pan Trinbago.

UDeCott also recently issued a request for proposal for a consultant and they have been actually working with the consultant to do a whole review of the facility there—the structure and everything. We have now put together, for the first time, a comprehensive plan for the completion of the headquarters, and that has actually gone before the Cabinet for its attention and consideration. We are hoping that once the Ministry gets the go ahead from the Cabinet, work is going to resume on the headquarters in short order, and we are actually aiming to complete that in late 2013. So that is the situation with the Pan Trinbago headquarters.

I will hand you over to Ms. Demas who is going to tell you a bit about the plans for Carnival 2013.

**Ms. Demas:** Madam Chairman, I am actually going to ask the CEO, whose prime responsibility it is to ensure the smooth operations of Carnival, to speak to that issue, and I will speak to the question of the tender rules and procedures.

**Mr. Moe:** Thank you, Madam Chairman, for having me here again. If only to say that for me and for those who plan Carnival, having an early Carnival is not strange to us. If you ask me overall if we are to do things in the best and most efficient manner, we would need a month and a half, because a lot of the construction works which are the major aspects of it really takes about six weeks really to get up and get going, it is repetitive year after year in terms of construction.

Where we might have some changes as we move towards greater efficiency is the management of the Carnival, for example, our ticketing, our gate control, our security, and as it relates to those, discussions have been going on even before the new board was appointed with the relevant authorities to ensure that it will happen. So I feel confident that we will see Carnival coming off with the first event, I think it is January 26, at the Queens Park Savannah, on time and the infrastructure in place.

**Ms. Demas:** Madam Chairman and Members, I have had an opportunity to review the tender rules and procedures of the NCC. Whilst I am satisfied that they are adequate certainly for the purposes of Carnival 2013, I do think that there is room for amendment in order to strengthen the procedures, and certainly, this will form part of the entire strategic review and operational review that will occur immediately following Carnival 2013.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Madam Chairman, may I just turn now to question 15 with respect to plans to stimulate regional Carnival throughout Trinidad and Tobago. This—*[Interruption]* Okay.

**Mr. George:** I had a follow-up. Just a follow-up on the issue of the Pan Trinbago headquarters, in the proposals that you have sent forward, what is the comparative cost now as against the original cost of the construction of that building?

**Mr. Lewis:** Unfortunately, I think we did not have a detailed cost of the building prior to now. I think Pan Trinbago, when they started the project, they were using a figure that somebody had come up with, and we could not glean the figure, because the strange thing is that a thorough assessment was never done on what it would have taken to complete the building. That is why UDeCott worked with us to find a consultant who could do a comprehensive analysis of the structure as it is now. There have been some deterioration of the steel and so on, and so some refurbishment work has had to go into the building. We had to remove some parts of it and so on.

So only now, I think, we have been able to do a comprehensive study of the cost that would be involved in completing the headquarters.

**Mr. George:** What is that?

**Mr. Lewis:** It is in the vicinity of approximately \$60 million or so.

**Mr. George:** Sixty?

**Mr. Lewis:** Yes.

**10.20 a.m.**

**Mr. Moe:** It is actually not much different to what the Ministry has actually been asking before this plan had been put together.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay.

**Mr. Seemungal:** I turn now to the question 15 of your reply dated September 17, 2012, with respect to the question in relation to regional carnival and stimulating carnival regionally.

In (i) you have:

the regional carnival committee to agree to pool resources to hold one large event on Carnival Monday and Tuesday.

Can you all explain this further so that we can understand what is happening?

I think on the last two occasions, both Madam Chairman, myself and other members alluded to the fact that Carnival Monday is not explored to its fullest and we would like to see some sort of, either diversification of the Carnival from Port of Spain to more regional carnival on a Monday and then may be bringing out some of the smaller bands on a Monday into Port of Spain, while allowing the larger bands to parade on Tuesday into Port of Spain, or the ones that are furthest away from Port of Spain perform on the Monday and the ones that are nearest to Port of Spain on the Tuesday. Have you all given it consideration and what is really meant in (i)?

**Mr. Sylvester:** Thank you Minister Seemungal. Just to make a slight correction to your opening comments relative to that grands affaires on December 08, in your constituency as the launch of regional carnival, you indicated that one of the regional carnival launches would be in your constituency. No, the launch of regional carnival will be in your constituency. That is a culmination of all the regional carnivals heralding its beginning for carnival would be in your constituency. I needed to correct that.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Before you go on, let me say I am really—I want to commend you all. Do you know why? It is because we have been speaking about neglecting the rural communities in carnival. I think this is an ideal opportunity where you show that you are actually going into the rural communities and staying in Port of Spain, the Tunapuna area and the Chaguanas area and these areas to actually launch carnival. So I want to commend you if this is the launch of carnival. It will really be a big event. So, I want to commend you on this.

**Mr. Sylvester:** Thank you Minister. And to go into more of the substantive issue you have raised—work in progress. As a matter of fact, it is coming out of the deliberations at this joint select committee that we went back and did our home lesson, taking into account comments raised here, particularly by you and my goodly brother from Diego Martin Central, MP Dr. Amery Browne. So we had to get back to the drawing board, as I said before, work in progress, and we are still working out the details at the regional committee level to bring to the board and very soon you will get the specifics vis-à-vis whether it is on Monday or Tuesday, but definitely credence must be given to the deliberations here which have given us a mandate and we are going ahead with that, to ensure that regional carnival is broadened out of the communities coming into Port of Spain and the bigger areas Monday or Tuesday. So, it is work in progress and you will hear more of it as we progress at the regional committee level unto the board of the NCC level.

**Madam Chairman:** Are you happy with that?

**Mr. Seemungal:** Yes. Thank you very much.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Madam Chairman, I too would like to extend a very warm welcome to members of

NCC, particularly the new members of NCC, the new faces that we are seeing. This, I think, is going to be the last session we are having with the NCC. I want to say how much I enjoyed your company. I think this is the fourth session. But, however, I would be less than honest if I say that I am happy with some of the responses I have gotten to some of the questions that I have asked and other members have asked.

I want to remind the members of the NCC that the NCC is funded mainly by the taxpayers of this country; the moneys of hardworking citizens. And consequently, there must be accountability and transparency. It saddens me when I see that we do not make optimal use of taxpayers' money when it is given TO us in the form of a grant, as has occurred so many times over the years in this country. We need to spend taxpayers' money wisely and optimally.

It is in the interest, I think, of all of us and my fervent hope, Madam Chairman, is that at the end of the day we would see a transformed NCC; that the public's perception and my perception of NCC would have changed. That is my fervent hope.

Now, I want to get to the question that I have asked and the responses that I have gotten. I do not know if you all have copies. It is a letter dated October 19, 2012, page 12. Are we all on the same page? Question one, issue one, deals with the rental of offices. But at the top of that I see NCC has already started making some changes, albeit the wrong change. The name should be Harold Ramkisoon and not Arnold Ramkissoon. So, while I welcome change, it is the wrong direction. [Laughter]

**Mr. Moe:** My apologies.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** I want to look at the rental of offices and that question arose from a question I had posed, that is minuted. It is the Minutes of April 20, 2012, page 5. I do not know if we have that document also. The question I asked then was what was the rental fees for the NCC offices. I quote from that:

The rental cost of the NCC's office is currently \$250,000 annually, inclusive of rental fees for its stakeholders. The NCC fees are \$111,000.

Now I come to page 12. I am a bit taken aback with the figures I see there on page 12, rental of offices and I see NCC's sub-office for 2011, \$360,000. The office at Cipriani Boulevard, \$1,565,244. The total rental for 2011, \$7,764,300. That is quite a bit for rental fees there.

And we go to 2012, and again we see rental at Cipriani Boulevard reduced this time and at Jerningham Avenue, at the same level, \$360,000 and a total of \$5 million-plus for rental fees. That is quite in contradiction to what was given to us on April 20 when I posed the question. It is quite a difference between a quarter million and \$7 plus-million and \$5-plus million.

I want to go a bit further down—there is quite a bit of discrepancy there—the Newton Centre. The NCC entered into a three-year lease agreement in February 2010 to relocate its corporate offices in light of the inadequacy and unsatisfactory condition of the premises at 85A and B Cipriani Boulevard.

I go further down, when the new board took office at the beginning of November 2010, it was determined that the Newton Center was unsuitable as a location, inter alia, in light of its distance from the Queen's Park Savannah. These are costly errors and it reflects, I think, on poor judgment in the selection of rental spaces. That is the only conclusion that one can come to, very costly.

Madam Chairman, I said before that the NCC must explore the possibility of moving some of its offices to the Savannah and cut down on the rent. This is really high rental fees, \$7 million-plus in 2011 and \$5 million-plus in 2012. So, I once more want to urge the NCC to pursue moving some of their offices to the Savannah and cut down on high rental fees.

I turn the page now to question four: Procedures: re the call to tender opening of bids and awards of tenders. This has been an area of public disquiet, great concerns by contractors. Many of them are not happy with the way tenders are being conducted and I am glad that the Chairman said that they are going to be looking into this and I want to suggest, before we go back to the old way things were done, and if you

look at the question I asked, I indicated the old approach.

Since the inception, the tenders for carnival structures are prepared by the design engineering branch of the Ministry of Works and Transport, under the supervision of the Chief Designs Engineer, as it is done today. Up to the late 1990s, the tenders were invited by the Central Tenders Board and opened at the CTB. They were then sent to the CDE to evaluate. Awards were made by the CTB on the recommendation of the CDE.

I think there is a certain amount of transparency in that approach to the process and you may want to reconsider going back to the old way or modifying it, but there must be transparency. Contractors must not feel that they have not been dealt with in a fair and transparent manner, that others have gotten the contract when they should not be getting the contract.

I also want to suggest again, and I raised this point at one of the meetings, there is always this rush to tender contract and get the stage and the North Stand built and we see a repeat of this this year. I noticed in the newspapers that tenders have been advertised/invited for the construction of the North Stand, et cetera. I did not see anything about stage though and I would like to know why there was no mention of the stage. But, again, you are now advertising and I imagine that the deadline is probably somewhere in December and then you would ask that the job be completed by January next year because carnival is in early February. So, there is a very narrow window to get this thing done and this is not good enough. When you have such a narrow you put yourself in a corner and more than that, it opens up or gives room for corruption and we must come up with an approach that gives us the time to do these things. These things should be done six months before.

I heard the excuse that: “Well we get allocations very late and therefore we have no choice but to do these things in a very rushed manner.” That is not good enough. We must come up with some solution to the problem, whereby when we are advertising/inviting tenders, we do that six months before carnival and give ourselves good enough time to give the contractors also good time to put in their tender.

Madam Chairman, I would like to make a recommendation, it is a strong recommendation—but I think in the interest of all of us, all of us want to see a strong NCC, a transformed NCC—that a forensic auditing should be carried out during the period 2009 to 2012, with respect to NCC and some of its satellite bodies. I thank you very much and I look forward to some of the responses I would like to hear from you, with respect to why was the stage not advertised for Carnival 2013 and any other comments you want to make on my presentation this morning. I thank you very much.

**Mr. Moe:** Allow me, first of all to deal with the stage and then I will allow the corporate secretary who handles both the tenders and also the question of the rental.

As you all observed in my attachment document that we are still awaiting word from the Ministry of Works on the evaluation of the steel, as it relates to the stage, hence the reason you have not seen any publication with regard to stage. Indeed yesterday or day before, I called up the Ministry of Works, because remember the steel has not been used and the, as I said before, there was need for redesign. We are awaiting from the Ministry of Works some kind of indication as to what we going to do, but we still have time.

**10.35 a.m.**

In my opinion, the members who have to be constructed, if they have to, will be minimal. This is my opinion, but I am still waiting for the advice from the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure. I now ask the Corporate Secretary if she could respond both to the rental as well as the tenders.

**Ms. Wolfe:** Madam Chair and other Members, insofar as the rental of the various offices are concerned, I am not sure that there was a question as against comments and observations about the procedures that we have followed. Was there a question as such? If there was, what was the question?

**Madam Chairman:** Prof. Ramkissoon, do you have a specific question?

**Ms. Wolfe:** What was the specific question?

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** Concerning the rental. I had posed the question on April 20, 2012 and it is minuted, okay, concerning the rental fees for NCC offices. I was given—again it is minuted here, that the rental cost of NCC's office is currently \$250,000 annually inclusive of rental fees for its stakeholders. That was the figure that I was given; it was minuted. Now, when you look at that figure and the figure that was given to us, on your response to my query, there is quite a discrepancy there. This is what I am querying.

**Ms. Wolfe:** Okay. I understand now what you are querying. Unfortunately, the figure you were given at the earlier sitting was wrong. I do not want to say I did not give it. We gave it as a team. The figures here on page 12, are the correct figures.

**Prof. Ramkissoon:** I thank you.

**Madam Chairman:** Can I just follow up on that? I note that on page 12, you have a figure of \$385,200 as rental of premises for the NCBA, but on another document which you gave us on September 17, dealing again with the NCBA, we have their estimates and there is a figure for accommodation/rent of \$182,000. Can anyone explain that?

**Ms. Wolfe:** That one I think, Madam Chair, I will pass to the CEO, because the NCC pays rent. The figures I have reproduced here are the rents that the NCC pays on behalf of its own offices and the offices of the interest groups. I cannot answer for this.

**Madam Chairman:** How come the NCBA has another distinct figure for rent?

**Mr. Moe:** Before I allow the NCBA to respond to that, in our first submission of \$250,000, we perhaps misread the question and provided for NCC's office rentals which would have included our offices, NCC's offices at Cipriani Boulevard and that of the offices at Jerningham Avenue. It was the monthly rental that we gave for those offices. I am sure if I work the math back, it will come back to that and, therefore, when we saw the question, we felt that he was talking on an annualized basis. I thought we should bring out all our rentals so that one can see all that we have done. So, when we first gave the figure, we were just looking at our office rentals which just for us included only the Jerningham Avenue as well as the Cipriani Boulevard. I will just turn you over to Mr. Lopez and you could explain in your budget.

**Mr. Lopez:** Good morning, Madam Chair, and members at the table. Yes, the rentals that you would see, the NCC would pay the rentals for our main offices which are at No. 1 Picton Street. The NCBA also has an office in San Fernando and we had offices at Cornelio Street, Woodbrook which housed our mas academy. We have since closed our mas academy. So, we still have our offices in San Fernando in which the NCBA is responsible for paying its rent.

**Madam Chairman:** When did you close your mas academy?

**Mr. Lopez:** Mas academy was closed on May 31, 2012.

**Madam Chairman:** 2012?

**Mr. Lopez:** Yes, Ma'am.

**Madam Chairman:** Then I note that in your estimates for 2013, you have the identical figures that you have had for 2012, so that figure should be reduced.

**Mr. Lopez:** Yes, Ma'am. The identical figure is there because we had to close the mas academy because of financial issues, and we would want to continue with the mas academy, so we are right now in the process of identifying a new space for rental for it.

**Madam Chairman:** Very well. Just to clear my own mind, what exactly is the subvention from the NCC to the NCBA for the 2013 period?

**Mr. Moe:** It will be in the vicinity of about \$8.1 million overall.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. So, that is what would include electricity, phones, et cetera, for now? Would electricity be paid by the NCC on the building at Picton Street that you all pay the rental for?

**Mr. Moe:** No, just the rental. They have to look after electricity.

**Madam Chairman:** They have to look after that?

**Mr. Moe:** Certainly.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay. Does anyone else have any questions immediately? Because there are a couple of things that I would like to get into. Go ahead.

**Dr. Browne:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Members. Some serious concerns have been raised at this forum and elsewhere with regard to the relationship between the NCC and NCBA, particularly with the view, that taxpayers' dollars in large quanta are being provided to that association with very little, or should I say, insufficient accountability. I recognize that the NCC sought and received legal advice on the recommendation that a forensic audit be conducted. I took note of the views of the advisor particularly that:

“...only the governing body of the NCBA...”

This is page 7.

“can commission such an audit”—forensic audit—“and it must do so in conformity with the NCBA's Constitution.”

The advice went on to state:

“If the prevailing view is that an audit is necessary...”

And I would submit that that is it the prevailing view.

“...it may be possible to compel the NCBA to undertake such an audit. This may be achievable if, for example, the Ministry makes the payment of next year's subvention subject to the commissioning of and presentation of a forensic audit of the NCBA's books and records.”

That seems pretty clear in terms of the direction that the legal advisor is pointing the NCC toward.

My question is, has there been a decision taken on this urgent matter? I would like some feedback on that, because this appears to be a pathway toward greater accountability. And while the NCBA's rules and regulations may not allow—its status may not allow the NCC to conduct the audit itself, you have the power of the cheque book and the ability to encourage them very strongly to conduct due diligence in that regard. So, I would like your feedback on that.

**Mr. Lewis:** Thank you, Member. I could tell you that there is not as yet a decision to go that route for 2013, I suspect simply because of the timing. The Ministry has actually received the accounts of the NCBA on the funds that the Ministry would have handed over to the NCBA. The NCBA would normally do their accounts and submit their financial statements to the Ministry.

The Ministry had also written to the Auditor General. The Auditor General has advised that they would want to do first of all an audit of the NCC's accounts. They have advised that currently they are a bit constrained by resources to do that for us immediately, but they are hoping that sometime in the near future they could have that done. They are proposing that from that audit, maybe they would want to see whether we would go the route of compelling the NCBA, of course, through, as suggested here, the withholding of funds to the NCBA. At the moment, that decision has not been taken as yet by the Ministry. I think certainly it is one that the Ministry would certainly want to consider. It would not be ruled out.

**Dr. Browne:** Thank you for the response and, Madam Chair, thanks for the opportunity to continue. I am a bit curious about the connection between an audit of the NCC and the need and now the advice toward an audit of NCBA. Why is one dependent on the other? Or why does one have to wait on the other? Is there a logical sequence in terms of which should come first? I am not arguing against an audit of NCC at all, and I doubt anyone in this room would do so, but the concerns of this committee have, to a significant degree, focused on the lack of accountability with regard to NCBA, and the fact that our taxpayers' dollars year after year have been going in that direction. So, if that has been established as a priority, I am not sure why we would now be hearing about the need to do an audit of NCC. Why is one dependent on the other? My

suggestion and I heard the reference to the timing and maybe not for this year, but whether or not funds have already been provided, I need to be clear on the reason for any further delay, because clearly the NCBA would need to be given sufficient lead time to first of all agree, and to conduct such an audit or commission such an audit and then to present its findings. So, already we might be behind time for next year and if these types of decisions are postponed, notwithstanding the fact that you have our views and you have legal advice on the matter, then we may just be kicking the tin down the road, and more and more moneys might be going down the drain. I will say that generously.

**Mr. Lewis:** Well, I do not want to suggest that there is a connection between the audit of the NCC necessarily and the proposed forensic audit or suggested forensic audit of the NCBA. It was just suggested to us that we needed to do that based on all the discussions that have been taking place particularly here at the JSC, that the Ministry ought to have the books of the NCC properly audited. So, the Auditor General suggested that they would like to do that, but they were just saying that they were a bit constrained by resources, particularly human resources, I think.

The question of the forensic audit of the NCBA, unfortunately or fortunately, has not yet been discussed at any lengths at the Ministry or between the Ministry and the NCBA at any great lengths, but it is something that I would personally want to follow-up with the hon. Minister and the other officials at the Ministry, and certainly in our upcoming stakeholders meetings with the various interest groups for Carnival 2013, it is something that I want to assure the committee that we are going to—at least I am going to suggest to the Minister, that we put on the table in our talks with the NCBA.

**Madam Chairman:** Can I just follow up here by asking a blunt question? Does the NCBA provide the NCC with an annual audit report?

**10.50 a.m.**

**Mr. Moe:** Yes, they do.

**Madam Chairman:** When is the last audit report that you received?

**Mr. Moe:** I think it is for 2011 or 2012. It is very current. It is 2011; I know for sure.

**Madam Chairman:** 2011—[*Interruption*]

**Mr. Moe:** 2011.

**Madam Chairman:**—you have got an audit report?

**Mr. Seemungal:** We have an audit report, Madam Chair—if I may intervene—2013, the draft estimates.

**Madam Chairman:** No. No. No. You cannot have an audit report for 2013. Not possible

**Mr. Moe:** It is 2011 or 2012. I know for sure.

**Mr. Seemungal:** No. This is draft estimates, sorry.

**Madam Chairman:** What you have is estimates.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Yes.

**Mr. Lopez:** The audit report has been submitted to the Ministry and the NCC is current.

**Madam Chairman:** Current meaning what?

**Mr. Lopez:** Current meaning 2011/2012; then we would have 2012/2013—[*Interruption*]

**Madam Chairman:** Hang on. Hang on.

**Mr. Lopez:** Sorry.

**Madam Chairman:** 2012 fiscal period finished when?

**Mr. Lopez:** September 30. It runs the same financial year as the Government.

**Madam Chairman:** And you have already submitted your audited reports?

**Mr. Lopez:** No. Not for 2013. Not for 2012/2013, it is 2011.

**Madam Chairman:** 2011/2012 ran from October 2011 to September 2012.

**Mr. Lopez:** Right, to September 2012.

**Madam Chairman:** Is it that audit report that you have already submitted?

**Mr. Lopez:** Yes, that has been submitted.

**Madam Chairman:** That is wonderful.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Madam Chair, may I just add to my friend.

**Madam Chairman:** Yes, go ahead. [*Crosstalk*]

**Mr. Lopez:** Let me correct that statement, Madam Chair. It is the 2010/2011—[*Interruption*]

**Madam Chairman:** 2010/2011 fiscal period.

**Mr. Lopez:** Yes. Yes, Madam Chair.

**Madam Chairman:** Now, that I can understand, because you know—[*Interruption*]

**Mr. Lopez:** Yes, Madam Chair, that is what has been submitted.

**Madam Chairman:** Very well. Mr. Seemungal.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Madam Chair, by your submissions dated October 19, 2012, you attached to it, Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 16 May, 2012, and without disclosing details of the Minutes, it seems that all is not right within the NCBA.

Have you all been able to have subsequent meeting to this, to iron out or come to some conclusion as to what the problems are? Because they are spending a lot taxpayers dollars. So what are the problems that exist within the NCBA, with a view to bringing some kind of conclusion to these matters? And I saw in it, Mr. Don Sylvester chaired this particular meeting. Would you all like to have a copy?

**Mr. Sylvester:** Madam Chair, I have a copy of that report. What I think transpired during that period of time, it was a heated election time within the NCBA, and there were a lot of nuances—[*Interruption*]

**Mr. Seemungal:** So, they have a new board now?

**Mr. Sylvester:**—and there is a new committee elected by the members of the NCBA. There were issues and I think the election dealt with most of those issues.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** So, that is it?

**Mr. Sylvester:** In that respect, that part of it.

[*Crosstalk*]

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** No, it is just the follow-up to that, as well. I mean, since that election, have there been any commitments from the new board to address these issues that we have seen here? Because, I mean, these are really issues of great concern.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Serious issues.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** Yes. Serious!

**Madam Chairman:** I guess we have the NCBA here; somebody should be able to advance a response.

**Mr. Lewis:** I would like to ask Mr. Lopez to make some comments.

**Mr. Lopez:** Madam Chair, yes, as was said by the Deputy Chair, in that period of those—what I would say—allegations, it was the election time of the NCBA, and members used what was available to them to get their issues out in the media. It is unfortunate, though, that—[*Interruption*]

**Mr. Seemungal:** This is not a meeting, sorry.

**Mr. Lopez:** No. Sorry! Sorry!

**Mr. Seemungal:** This is minuted meeting that is submitted to this committee.

**Mr. Lopez:** Well, I agree with you, Sir, but members used what was available to them to get the attention. From then, the election of the NCBA was held on July 17, 2012. We have since had a new board headed by myself, the President of the NCBA. We have a full board. I am now on the NCC board as a commissioner, and I want to assure you, all efforts are made to ensure that the smooth running of the NCBA, and the collaboration with the NCC for greater Carnival festival.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** Well, I suppose the question I am asking is given what has been raised here, at

this particular meeting, in accordance with these minutes—[*Interruption*]

**Mr. Lopez:** Yes.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** I just want to know from the NCC—[*Interruption*]

**Mr. Lopez:** NCC—exactly.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:**—that these issues are being addressed?

**Mr. Seemungal:** That is all, the details of it. We just want to know that.

**Mr. Sylvester:** Yes.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** Yes?

**Mr. Sylvester:** Yes.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** So, we should have a resolution and, in some way, you would have addressed this, clarified, validated it, whatever, or correct it within some time frame?

**Mr. Sylvester:** Yes, because we already had discussions with it.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** And that time frame is what?—a year, six months, three months.

**Mr. Sylvester:** Within three months, because—[*Interruption*]

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** We would have these issues resolved?

**Mr. Sylvester:** Yes.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** Okay, thank you. That is what I really wanted to get.

**Madam Chairman:** Members, committee, I have a problem. Let me try to explain this problem as lucidly as I can. I am aware that the NCBA does not represent the totality of the Carnival Bandleaders Association. Let me tell you how I come by that information.

I was invited to a meeting of a group under the umbrella of the Ministry of Planning and the Economy, and there is a company, I think it is the Strategic Creative Industries—[*Interruption*]

**Dr. Browne:** Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company.

**Madam Chairman:** Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company. Now, among these creative industries is the mas industry, and in that context, there is no mention of NCC, which, according to our laws, has the responsibility for promoting and developing Carnival.

There is no mention of the NCBA; there is the NCDF, which, when you investigate the NCDF, it appears to be a dynamic forward looking institution. So, I say to myself, “Something is wrong, let’s do a little research”, and you know what turned up. There is a report in this Parliament of a special select committee of the House dating back to 2007, when the matter being discussed was the incorporation of the NCBA.

Parliament lapsed—I think, at least in my estimation, fortunately, before that came back to the House—but in that report from then, it is obvious that there has been a problem among the bandleaders of this country. The NCBA purports to talk on their behalf, but the bulk of the membership of the big bands, the medium bands, and the Tobago bands, belong to the NCDF. The NCDF; that report was suggesting that they be given a seat on the NCC. Nothing has come of that.

Now, we have, at some point, to become serious. If this Carnival is supposed to be “our thing”, is it in our interest, which the NCC is supposed to be looking out for, to isolate a set of bandleaders? And when you look at the people who belong there, these are the people who bring out the big bands, without whom, Carnival is not going to really happen. Is the NCC going to sit here and try to convince me, as well as the NCBA, that they are not aware of these people? That they do not know what they are doing? That they do not realize that if they do not get their act together and talk to these people, have them part of the NCC, they are going to take over your functions and perhaps run them better than you are doing?

I want to know how you all are responding to this fact. Not tell me that in three months’ time you are going to be sorted out, and pretend as if these people do not exist. No! Let us confront the matter. In Parliament, I understand that the language is “there is an elephant in the room”, but this is not an elephant,

this is a whole circus. We have to deal with it, and I would like to hear how you all are dealing with it.

**Mr. Lewis:** Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. The Ministry actually recognized that there is another body called the NCDF. In fact, on several occasions, we have worked with the NCDF. I would want to hand you over to the new chairman, who has a legal mind as well, who would want to talk a little bit more about it, but just to say that the NCC Act, as it is at present—and I know that the Ministry is proposing to put forward some amendments to the NCC Act—as it is at present, the NCC Act constrains the Ministry to recognize on the board of the NCC, only one nominee from the organization that is most representative of Carnival bands. That is one of the issues that we have had, to determine which organization is most representative of Carnival bands.

We have been convinced, so far, that the NCBA had been most representative of the Carnival bands, but I would want the chairman who had actually looked at this issue for some time and wants to make a comment on it.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** Just before you do, I just want to add something to that, that he said, that probably the chairman could address, because, yes, I noticed on page 2 of the letter from your office, Permanent Secretary, that you indicated the need for that legislative review to govern NCC. And you did mention that, you know, the institutions as Pan Trinbago, TUCO and NCBA, but in that last session, NCC indicated it had little control over these organizations as they run their own shows, as they are charged with developing Carnival into a viable, national, cultural, commercial, et cetera, but should the review, Madam Chair, allow the NCC, as well, to have greater authority in these organizations in order to ensure this goal of viable, national, cultural and commercial enterprise? I hope you could address that, as well, as you respond.

**Ms. Demas:** Thank you very much, Member. Madam Chair, the question of which organization in fact is most representative of Carnival bands is indeed contentious. And, in fact, recently, we now have a third organization that is being formed and, in fact, I will be meeting with them.

Madam Chair, I have a history in my previous life, I have in fact collaborated both with the NCBA—in fact, at one stage I was, I think, a legal adviser to the NCBA, similarly to the NCDF. I think, however, if one looks at the provision of the Act and having regard to the NCBA's constitution, notwithstanding the fact that the NCDF and the new organization represent the big bands, we have to remember that those big bands have, basically, one vote, and, therefore, the NCBA, when you look at all the individual members, the small bands, the medium bands, therefore, is in fact, according to the Act, the organization that is most representative of Carnival bands. Because we have to remember that a lot of persons are involved in our Carnival, and while there may be a lot of focus on the big bands, they are not necessarily representative of the entire Carnival community, but I would let Mr. Lopez address that question.

**11.05 a.m.**

**Ms. Demas:** Now, apart from the NCBA, we also have the other interest groups, and what I have realized is that there is need for more dialogue between the NCC and the stakeholders, not just the stakeholders who are represented on the board of the NCC, but in fact the wider community. I have immediately started by meeting with the executives of the interest groups. As I mentioned, I am also going to meet with other groups such as the new bandleaders association, as well as—you know, like the artistes coalition—there are a number of groups that have vested interest in our creative industries who I would be meeting with.

In fact, one of my plans is that immediately after Carnival, to convene a meeting of all the stakeholders, as well as our line Ministry as well as all the other agencies that are involved in our Carnival. For example, there should be close linkages with our Ministry of Tourism. We see now that the Ministry of Trade and Industry is also making inroads into the creative sector, as indeed the Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development.

In terms of the legislative framework, if one actually looks at the NCC Act you would see that the

legislative framework is very strong. The issue has been that the NCC has never been provided with the requisite resources in order for it to meet the mandate and the functions as set out in the Act. And in fact, one of those reasons I think led to Cabinet Note 2007 of 1997, and in that Cabinet Note, decision was made in relation to arrangements for Carnival 1998 and beyond, and what that Note in effect did, was to give the Carnival bodies specific responsibility. Where I sit now, I see there is need to review the Act as well with that Note because what that has done is cause great confusion. I have come in now and I am wondering, well, what is the NCC responsible for?

**Member:** That is my question.

**Ms. Demas:** Yes. It is impossible, you know, to govern or to chair or lead in such a situation which is why I say, we have to bring all the players into one forum and review the Act and the Cabinet Note, because what obtained in 1997 may not obtain now. The NCC also needs to have a strategic plan. It also therefore needs to do, what I would call, a business diagnostic, to determine this is the way the NCC wants to go. What are the shortcomings and what does it take for the NCC to meet its strategic plans and objectives? Therefore come up with a transformation plan which would address a lot of the issues that we have heard from Prof. Ramkissoon in terms of providing that public accountability and transparency which is so vital for our Carnival sector.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** I hear you with the blurring probably of responsibilities that is making that difficult.

**Ms. Demas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** So you need to clearly define what those responsibilities are. But are you also looking at the possibility, or do you envisage that probably NCC has to have more control of these various organizations?

**Ms. Demas:** Well, put it this way, if the NCC is provided with the resources.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** They can?

**Ms. Demas:** I think that the NCC Act provides an excellent framework in which the NCC can effectively operate in collaboration with the various interest groups in Carnival, but there must be a greater level of dialogue, a greater level of collaboration, and indeed, greater accountability and transparency which would result.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** You see, my point is, and allow me just to make this point “eh”, it is just that sometimes it may be, yes, you have problems with responsibilities, you know, delineating those responsibilities clearly, but you know, sometimes to get accountability out of the institutions that are now part of your NCC, does it mean that you probably need to have more—or are you saying is just the resources you did not have to ensure that there is accountability from each of these organizations? That is what I am trying to get at; is it really a resource issue or you do not have the legislative mandate to do so?

**Ms. Demas:** No, I think that the legislative mandate is very clear—*[Interruption]*

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** And it allows it.

**Ms. Demas:** It allows it. What has, I think, muddled the waters, in my respectful view, is the Cabinet Note.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** So we need to correct—what you are saying there is a need to—*[Interruption]*

**Ms. Demas:** This is my review, but like I said, I think that, you know, different persons here may have different opinions and indeed in the wider Carnival fraternity. We need to let all these views be aired, and then come up, hopefully, with some kind of consensus as to how we can move forward effectively and efficiently.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** Thank you. Madam Chair, can I —*[Interruption]*

**Mr. Seemungal:** Just one more on this point.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** I just want to talk on the strategy side.

**Mr. Seemungal:** I just want one more on this point.

**Madam Chairman:** No, no, no. Let Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan finish and then you would come back in.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** What had happened is that the Chairman raised a number of issues on strategies and so on, and I mean, I was very happy on page 7 of this report from the Permanent Secretary again, that you touched a lot on the issues of your strategies and so on, and I noticed that you identified those key strategies for 2012—2015. How have you found their implementation or have you started with the implementation or roll-out of these strategies and are you finding it slower? Again, do you find again you do not have the requisite resources to implement those strategies? Do you feel, again, do you need legislative or regulatory authority to do so?

**Ms. Demas:** Okay. One of the issues and the problems with the board of the NCC is that we are forced to be far too operational especially around Carnival, and that has to do with the fact that, again, there are not the requisite resources, particularly at managerial level. So what happens is that, apart from the three statutory committees, a number of committees are formed, and basically these committees do the work that the management is supposed to do. So, to be quiet honest, whilst I have plans for strategies, I have not been able to address strategy and I know realistically I cannot do so until February 13.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** So you are saying that there is a need now to strengthen the management—  
[*Interruption*]

**Ms. Demas:** Definitely.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:**—to be able to move forward operationally —[*Interruption*]

**Ms. Demas:** Indeed, indeed, absolutely.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:**—and allow the board to become strategic.

**Ms. Demas:** Absolutely.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** And therefore, you would be taking steps—you see, there are two things that I want to raise on the issue “eh”, one is I noticed that you spoke a lot on the issue of—I think it was not page 10 of this document—talking about you A to Z operations manuals and the recording of your processes. Are you looking—and it gives to me the impression you are taking that more business-oriented approach. I want to commend the team for taking that business-oriented approach, and you are to ensure that you are economically viable, et cetera, et cetera. But what it may mean, are you just going to just strengthen the management or are you going to look at a whole overhaul, re-engineer all your processes? You may need to do a whole organizational review, you know, to reengineer all your processes in order to ensure that your management has the capacity now to really take over operations, and have this operation run smoothly on a 12-month basis.

**Ms. Demas:** Indeed, precisely. As I mentioned, what I would like to have done is a business diagnostic which would identify all the weaknesses, the human resource structure, you know, the facilities, the technology, and which would therefore enable the board and the management to come up with a transformational plan as to what is needed in order for the NCC to operate, how it was envisaged, within the legislative framework.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** I just want to caution that you look at that whole issue of how you reengineer your processes because you may very well throw resources at it; all the HR, et cetera, and then you may find yourself saying well, you know, you could bring in technology, I mean, the public service we have seen problems with that. You bring a lot of technology, you bring a lot of resources but when you do not re-engineer those processes to take advantage of new skill sets, et cetera, et cetera.

**Ms. Demas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** So your diagnostic should try to ensure that you focus a lot on the review of your processes.

**Ms. Demas:** Indeed.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** And, Madam Chair, one other question. At the last Joint Select Committee, you know, I raised the point about the indirect economic activity as a result of Carnival activities. We had some discussion on that issue. I mean, I did not see much, I saw something here in the notes on page 7, but it really did not address the issue of the indirect economic activity because we keep hearing that, you know, Carnival brings millions of dollars, and we hear them quantified after—February 13 we would hear another figure—but a lot of it is indirect activity. Have we found a way to be able to quantify it—*[Interruption]*

**Ms. Demas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:**—so we could measure it and make sure that we are maximizing the impact of that indirect economic activity.

**Ms. Demas:** I am very glad to hear you say that because we are on the same page, because one of the plans which I have already brought to the board is that I would also like to see a social and economic analysis of the contribution of Carnival to our economy in terms of the number of jobs created, the contribution to GDP and so on, so that we would have tangible figure which also enable the NCC therefore to make a case on its behalf as well as on behalf of the Carnival bodies for an increased allocation, so that it could be properly resourced.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** You see, so it could be properly justified as well.

**Ms. Demas:** Yes.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** I noticed as well, Madam Chair, that, just to follow up on what you are saying, because Madam Chair raised the whole issue on the whole issue of creative industries, and you know the Government of Trinidad and Tobago is looking at the whole issue of creative industries as a possible growth area for the Trinidad and Tobago economy. You know, Carnival is that celebration of our creative genius of our people, and I agree with you, Madam Chair, it forms that important part of the creative industries.

You know, as Ministry of Public Administration, we offer a lot of scholarships. Have there been any areas that you have been able to identify for national development human resource needs in the areas of this creative industry. Because you know we talk about cultural community services and personal services theater, film, et cetera, but what about this industry itself, you know, mas and so on. Is there something that we could look at to further the whole development of the human resource in this particular area through the area of scholarships?

**Ms. Demas:** I would probably have to ask the CEO to address that issue.

**Mr. Moe:** Again, Madam Chair, no, it has not yet been done. It has also bothered me even beyond that; that the Government enter into bilateral agreements in areas of culture which we can benefit from, even under trade and so on, which we have not yet taken advantage of, and I agree with you that we need that holistic approach if we have to have a new re-engineered Carnival, and I am saying that Trinidad Carnival is a saleable international product. There is demand for it.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** And my last question, Chair, my last question, just to follow up on—sorry, what is it?

**Ms. Demas:** Just on that point, I would just like to draw to your attention to the fact that the NCC Act in section 18 does provide for the establishment of a fund, and one of the uses of that fund could be to create reserve funds out of which money may be expended for the establishment of academic, technical and vocational grants. So therefore again, that has to be another priority, beneficial for the enhancement of the welfare of our artistes, designers and composers of musical works engaged in Carnival.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** But it seems that those are drafts “eh”, but you have to take a look at the academic side of the problem at the level of management. It is something you need to look at, and something that you may, either you may want to send abroad. Why can we not become that, develop that industry right

here in Trinidad and Tobago? And my last question I said—[*Crosstalk*]

**Madam Chairman:** Let Mr. Seemungal go, because he might forget what he wanted to ask. [*Laughter*]

**Mr. Seemungal:** “I done forget.”

**Madam Chairman:** Hold yours, make a note.

**Mr. Seemungal:** No. Let her continue.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** It is a follow up on the same thing. It is the issue of when you are talking again about the whole, you know, when we are looking at the re-engineering. We know your 53 organizations would—the 53 regional Carnival committees which were spoken about, got their subventions an so on, and you would have already probably given those subventions. My concern is, was there any, in trying to do things differently, because at our last meetings you talked about doing things differently, and was there requirement for more detailed submissions to the NCC. In particular did you try to look at the request into a more value-based type budget breakdown so that, you know, you were seeing the value for money in these subventions? That is my last question.

**11.20 a.m.**

**Mr. Sylvester:** Yes, as a matter of fact, Minister, each Regional Carnival Committee, outside of having to present audited accounts—and the subventions have not yet gone out for this Carnival but preparations are taking place—we have officers going to the different regional Carnival Committees, attend their meetings and have them do evaluations, document it and send them back to NCC, so it is a holistic approach in terms of accountability for the use of the Government funds.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** But in an informed value based, “eh”.

**Mr. Sylvester:** Very value based. The value for money in terms of what we are getting for the money we expend to the committees.

**Mrs. Seepersad-Bachan:** Thank you, Madam Chairman.

**Mr. Seemungal:** I just wanted to bring some closure to the NCBA in looking at their estimates for 2013, and enquiring as to whether or not you have further details of these listings and requests that they have made of you? It is attached to your letter dated September 17, 2012. Now, you do not need to go through the whole—

**Mr. Moe:** For the breakdown?

**Mr. Seemungal:** Yes, if you all are happy with this budget and also if you request of the NCBA further details. Take, for example, they have for fees \$200,000, but fees, what are they? What are they paying with it? What are they using it for? Then there is another one, \$10 million for—

**Mr. Moe:** I am trying to find the document.

**Mr. Seemungal:** Okay, while you are looking for it—why I am asking this is because I just want to bring some conclusion to this part, because NCBA, I gather, is an NGO which is receiving funding from you all, and governed under their Constitution, I am not sure if an Act—but in the Ministry of Food Production, for instance, we have similar challenges by funding NGO organizations to help us.

It is a known fact that, generally, the Ministries or the institutions giving the funding cannot do it by themselves and you engage other stakeholders to help you. What we have started doing in the Ministry, and maybe the new board can look at that as well, is started engaging them by way of a Memorandum of Understanding. All we are asking for in the Ministry is that they give us a breakdown of how they are spending our funds and we want details of it. You can do whatever you want with other moneys that you have raised otherwise but the \$10 million or the \$12 million that we are giving you, we want full breakdown of that because that is taxpayers’ money. Whatever they raise otherwise may or may not belong to the taxpayers, we do not know.

Why I am asking you this is that we can then, maybe, in the future—might be too short for Carnival

now—start making consideration for if the Act does not provide for it, but you all, I am sure under your board, you can provide for it, so that when you enter into these arrangements with these NGOs, because this one is an application for \$34 million for 2013, which is quite a lot of money, that we account for every single cent of it, and not account for it in broad terms. For instance, training of judges, \$300,000; I am not even sure what type of training this is and how detailed is the training, what and who is receiving the benefits out of it.

Just one or two areas that really struck me: for instance, committee, \$1.3 million; what is that about? Stipends, \$1.1 million; who is being paid that? How much they are receiving? Because very often you find that these organizations that receive a lot of funding, the stipend, sometimes, is even more than the President's salary, so we have to be very careful as to how we are spending taxpayers' money. That is all I am asking. When we see you next year, maybe by that time you would come with more details as to what the funding that you allocate to these organizations, how are they spending it. Not just for NCBA, "eh", there are many smaller organizations receiving funding of \$50,000, \$100,000, or \$120,000; and they would give you a broad scale audited financial report.

Yes, it is good, but who understands. A layman like myself trained in law who did a crash course in accounting in law school, I really do not understand these things that well. If you tell me that you bought a pan of biscuits, ten boxes of soft drink, or whatever, I can understand that, or you paid travelling for so and so and this is the breakdown, I can understand that. So, the point here is this, not just NCBA who receives a lot of money, but the small organizations start looking at the different method of auditing what they are spending your money for, and the MoU that you would be entering with them is not for whatever funds that they have, but for your money and your money alone, a detailed expenditure as to your money and the people's money.

**Mr. Moe:** Just to give a response as to what occurs, I cannot say for sure that in every respect we monitor every line item, but I can say, we are provided with a detailed account of, maybe, 85 to 90 per cent of the funding. If only because they do submit—the funding by and large is for prize moneys or assistance to groups or individuals, and they do submit a fairly detailed expenditure listing. After, when these funds are disbursed, we get the names of the groups, the chequing account and the cheque number; we get all the details that are necessary as it relates to the major part of it.

We know exactly how the prize moneys are spent, who got first prize, who got second prize or so, we have a very detailed coming out of the groups for that amount. Now, I cannot say that in the areas of administrative expenses that I have looked in detail to see how that has gone in rents and so on, but in terms of 80 per cent of the funding, it is really for prizes and for assistance, and they do provide us with a very detailed listing.

**Mr. Seemungal:** I understand that part of it, because to apply for funding you must submit some form of detail. What I am speaking of, after the cause.

**Mr. Moe:** What you are talking about is after?

**Mr. Seemungal:** What they are sending for you, is whether they are sending back bills or receipts for that funding that they have received?

**Mr. Moe:** They do provide us with a total listing of those who receive the funds, what are the cheque numbers, what are the details of the cheques. They do provide us with that detail and it is always available. Now, as I said, in administrative expenses and so on, I may not be able to say we have looked at it, but certainly as it relates to the major part of it.

**Madam Chairman:** Dr. Browne?

**Dr. Browne:** Thank you, Madam Chair, I am becoming a bit concerned because we almost appear to be slipping back into a sense of comfort with regard to what currently obtains, and given the submissions that

have been made to this committee, including meetings with some very concerned Carnival stakeholders and some, I would have to say, very serious allegations that have been made or, let us say concerns that have been raised on the issue of accountability, particularly focused on the NCBA.

I would want to state that there is a world of difference between financial statement, whether or not it is described as an audited financial statement, there is a world of difference between that and a forensic audit of an entity or organization, and I am concerned that we appear to be morphing a bit between the two. Because we on this committee did look at some of those financial statements, and Members highlighted some very serious gaps and deficiencies within those statements and the issue of detail, so I do not know if the answer is asking for more Bills and so on, but I just want to reiterate the recommendation or the call for a forensic audit. I think that might assist the NCBA and take some of this burden off their shoulders and would also bring some relief to those stakeholders that continue to express those types of concerns.

But, Madam Chair, I just want to touch on an issue that you raised a little while ago, because I think it is a very, very important issue, and that is the T&TCIC, and I did note the Chairman smiled a bit when referring to, what I believe was described as some of the inroads or additional contributions now being made by a number of Ministries, sectors and so on. I mentioned this at a prior meeting and I do so again, we must look towards the NCC to demonstrate and bring leadership to the sector, particularly with regard to Carnival, a very important part of this country and its DNA depends on your leadership and direction.

I would say that if the NCC has not been sufficiently consulted in this current trend in the evolution of this entity and these managers, I see there is a manager apparently being proposed, of Carnival, then that should be an additional wake-up call for the NCC, and the committee should waste no time. I know there may be plans for discussions with stakeholders, but this is an area of concern. It can have a fundamental impact on how Carnival is managed and administered in the future.

So, I just want to encourage you, Madam Chair and your Commission to waste no time in really pulling your concerned, stakeholders together and bringing that leadership to the table. Yes, you do fall under the ambit, let us say, of a Government Ministry and within a particular system, but I think the stakes are too high and the concerns are too broad for us to take a back seat in this matter, and I just really want to sincerely encourage you to ensure that while final decisions may not have yet been made, the NCC is really able to represent its stakeholders and the interest of Carnival in the most forthright manner, because we might be moving into an era of greater overlap and, you know. You know how these things can go with regard to mandates in the future, because I would really want to know where the mandate would end with regard to NCC and where it would begin with regard to this T&TCIC, because Carnival is specifically referenced as part of their proposed mandate.

Just two more very brief issues that I would want to touch on. One is, it was raised before, the view by some that the bikinis and beads trend continues unabated and that the NCC in taking on its leadership mantle might be able to find some strategic or innovative ways over time to encourage a different type of enrichment of the Carnival experience or what we have to offer to both visitors and locals. I would wish to hear, maybe get some brief insight into the thinking of the commission in terms of whether it has such a role, whether it is interested in serving such a purpose and some of the instruments or incentives that can be used to achieve that turn of the tide. So I am interested in that.

And the final, just quick question has to do with Tobago Carnival. I know we are talking about regional Carnivals and so. I have to confess that I am very confused with respect to Tobago Carnival, because every month I hear something different. So, I do not know where we currently stand and what is the view of the NCC with respect to Tobago Carnival or Carnivals as it were, so maybe you can enlighten me on that?

**Ms. Demas:** Let me first address the issue of Tobago Carnivals and then I would ask Mr. Lopez to speak

about the—encouraging a different type of enrichment. Again, the NCC is somewhat constrained legislatively, in that the Tobago House of Assembly Act, Schedule V specifically provides that Carnival activities or cultural activities fall under the ambit of the THA. So even though it is the National Carnival Commission of Trinidad and Tobago, in effect there is very little, I think, that the NCC can do. We have to be very careful not to tread on the territory of the Tobago House of Assembly.

**Dr. Browne:** From your lips to God's ears.

**Ms. Demas:** Let me ask Mr. Lopez to address the—

**11.35 a.m.**

**Mr. Lopez:** Madam Chair, through you, in response to your concerns about the beads and bikini that has been with for us for some time now, it is part of our Carnival and we have to understand that the big bandleaders are not interested in the art and the theater of Carnival, and are more interested in selling an experience, and what they sell for Carnival. What we are dealing with for Carnival, it is more a street party where you have this all inclusive and you have the different “wee wee trucks”. So it is an experience, it has nothing to do with the costume, costume is just a part of the experience and what we have to do is to continue in developing the regional Carnival.

Our Carnival stands out from the rest because of our traditional mas and we cannot allow the beads and bikini to take over. Yes, we need to pay some attention in that area, but because Carnival comes from the private enterprise, the bandleaders are all private, they come up with their own portrayals, they start to market what they are bringing for the year 2011 and I do not know if the NCC or the NCBA could direct a band and tell them “Well you have to bring clothes and not beads and bikini.” There are also bands outside there that have continued to bring what we know as mas, in terms of costumes and designs, and the way it has evolved over the years, you have a band which has a name, but that band has sections out, everybody. There is a different section that makes up that band without calling any name of any particular band, you pay because I am established with my name, but when you see that band on the road, if it is 20 sections, is 20 different designers, you understand.

So, there are some challenges, I am not saying that challenges in the sense of how the Carnival evolve, but we at the NCC have a responsibility to look at our creative export and deal with it in a particular way so that everybody could benefit from it.

**Dr. Browne:** Just a brief supplemental. Again, and I listened carefully to and I appreciate the response, but again this is where the issue of leadership comes in. I do not think anyone is saying that the NCC should tell bands what to produce, or what type of material to use, or what type of costumes to develop. But again, this is a creative sector and therefore I am seeing some very bright people on the Commission. So, I would want to feel that, this is why I ask the question, do we recognize this as an issue? Is this a concern, and if so, I would want to just as a member of this committee and a concerned member of the public, be reassured that these bright minds are tuned towards this issue and that they are some instruments or intervention that over time can help change the trend which is what it is.

I understand that these bands are selling an experience as has been said, but that experience is only an experience for some and the thinking is we can make that an experience for more. There are citizens and other persons who would get involved and more involved in a broader type of carnival. As it is, it seems to be getting more and more narrow, and while I am taking the Chair's time and generosity, I want to throw in, when we talk about selling an experience, the issue of vending at the same time, because the concerns also impact on the vending experience. Carnival is an experience for many types of persons, not just the players, but also the vendors. I know there are issues and discussions that were proposed with the Mayor of Port of Spain and there are some territory and lines of responsibility and so on, but again, in this regard, whatever the specific role and responsibility of the Mayor might be or the Mayors might be, I would want as leaders in this

sector, the NCC, to have a sound and broad vision of what the vending experience would entail in a proper carnival and find ways to persuade and work with others to achieve that. So it is both for the mas players, the viewers of the mas and the other participants in the experience. That is just my thought.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you very much. There are a couple comments that I would like to make on this and I think I need to start by saying that it is really heartening to hear what you, Madam Chairman, have said, because it gives the impression that the NCC recognizes its role in taking leadership and direction, to borrow the phrase, of the carnival experience. But I would like to point out that it is all well and good to say that Carnival now has become more a matter of the experience, but if we are thinking in terms of making this a marketable experience, it has to appeal to someone who is going to buy into the experience. I am sure everybody is aware that what passes now for our Carnival parade goes live on the Net. So that Trinidad Carnival as far as people outside are concerned, is beads, flesh and feathers.

Now, does the NCC have a role in trying to make that an experience that could be more profitable in terms of our external exposure? I mean an experience that people would literally pay on pay per view to share. Now, I think that somewhere the NCC has a fund of money that is supposed to be paid out to the artistes for their intellectual property that has never really been disbursed—*[Interruption]*

**Mr. Moe:** I am not aware of that fund, but in terms—*[Interruption]*

**Madam Chairman:** I have been told that at some point money was collected for intellectual property that was never disbursed.

**Mr. Moe:** From my knowledge, all moneys that might relate to intellectual property which will come from broadcasters and so on and so on, that goes directly to the interest group. They negotiate with the various artistes and so on—*[Interruption]*

**Madam Chairman:** The interest groups meaning the NCBA?

**Mr. Moe:** The NCBA, yes.

**Madam Chairman:** Okay, so Mr. Lopez will tell me about that later on—

**Mr. Moe:** Yes, he may be able to tell you more about that.

**Madam Chairman:**—what happened to that. So that is an area of my concern, because I think that if the NCC approached the bandleaders from that point of view where it is going to literally have an impact on their pockets, they might be more inclined to provide the kind of experience and exposure that would bring in this kind of revenue.

I am also very interested in the problem raised by Dr. Browne, of the vending. The street vendors, the spectators have to be taken into account, because they are an essential part of the exercise. I recognized, as has been said in the response, that this is a matter that has to be discussed with the Mayor in terms of where the vendors are allowed to be. But in discussing this with the City Corporation, one has to be mindful of the fact that if the vendors are on the pavement, the spectators are forced to be in the band on the street. So there must be designated places along a designated route, so that people can make their provisions and know that it is the quality and quantity of what they are offering that will determine what money they make as to whether they get lucky and bands pass.

Now, in addition, you cannot be selling people stalls to vend and at the same time having 10 foods trucks in a band. Let us face it, and this has got to be within your control, to say that a band is allowed a maximum of so many vehicles, such as size on the road, because it really is impossible to cross from one side of the road to the other with these tremendous large jargonauts coming at you. I do not think that this is part of improving the experience for the people who have actually paid their thousands of dollars to jump up, please, and there is the other problem of the convenience trucks. Come on. Arrange some other mechanism, but you have got to get all of this traffic out of the bands, because until you can do that, until you can arrange the proper accommodation for the vendors, you are not going to remove the pedestrians from inside the

band.

How come in Crop Over you do not have people “winning” on “winners” inside the band? You know how, they have a law that says there is a fine for doing that. Consider all of these things. You have got to amend your legislation anyhow, and once you start talking about considering it and letting people know that you are considering it, it might help them to adjust their own behaviour and realize that you have got to choose, either to participate or to spectate. And if you are going to spectate, choose whether you are going to go into the Grandstand or the Northstand or stand on the road side, but you cannot spectate inside the band obstructing the people who have paid their moneys to play. That is the vendors.

The route: When you have bands of 5,000 people and you have about, how many? You have got about four of that size and then you have got the 1,000 and the 2,000 bands. If you line those bands up along the current designated route, what you have, a standstill. You have to have a longer route for these bands. You have two days and how many bands at an hour each to cross the stage, that is more hours than you have, if you had three shifts of bands going across the stage, it would be 48 bands, come on. I do not think that these things are outside of the competence of the Commission to deal with.

I am so glad to hear that on the agenda it is getting all of the stakeholders to talk, a wonderful idea, but I would really like to suggest that some of that talking should go on before Carnival of this year, so that at least there are some things that you could try out to see how they would work. It is simple, you have an agreement and people do not agree to it, they cross the stage no points. And they will remember. But something has to be done because it is spoiling the experience for the participants as well as the spectators, and if you want to forget the voyeurs from overseas, which I do not think is a good idea because what you really need to be doing is giving them the sort of vicarious experience that makes them yearn to come and be part of it, and with the best will in the world, beads, flesh and feathers “ain’t where it’s at”.

**11.50 a.m.**

This is just what I would like to leave with you, and I want to remind people, annual administrative reports are supposed to come into Parliament every year. That is what annual means. We have never had one from you all—never. The fact that you are not alone is not helpful. *[Laughter]* We would like you to set the example, if possible. So help us. Give us an annual report. Help us to make this an enriching experience.

Would anybody else like to have the floor? If not, would you like to make any closing remarks?

**Ms. Demas:** Madam Chair, I would like to ask Mr. Lopez to address many of the salient issues you mentioned in relation to the vending and the route, and then I would make closing remarks.

**Mr. Lopez:** Madam Chairman, in relation to the route, I think what you have said there, we agree with you and we are in consultation with the powers that be, which means the licensing authority and the police, who have the responsibility of issuing the permits for the routes. We are also asking for an extension of the routes. We are working out that. We are also asking to try something new in reversal of the routes because you are so correct, that the amount of trucks—utilities trucks and music trucks—that are on the route, if you line them up we have a standstill. So we are working to see how for 2013 we could start to deal with some of the low hanging fruits where these things are concerned.

In terms of the vendors, while we at NCC have the responsibility for the overall Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago, the fact remains that there are some issues of territorial boundaries that we have to deal with. What the NCC is basically responsible for in terms of the vending, is what is around the Savannah, and from the whole of Port of Spain, from the Memorial Park right down to the avenue, it is the responsibility of the Mayor. We have had many conversations to discuss how we could deal with that, and actually selling of the pavement; not selling booths as such, but selling the spots on the pavement. It is a conversation that is ongoing and we hope to have some kind of resolve brought to it.

So, yes, we agree that the length of time a band would stay on stage, in the rules of the NCBA,

before we had an hour, and recognizing that if we give one band an hour to pass on stage, it does not make any sense. We have revised that and we are working together with the NCC. We have submitted our rules and regulations for review. So these things that you have spoken about there, this new board is paying close attention to some of those issues and we have started to work closely with that.

In terms of the copyright, Madam Chair, I am not aware that the NCC has any fund put away to pay copyrights for us. We, as the interest groups, are the ones who would negotiate our own copyrights, and the NCBA have paid copyrights up to 2010. We have to work out and finalize the copyrights in 2011 and 2012, which is a tedious exercise, Madam Chair, in terms of creating a video, doing magazines, all these different things that you get rights from. In the recent past we have stopped producing legal DVDs because when we have a high production cost to produce a DVD, on Ash Wednesday morning other DVDs are on the market and it is a challenge to police, as you may be well aware of some of the challenges the artistes have had in the past.

So, Madam Chair, your concerns are valid and we at the NCC are going to ensure to work to see how best we can start to have the process to work with for Carnival 2013 and beyond.

**Madam Chairman:** Thank you. Just let me clarify one point. My point about extending the route is not to accommodate the vehicles. My point is to get rid of some of those vehicles and make more space for people to play mas.

One other question that I forgot to ask: the Carnival Institute, is it alive? Is it to be resurrected, or what? Because I notice that there is rent here for it still.

**Mr. Moe:** Well, it's alive, first of all, and what we have done is we had instituted a review for which a report is now under consideration by a consultant as to how we go forward. There is a three-year plan that is to be rolled out and we hope to look at that in 2013. One of the major obstacles to doing all that we want to do is the fact that the institute is now housed in a place which is really too cramped and we are looking for new space for them.

But, yes, there is a plan and you would hear more about before the end of the year. We are now considering what the consultant has said at the board level and, certainly, we will implement some of those things before the end of 2012.

**Madam Chairman:** So that this space is basically warehouse space that you are paying for.

**Mr. Moe:** Yes. They have acquired a lot material and so on. Not only that, the staff is small and we have to look at all of those considerations. And we want to create a kind of link between the public. The public does not know, really, all the good things that the institute is doing and we think that we need to expose the public to it.

**Madam Chairman:** Do you not have a television station?

**Mr. Moe:** No, Ma'am.

**Madam Chairman:** I thought it belonged to the NCC. Well, rent a little space on it and tell people what you are doing, "nuh". Since it carries your name, piggy-back on it.

**Mr. Moe:** Will do. *[Laughter]*

**Madam Chairman:** Well, if we have no further statements, Madam Chair, would you like to have a closing word?

**Ms. Demas:** Yes, Madam Chair and Members of the committee, as a first time offender I must say that I have found this interchange very instructive and I wish to assure this committee that certainly the NCC will submit annual administrative reports. We will also strive for a much greater level of transparency and accountability on the part of the NCC and, indeed, on behalf of the Carnival bodies. We have taken note of the need for wider consultation and, indeed, we will include the vendors and spectators, as well as perhaps advance the timing of the consultation, having regard to plans that are afoot. Overall, I think that the NCC is

well poised now, if I may say so, to provide the requisite leadership which is so essential in order for us to really take the Carnival forward.

So I want again to thank you all very much for giving us this opportunity to clarify all the requisite issues. Thank you.

**Mr. Lewis:** Thank you, Madam Chairman. I just want to, as acting Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, assure you that the Ministry feels very assured with the new board in place that the NCC is going to take Carnival to the next level. In fact, at the installation of the board the hon. Minister gave NCC the mandate that the focus should move away from just Carnival, the event, to Carnival the industry, and I am sure that in the ensuing months, Members of the committee here would see the fruits of the labour of the new commission.

I wanted to thank you also for some of the recommendations that you have given to us, both as the commission and as the Ministry, and we want to assure you that we are going to take these seriously on board. Thank you very much, Chairman and Members of the committee.

**Madam Chairman:** I wish to thank you and hope that that includes your annual report too. Thank you all for coming, for your cooperation. This has been enlightening and entertaining. Thank you very much indeed.

*Officials of the NCC depart meeting.*

**12.07 p.m.:** *Meeting adjourned.*