

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
OFFICIAL REPORT

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TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO WHICH OPENED ON JANUARY 13, 1992

SESSION 1992—93

VOLUME 42

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 12, 1993

The House met at 1.45 p.m.

PRAYERS

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, I have granted leave of absence to the Member for Barataria/San Juan, (Hon. Linda Baboolal) and to the Member for Siparia, (Mr. Sahid Hosein) from today's sitting.

POLICE COMPLAINTS AUTHORITY BILL

Bill to establish the Police Complaints Authority and for matters incidental thereto, brought from the House of Representatives [*The Minister of National Security*] read the first time.

BREACH OF PRIVILEGE

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, I shall now rule on the matter raised by the hon. Member for Tobago East.

At the last sitting of the House, on Friday, February 5, 1993, I granted leave to the hon. Member for Tobago East to raise a matter as a question of privilege under Standing Order 27 of this House. In raising the matter, the hon. Member referred to an article appearing at page 1 of the *Trinidad Guardian* dated January 24, 1993 under the caption, "Manning to A.N.R.—It's War."

He submitted that the words complained of amounted to threats and/or intimidation of a Member of the House. He further submitted that the words were an attempt to influence him to act in a certain way by offering to treat him in a certain way if he so acted. This he argued was an attempt to influence his conduct in Parliament by threat of punishment or injury and accordingly the Prime Minister and Member for San Fernando East was guilty of a breach of privilege.

His submission was that the essence of democracy is that there should be freedom of speech in the House and in the exercise of such freedom, a Member should not be under any threat or intimidation. He quoted several passages from the 20th Edition of *May's Parliamentary Practice* in support of his submissions, and moved that the matter should be referred to the Committee of Privileges.

Breach of Privilege
[MADAM SPEAKER]

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Standing Order 27 (4) provides:

"No debate shall ensue on a Motion under this Order but if the Speaker decides that a *prima facie* case has been made out he shall so state and refer the matter to the Committee of Privileges."

Attempts to intimidate a Member in his parliamentary conduct by threats, as well as attempts by improper means to influence Members in their parliamentary conduct may be considered contempt under breach of privilege.

The passages relied upon by the Member in support of his submissions give some insight into the types of matters which may constitute a threat, intimidation, or an attempt to influence by improper means, warranting reference by the Speaker to the Committee of Privileges.

I have been guided by these matters as well as my own research into matters of a similar nature and find that the matters of which he complained in no way constituted a threat, intimidation or attempt to influence the Member by improper means.

In the circumstances, I rule that a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege has not been made out and accordingly the matter cannot be referred to the Committee of Privileges.

PAPERS LAID

1. Report of the Auditor General on the accounts of the Trinidad and Tobago Export Development Corporation for the year ended December 31, 1991. [*Minister of Local Government (Hon. K. Valley)*]
2. Report of the Auditor General on the accounts of the National Institute of Higher Education (Research, Science and Technology) for the year ended December 31, 1985. [*Hon. K. Valley*]
3. Report of the Auditor General on the accounts of the National Institute of Higher Education (Research, Science and Technology) for the year ended December 31, 1986. [*Hon. K. Valley*]

Papers 1 to 3 to be referred to the Public Accounts Committee.

4. The Traffic Control Regulations [*The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. C. Imbert)*]

Written Answer To Question

Friday, February 12, 1993

1.55 p.m.

WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION

**Agricultural Tribunal
(Allowances)**

The following question was asked by Mr. Subhas Panday (Naparima):

109. Could the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources state:

- (a) The number of matters which have been pending at the Agricultural Tribunal of Trinidad and Tobago (North) for each of the following years:-
 - (i) 1990
 - (ii) 1991; and
 - (iii) 1992?
- (b) How much allowance is provided to each member of the said Tribunal per sitting?
- (c) How many sittings of the said Tribunal have been held for the year 1992?
- (d) How many sittings of the said Tribunal have been aborted for the year 1992?
- (e) What are the average lengths of adjournment of matters of the said Tribunal?
- (f) What is the date of filing of the oldest matter now engaging the attention of the said Tribunal?
- (g) How many matters have been heard and determined by the said Tribunal for the year 1992?
- (h) Have members of the said Tribunal been awarded their allowances for their attendance of sittings of the said Tribunal which were either not held or aborted during 1992?
- (i) If the answer to (h) is in the affirmative, could the Minister indicate how many members were given their allowances and how much did each member receive?
- (j) What steps, if any, are being taken to rectify this situation?

Vide end of sitting for written answer.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

**Impounded Motor Vehicles
(Number of)**

110. Mr. Subhas Panday (*Naparima*) asked the Minister of National Security:

- (a) Could the Minister state the number of privately owned motor vehicles which were confiscated and impounded by the police as a result of the events of July 27, 1990?
- (b) How many of the said motor vehicles are still in custody of the police?
- (c) What steps, if any, are being taken for the return and/or compensation to the owners of these said motor vehicles?

The Minister of National Security (Hon. Russell Huggins): Madam Speaker, I have advised the hon. Member for Naparima that the vehicles subject to this question are also subject to pending court proceedings. As a result, having regard to the provisions of Standing Order 18(1)(g)(vi), the answer to this question cannot be given.

Mr. S. Panday: Madam Speaker, what I asked was for the number of privately owned vehicles confiscated and impounded by the police. I wonder if the hon. Attorney General is indicating that every one of those vehicles is engaging the attention of the High Court.

Mr. Sobion: Yes, the subject vehicles, as I indicated, are all subject to pending court proceedings.

**St. Croix Road
(Repairs)**

111. Mr. Subhas Panday (*Naparima*) asked the Minister of Works and Transport:

- (a) Is the Minister aware that the condition of the St. Croix Road between the 2 1/2 m.m. and the 5 m.m. has deteriorated so badly that the said road has now become almost impassable?
- (b) What immediate steps are being taken to repair and/or resurface the said road?

The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Colm Imbert): Madam Speaker, the Minister of Works and Transport is not aware that the St. Croix Road between the 2 1/2 m.m. and the 5 m.m. has become impassable. The Minister is advised that the road is in a fair condition.

Repair and maintenance works, including repairs to the road surface, were carried out on the St. Croix Road in 1992 at a total cost of \$112,000. In 1993, the same level of maintenance work is programmed to be undertaken on this road. Available funding did not allow this road to be permanently resurfaced in 1992 and based on the funds available in 1993, it appears that the permanent resurfacing of this road will have to be deferred.

Mr. S. Panday: What steps are being taken temporarily to relieve the residents of St. Croix Road?

Mr. Imbert: As indicated in the answer, the same level of maintenance work, that is \$112,000 that was carried out in 1992, is programmed to be undertaken on this road in 1993.

Mr. S. Panday: He is doing that because it is Naparima.

**Justice Crane's Matter
(Expenses)**

113. Mr. Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj (*Couva South*) asked the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs:

Would the Minister state to this honourable House:

- (a) The total fees and expenses incurred to date by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in respect of the High Court matter brought by Justice Richard Crane giving all material particulars of the fees and expenses?
- (b) The amount of moneys the Government estimates it would spend in respect of the legal fees and related expenses in its appeal in the matter against the decision of the Court of Appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council?

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Hon. Keith Sobion): Madam Speaker, by both constitutional proceedings and judicial review proceedings, Mr. Justice Crane challenged the decision of the Chief Justice and the Judicial and Legal Service Commission in or about October 1990, that he should cease to preside in court and that a representation should be made to the President that the question of the removal of Mr. Justice Crane be investigated.

These court proceedings were decided against Mr. Justice Crane by Mr. Justice Blackman on March 21, 1991, after some twenty-three days of hearing. Mr. Justice Crane appealed, and the Court of Appeal, by majority decision, decided the appeal in his favour on November 20, 1992, after some thirty-six days of hearing.

Oral Answers To Questions
[HON. K. SOBION]

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The total fees and expenses incurred to date by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in respect of the High Court matter brought by Justice Richard Crane is \$2,603,114.

I give the House all material particulars of fees and expenses:

- (1) With respect to the constitutional motion and application for judicial review:
 - (i) Legal fees for attorneys representing the Attorney General, the Judicial and Legal Service Commission and the Tribunal \$848,800
 - (ii) VAT in respect of (i) above \$ 93,750
- (2) With respect to Civil Appeals Nos. 58 and 59 of 1991
 - (i) Legal fees for attorneys representing the Attorney General, the Judicial and Legal Service Commission and the Tribunal \$1,448,000
 - (ii) VAT in respect of (i) above \$ 198,900
 - (iii) Cost of record of Appeal \$ 13,664

The amount of money the Government estimates it would spend in respect of the legal fees and related expenses in its appeal in the matter against the decision of the Court of Appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council is \$797,000.

The main issue for determination by the Judicial Council is whether a judge has a right to a hearing by the Judicial and Legal Service Commission before the Commission makes a representation to the President seeking to have the judge removed and whether the failure to have a hearing is unconstitutional. This issue is of critical importance to the constitutional jurisprudence of Trinidad and Tobago as it could have a direct bearing on the operations of the other independent service commissions.

Mr. Maharaj: I do not know whether I got the figure for the Court of Appeal hearing; what was it?

Mr. Sobion: \$1,660,564.

2.05 p.m

The following question stood on the Order paper in the name of Miss Hulsie Bhaggan (Chaguanas):

Assistance to Orphanages

117. Would the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Social Services indicate:

- (a) What financial and technical assistance was given to orphanages in Trinidad and Tobago in 1992?
- (b) The number and capacity of orphanages in Trinidad and Tobago?
- (c) Would the Minister provide details of support (if any) given to orphans who have to leave the orphanage after having attained the required age?

The Minister of Local Government and Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Kenneth Valley): I would ask that this question be deferred for one week as the Minister is not here today.

Question, by leave, deferred.

Pierre/Tahadille Multi-Cultural Complex

118. Miss Hulsie Bhaggan (Chaguanas) asked the Minister of Works and Transport:

- (a) Would the Minister indicate whether his ministry has completed the assessment of the Pierre/Tahadille Multi-Cultural Complex?
- (b) If the answer is in the affirmative, what are the results of that assessment?

The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Colm Imbert): Madam Speaker, the answer to part (a) is yes, the Ministry of Works and Transport has completed assessment of the Pierre/Tahadille Multi-Cultural complex.

Answer to part (b): The assessment carried out indicates that the works were adequately supervised by the consultants and that as a result the work undertaken on the project so far has been properly done.

A number of items of work are still incomplete. These include: Fencing of the compound; roads; car parks; multi-purpose court; and surface finishes, including painting.

This additional work is estimated to cost just over \$200,000.

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WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION

Foreign Missions

The following question was asked by Miss Hulsie Bhaggan (Chaguanas):

- 119.** Would the Minister of Foreign Affairs indicate the locations, number of staff and details of expenditure for each of our foreign missions abroad for the year 1992?

Vide end of sitting for written answer.

ORAL ANSWER TO QUESTION

The following question stood on the Order Paper in the name of Mr. John Humphrey (St. Augustine):

**Muslimeen Appeal Case
(Estimated Expenses)**

- 123.** (a) Could the Attorney General state to this honourable House what sum of money, giving all particulars of fees and expenses, it anticipates the state would spend in legal fees and related expenses in the appeal by it to the Court of Appeal against the decision of Justice Clebert Brooks in the constitutional proceedings brought against the state by the members of the Jamaat Al Muslimeen in respect of the amnesty granted to them by the state?
- (b) Could the Attorney General indicate whether the Government intends to retain the services of both Mr. George Newman, QC and Mr. Ewart Thorne, SC to argue the appeal?
- (c) If the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, could he explain why it is necessary to retain two Senior Counsel to put the arguments before the Court of Appeal on behalf of the state?
- (d) Could the Attorney General tell this honourable House how much money he estimates the Government can save if it retains the services of one Senior Attorney instead of retaining two?

Question, by leave, deferred.

**ADJOURNMENT MOTION
(LEAVE)**

Water Shortage

Mr. Trevor Sudama (Oropouche): Madam Speaker, I had written to you on this item, seeking leave of the House to raise a definite matter of urgent public importance.

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This matter has to do with the acute and desperate shortage, and in many areas the non-existence, of the supply of water in the majority of districts in Central and South Trinidad over the last three weeks.

I raise this matter, although I am aware of the Minister's initiatives and, indeed, his earnestness in attempting to resolve the problem. But there has been little relief in many areas of this country.

I raise this matter, Madam Speaker, because I believe it goes beyond the responsibility of one Minister. It is a systemic problem where a basic utility, supplying a basic need of life, operates in a state of continuous crisis with such disastrous consequences for thousands of citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

It is also a matter of governmental priority. What priority does this Government assign to the provision of a minimal supply of water for all our citizens in this country? In other words, to what extent is the Government willing to allocate resources for the purpose of having all people in Trinidad and Tobago receive a minimally adequate supply of water? So I say it goes beyond the question of the responsibility of one Minister.

Madam Speaker, the matter is definite because it has to do with a specific issue: The acute shortage of a basic necessity of life, which is water. I want to emphasize: There is no substitute for water. I hope that this gets home to the Government: There is no substitute for water. We could probably do without shelter or clothing, but we cannot do without food and water. Water is absolutely necessary for the very existence of life on earth.

The matter is urgent, Madam Speaker, because scores of communities and thousands of people have been without a drop of pipe-borne water for close to three weeks now. Scores of communities in Central and South and thousands and thousands of people have been without a drop of pipe-borne water. You can well understand the hazards and inconvenience which this state of affairs has given rise to.

The matter is urgent because people cannot find water to prepare food, to wash clothes or for the minimal requirements of hygiene—and we are talking about thousands of people. The consequences for health and the spread of epidemics are quite alarming.

A number of schools have had to be closed down in Central and South Trinidad and business places as well. In my own constituency of Oropouche there is an outbreak of gastroenteritis at the Tulsa Trace Hindu School, affecting about 50 pupils. This is directly related to the fact that there is no pipe-borne

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supply of water in that area and people have to do as best they can with whatever water is available. Gastroenteritis: If that is not urgent, I do not know what is.

Madam Speaker, you understand the trauma that thousands of people are going through in this country and the urgency of the matter. I am told that this is the age of Kalijug, but even in Kalijug you need water. I do not know who is the presiding deity of Kalijug.

Madam Speaker: Kalijug does not pertain to water; you misunderstand the principles of Kalijug.

Mr. Sudama: Yes, but even in Kalijug you need water.

I do not know who is the presiding deity of this age, whether it is “Kali-mai”, and who, in fact, is “Kali-mai”.

I want to add that with the Carnival celebrations around the corner, the requirement of a minimal water supply is very urgent. It has become more urgent in view of the public celebrations that we are going to have in a few days’ time.

Madam Speaker, this is a matter of public importance, and indeed, of national importance, because it affects a substantial section of the public, particularly in Central and South Trinidad and indeed parts of North, I am told, Madam Speaker, thousands and thousands of the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. It is a public matter. It has to be a national matter, and it is a national issue because of its widespread consequence and the fact that it is one of the basic necessities of life.

An issue does not necessarily have to affect every citizen in Trinidad and Tobago in the same way or with the same intensity to be a national issue. It does not have to. I am contending, Madam Speaker, that this is a national issue in view of the large sections of the population that are affected.

I have been advised that there is the problem of a malfunctioning pump at the Caroni-Arena Dam which pumps water from the river into that plant. A single malfunctioning pump which cannot be fixed for three weeks now, or almost three weeks. That problem has not been addressed and that shows you the nature of the continuing crisis that WASA constitutes in this country.

Today, Madam Speaker, I am proposing that we on this side will forego the increases in our salary. We would like those moneys to be diverted to the pump at the Caroni-Arena plant.

Mr. B. Panday: On the condition that you do the same.

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Mr. Sudama: This is unconditional on our part. We are willing to give up our salaries from now and for the next four years in the Parliament. We want no increases. We want that money diverted to WASA so that WASA would have some financial resources to do very minimal things, like repairing a pump. If Members opposite cannot have a pump repaired to provide water, why do they not resign as a Government?

Madam Speaker, my information—

Madam Speaker: I think the Member knows he just has to make out a *prima facie* case.

Mr. Sudama: Madam Speaker, I am speaking on the question of urgency.

I just want to point out that no releases have been made to date to local government bodies to provide truck-borne water in places where there is no pipe-borne water. Added to the problem that we have with the Caroni-Arena pump and the shortages in Central and South Trinidad, is the fact that we cannot even provide truck-borne water which compounds the acute water shortage in Trinidad and Tobago.

Therefore, I am saying that this is a national, public issue, it is a definite matter, it is an urgent matter of national importance, and I seek leave of the House to have this matter fully debated at a later point in time. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: I am not satisfied that it is a matter that falls within the ambit of Order No. 12. The Member may raise it if he wishes under Order No.11. *[Interruption]*

I should like also hon. Members to note that it is contempt to challenge the ruling of the Chair. I think the Members are aware of the procedures to be adopted for the challenging of the Chair.

**RENT RESTRICTION ACT
(RE-ENACTMENT AND VALIDATION)**

[SECOND DAY]

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question [February 5, 1993]:

Whereas the Rent Restriction (Re-enactment and Validation) Act, 1991 (No. 36 of 1991) re-enacted the provisions of the Rent Restriction Act, Chap. 59:50 save and except subsection (2) of section 1 which was repealed and replaced therein:

And Whereas it is provided by the said subsection (2) of section 1 as replaced, that the said Act shall continue in force until February 23, 1993 and may be continued in force for further periods of three years by resolution of Parliament;

Rent Restriction Act

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And Whereas the provisions of the Rent Restriction Act will expire on February 23, 1993 and it is expedient that they be continued in force for a further period of three years commencing February 24, 1993:

Be it resolved that the Rent Restriction Act, Chap. 59:50, shall continue in force for a period of three years commencing February 24, 1993 [Hon. V. Lasse]

Question again proposed.

Dr. Carl Singh (*Tabaquite*): Madam Speaker, the motion before this House which was being debated on the last day at the adjournment, refers to the Rent Restriction (Re-enactment and Validation) Act of 1991, re-enacting the provisions of the Rent Restriction Act, Chap. 59:50, save and except certain sections.

This is the time for the triennial entrance of this motion in this House for re-enactment of rent restriction. At our last sitting, the Member for Diego Martin East mentioned the word “Utopia”, as if it were really something very foreign to our vocabulary. The streets do not have to be paved with gold and silver to develop a Utopian society.

We in this lovely twin-island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago have all the ingredients of a truly Utopian society. We are geographically placed 10 degrees north of the equator, beautiful climatic conditions. We have a cultured, educated and intelligent people to man any type of society, all that can really move us to fulfil what may be termed our Utopian desires.

We are endowed with natural resources: Oil, gas, pitch, what have you. Over the years, we have also accrued a considerable amount of economic power, particularly from 1973 to 1983. I will read to you from a report. This is “A Report of the Committee Appointed by Cabinet to Review the Entire Programme of Government to Government Arrangements”, March 25, 1982. The composition of the committee, if I may mention, Madam Speaker:

- Mr. Lennox Ballah, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs;
- Miss A. Carrington, Treasury Solicitor, Ministry of Finance;
- Mr. Harold Atwell, Director of Project Analysis and Technical Co-operation;
- Prof. I.D.C. Imbert, Dean, Faculty of Engineering, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine;
- Mr. A. Tim Pow, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Resettlement;

— Mr. L. Farfan, Ministry of Works, Maintenance and Drainage.

On page 3, Madam Speaker, fourth paragraph reads:

“While for the first five years prior to 1973, total current receipts were \$1,833 million or an average of \$366 million a year, for the five years, 1974 to 1978, total current receipts were \$10,661 million, or an average of approximately \$2,132 million a year. The receipts in the second five-year period were six times the receipts of the first five-year period.”

That was the magnitude, the quantum of money collected over this period. In 1993, we do not have a safe and potable water supply for 1.2 million people. It is a shame, it is a disgrace.

Look at what is happening around Parliament today as a result of the manner in which the funds and the quantum of money were frittered away. We are having people parading around Parliament. This is one tandem of this Rent Restriction Act—food, clothing and shelter, or as my colleague the Member for Siparia would say, “capra, roti and makhan”.

The Member mentioned that \$15 million was to be collected by NHA from occupants of the Government-owned buildings. A pertinent question to that would be, where are these houses situated? Who are the parliamentary representatives of these areas? The answer would be quite obvious: \$15 million is not too bad to win those seats.

I go on to the historical background of this motion before the House. It has its genesis, as the Member for St. Augustine alluded, in war-time housing difficulties. In England, a Bill of similar intensity was passed some time in 1915 and it was consolidated in 1920.

In Trinidad and Tobago, then on colonial status, the Second World War was responsible for the institution of this same type of legislation in that with displacement, movement of troops, people were looking for accommodation. In order to protect the tenants of the population, Government passed legislation at that time because people were being evicted, high rents were charged and as a matter of protection, this Bill was passed in 1941. Initially, it was supposed to have been extended at yearly intervals, but then in 1949 it was extended to two-year periods and then it went right on to 1969, when it was extended for a three-year period, with a triennial type of refreshment for this piece of legislation.

Madam Speaker, it is for half a century that this piece of legislation has been refreshed, but it has not really solved the housing problem. I do not believe that

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this legislation will ever solve this problem that we are facing. It is true that housing is a problem experienced the world over. We are no different. Our population has also increased over the 50 years since the law has been instituted in these parts. But the mechanisms that are put in place are not going to solve this problem and, as the Minister who presented the motion for re-enactment suggested, further and more detailed preparation and changes are going to be presented to this House. I am sure that over the years the same argument and the same promises were made with nothing really happening.

As the situation stands today, what incentives are we really giving for people to build houses? I think, Madam Speaker, consulting with the Sou Sou Land expert, the Member for St. Augustine, may be a bit painful and distasteful, but this seems to be the way to go. We are not targeting the population that really needs housing. We have given incentives in our last budgetary provisions whereby persons who intend to invest money to the tune of \$250,000, plus the cost of land—a particular part of society is being targeted that can take care of itself. The persons who can buy a house for a quarter of a million dollars does not really need state funding for that. It is the low middle class and the lower class people who are really in desperate need of housing in our society, and this is the group that we are not assisting at all.

As the Member for St. Augustine suggested quite correctly, prepare the infrastructure, give a small loan and let persons build their dream houses a room at a time. It would cut down legal expenses and interest rates. And it would make him a proud citizen, he himself, having been part and parcel of the development of the house he is living in. This is probably the best way to go.

Now, the Government is giving tax relief to people who are going to invest \$250,000 to \$300,000 now to the year 2000. Okay. If you sell the house, or if you rent the house, there are no capital gains, no taxes on the interest. But what about the other persons, those who have already committed themselves the year before and were granted up to \$36,000 mortgage relief? This has been reduced to \$24,000. Those who have committed themselves to this type of arrangement, what is the situation? I would hope that the Minister would enlighten us on this aspect of this Act.

The Rent Restriction Act does not automatically bring every rented building within the ambit of the Rent Restriction Act. Persons have to apply and you are going to be admitted and rent will be determined. There are certain procedures that have to be followed. I am not sure if there are many applications or if the machinery is in place to deal with this. But this is a situation that exists and I

know from personal experience and otherwise that if you have a rented home and you want to repossess it, because of breaches, it would take ten years to get possession. In the process, the building would be of no use. It would be destroyed and you may have to rebuild.

Some measures must also be given for the repossession and not to create a protective tenancy after termination of the contractual obligation that the tenant can continue to remain on a statutory type of tenancy, where he is protected by law to continue to remain. These are measures which are obsolete, difficult to control and, at the same time add a tremendous amount of pressure on the persons responsible and who are willing to invest in low-income housing.

As I said at the beginning, this Re-enactment measure presents itself every three years. Let us put an end to this. We on this side are very cognizant of the fact that there are suffering people outside there who do not have a shelter over their heads. We are going to move in the direction of putting shelters over the heads of these people. We must do so with a human face, so that these people can pay the bills and I must also add at this stage that these are the people who are committed to building and are willing to pay and go through the sacrifices. We must not fritter away the state's funds over the years, as my friend the Member for St. Augustine has put it. We have really wasted it.

When the Member for St. Augustine mentioned that state revenues were frittered away, an example of this is in our present situation: People are marching around Parliament, crying out due to unemployment. We had a paper laid in Parliament recently where the Government acquired a building. This building is to house two ministries. We have policemen standing on the pavement in Princes Town, officers who are there to protect. What are we doing?

Now, the situation is that a price of \$6.3 million is going to be paid over a ten-year period but at 12.25 per cent bond issue. That is approximately \$800,000 a year in interest—I am not talking about repaying the capital. At the end of ten years, the owners of this would receive approximately \$8 million. Do you think they want to sell this? They would prefer to have this go on for the next hundred years. Any investment that can bring 12.25 per cent interest annually is a good investment anywhere.

Madam Speaker, we on this side would have to support the motion from the viewpoint that it is necessary in that government may not function illegally, as their inclination is at times. We do support the motion in the hope that measures would come to this House shortly to really address this housing situation that we are perennially facing.

Thank you.

Mr. Subhas Panday (*Naparima*): Madam Speaker, as the Member for Tabaquite has indicated, what is before us today is a piece of social legislation that appears to be very simple:

“Be it resolved” That the Rent Restriction Act, Chap. 59:50 shall continue... for a period of three years...”

One would think that this is a foregone conclusion, because since 1941 we have had on our statute books this Rent Restriction Act. After 31 years in Government and having boasted that they have built so many houses, I say that it is an indictment against the PNM to come to Parliament today to bring this piece of legislation.

The posture of the PNM has been one of free enterprise and let the market forces determine the price. But PNM governments have not been able to deal with the simple problem of housing to permit market forces to operate. Instead, they have come here, again, merely to extend the life of this legislation.

2.35 p.m.

The Member for St. Augustine and the Member for Tobago West indicated to this House that they have methods of dealing with the housing problem. The Member for St. Augustine was doing a good job and the Member for Tobago West has congratulated him on it. We humbly submit that if that line of development had taken place, the housing problem would not have been as acute as it is today. So coming with this motion today, I say is merely an indictment of the inefficiency of the PNM Government.

On the last occasion, the acting Attorney General came to this House and said that the Rent Restriction Act was to protect the tenants, the landlords in certain circumstances, and she made reference, to section 14(1) of the Rent Restriction Act. In that section, it states the grounds on which the landlord could eject a tenant. One would have thought that since this legislation has been on the statute books for such a long period, the Attorney General would have come to this House and gone through the section and indicate what were the strengths or weaknesses. But no, not at all. This Act has been engaging the attention of the courts for 40 or 50 years, but yet they come to the House merely to revalidate the whole Act.

Madam Speaker, I wish to draw the attention of this honourable House to section 14(e) and (f). I think it says that a landlord can recover possession of his house if the landlord requires it for his own use. Section 14(e) and (f) [*Interruption*] You keep on laughing with your arrogance. The people outside

there are waiting for you. That arrogance has you where you are. Algico. And I will tell you the kind of [*Interruption*] Oh, I am coming to you.

Madam Speaker, in those cases the landlord must have something called alternative accommodation, so that the tenant is really protected and taken care of by the Act. But when one goes down to section 14(l)—and look at it now, instead of behaving like that. Section 14(l) says—

"the dwelling-house, or the public or commercial building, or the building erected by the tenant on building land, as the case may be, is required by law to be demolished;"

So what happens is that the requisition of a building to be demolished by law is a ground for ejection. And people in the PNM, supporters of the PNM, have been acting corruptly in using this section against tenants. Let me tell you, Madam Speaker, how it operates. You want to find out? A current Minister of this Government is a beneficiary of the kind of corruption which I am going to talk about now. [*Interruption*] You have not heard yet, and you are objecting?

Madam Speaker, what they do is, these PNMites and PNM supporters, they go around hunting for relatively old buildings. They make their contacts and they approach the landlord and tell him, "What about that building?" He will say, "I cannot get the man out, I cannot get him out at all." He says, "I know. A building with tenants in it has no value." So he purchases the building at a very low price.

What he does then, Madam Speaker, he goes to the City Council, where he has his PNM contacts. He gets the City Council now to give him a demolition notice, a statutory demolition notice, or maybe the Ministry of Planning. And when he gets this demolition notice, he holds it in his hand and he waits. He files an ejection complaint against the tenant and he says that, "My ground to get this tenant out of this building, is that the building is required by law to be demolished." The building is good, you know, Madam Speaker. He goes to court. The poor tenant now tries to bring contrary evidence to show that the building is good, and the court on every occasion, so far as I know says, "The law says the building is to be demolished; I cannot go behind the notice." So he gets the tenants out. He then demolishes the building and in the same spot, puts up a new building and rents it for a very high price.

Further, in certain other instances, what he does, is that he gets this demolition notice, goes to court, gets the tenant out of the building and then does minor repairs, bringing in new tenants at high rents—exorbitant rents. Madam Speaker, this has been the case throughout Trinidad, and especially in the cities; and there

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are people in the PNM now, Ministers in the PNM, who are beneficiaries of that type of corruption.

Mr. Valley: Madam Speaker, Standing Order 36(5) says a Member cannot impute improper motives on the part of a Member of Parliament; and I am asking that if he is making the charge, he should state whom he is speaking about or make the evidence available to the House.

Mr. S. Panday: Madam Speaker, we have made evidence available to the House before, on many occasions, and they have sat on it. For example, on the Pegasus issue, we asked them how far the Fraud Squad has gone on the investigation.

Madam Speaker: The corruption that you referred to was with respect to the demolition of the buildings. That is what you were making your point on. Standing Order 36(5):

"No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Member of either Chamber"

You are imputing that the Ministers of the Government are the beneficiaries of corrupt actions. I think there is no evidence and I will ask the Member to withdraw that.

Mr. S. Panday: Madam Speaker, with the greatest respect to you, you said 36(5):

"No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Member..."

Mr. Mohammed: That is not imputing—that is an allegation.

Mr. S. Panday: "... of either Chamber". Madam Speaker, I am not pinpointing anybody. What I am saying is there are ministers who are beneficiaries...

Madam Speaker: And that is even worse, hon. Member. That is even worse, and I will ask the Member to withdraw it.

Mr. Maharaj: Do not withdraw it.

Dr. Rowley: You taking basket for him?

Mr. S. Panday: No! Madam Speaker, if you want me to call the name, I will call the name. Remember you asked for the name to be called.

Dr. Rowley: Madam Speaker, I await your ruling. The Member is asking, so I await your ruling.

Madam Speaker: Would the hon. Member withdraw the statement, please!

Mr. S. Panday: I can call the name. You do not want the name now? Okay, right, you do not want the name.

Dr. Rowley: Withdraw it.

Mr. Maharaj: You do not want to talk about the man who is running Fisheries too?

Mr. S. Panday: Madam Speaker, I have facts, and we will not degenerate like the PNM into *mauvais langue* to want to read into the record from the Drug Report in which the Member for Couva North has been exonerated.

Dr. Rowley: Madam Speaker, on a point of order...

Madam Speaker: The Member may pursue his point vehemently. But what I am asking him to do is to withdraw the allegation of corruption on the part of the Ministers and carry on with his contribution.

Mr. S. Panday: Madam Speaker, let me put it this way, Members of the Government are beneficiaries of the corruption of which I speak, that is, where their relatives have used this method in this Act...

Dr. Rowley: Madam Speaker, on a point of order...

Madam Speaker: The Member is getting into deeper and deeper waters. Will the Member please withdraw the statement?

Mr. S. Panday: The Members of the Government are beneficiaries of this type of corruption.

Dr. Rowley: Madam Speaker—

Mr. S. Panday: Madam Speaker—

Mr. Valley: Madam Speaker, really, we are asking...

Madam Speaker: I will adjourn this House for 10 minutes so that the Member may consider what he is going to do in the circumstances.

Dr. Rowley: Thank you, Madam Speaker, thank you very much.

2.45 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

3.05 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Madam Speaker: I call upon the hon. Member to kindly withdraw the statement.

Mr. S. Panday: Madam Speaker, as I was saying just before I closed, section 14(1)—

Madam Speaker: I have called upon the hon. Member to withdraw. Is the Member not withdrawing the statement?

Mr. S. Panday: No, please, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: All right. Hon. Members, in accordance with the Standing Order, this Member has shown disregard for the authority of the Chair. In the circumstances, I direct the hon. Members of this House to the conduct of Mr. Subhas Panday in his flagrant disregard of the authority of the Chair. I call upon the Leader of Government Business to move that the hon. Member be suspended.

The Minister of Local Government and Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Kenneth Valley): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the Member for Naparima, Mr. Subhas Panday, be suspended from the service of the House. *[Noise]*

Madam Speaker: Members in the public gallery, this is not a circus. You will conduct yourselves with dignity while you sit in this House.

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes 19, Noes 12

AYES

Valley, Hon. K.

Manning, Hon. P

Sobion, Hon. K.

Ramrekersingh, Hon. A.

Rowley, Dr. The Hon. K.

Eckstein, Hon. J.

Marshall, Hon. M.

Maraj, Hon. R.

Griffith, Dr. R.

Collis, Hon. K.

Imbert, Hon. C.

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Lasse, Dr. The Hon. V.

Pierre, Hon. J.

Casimire, A.

Narine, J.

Hart, E.

Allum, D.

Bereaux, H.

Rajaram, C.

NOES

Maharaj, R. L.

Panday, B.

Humphrey, J.

Sudama, T.

Palackdharrysingh, R.

Bhaggan, Miss H.

Mohammed, S.

Singh, Dr. C.

Sharma, C.

Jurai, K.

Haniff, M.

Nicholson, Miss P.

Agreed to.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member, Mr. Subhas Panday, is suspended from sittings of the House for a period of two weeks.

The sitting of this House is suspended until the hon. Member leaves the precincts of this House.

3.15 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

3.20 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Madam Speaker: I understand the Member for Naparima, Mr. Subhas Panday, is still here. Hon. Members, I wish to draw it to your attention that

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recourse to force is now necessary, in accordance with Standing Order 43(11) of the Standing Orders of this House.

In accordance with Standing Orders 43(10) and (11), I call upon Sgt. Barton to remove Mr. Subhas Panday from the House.

[Member removed from Chamber.]

Madam Speaker: As the Member is being removed, I think it is an appropriate time to take the tea break.

3.25 p.m.: *Sitting suspended*

4.05 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Madam Speaker: The debate that was in progress when the House was suspended will now be resumed.

Mr. B. Panday: Madam Speaker, on a point of order. Having regard to your deteriorating behaviour in this House, I should like to suggest that on the next occasion, Motion No. 10, which is a motion of no confidence in your good self, be debated as a matter of urgency, and that we have an undertaking from the other side that we do so.

Madam Speaker: Continue please, Member for Oropouche.

Mr. Robinson: Certainly, Madam Speaker, as a matter of courtesy, there should be a response. This House should seek to establish some standards of courtesy.

Mr. Mohammed: A request was made by the Leader of the Opposition.

Madam Speaker: The Member for Oropouche may continue the debate.

Mr. B. Panday: There is no point in carrying on in this House. Let Occah carry it on. Let Manning carry on.

[Members of the Opposition withdraw from the Chamber.]

Madam Speaker: The Minister of Housing.

The Minister of Housing and Settlement (Dr. The Hon. Vincent Lasse): Madam Speaker, I rise to respond to comments made on the motion that the Rent Restriction Act, Chap. 59:50 shall continue in force for a period of three years commencing February 24, 1993.

I made the point earlier, and I shall reiterate:

- (1) The Rent Restriction Act recognizes the rights of landlords and tenants, and protects tenants from arbitrary removal by landlords.

- (2) There is a considerable unsatisfied demand for shelter in Trinidad and Tobago.
- (3) The Rent Assessment Boards are created under the Rent Restriction Act, and they undertake rent reviews when required by landlords and tenants.
- (4) The Land Tenants Security of Tenure (Rent Review) Regulations and Order made under the provisions of the Land Tenants Security of Tenure Act, Chap. 59:50 are administered by the Rent Assessment Board created under the Rent Restriction Act.

I admit that there is justification for a review of legislation at this point, and my ministry is addressing this matter with urgency. However, pending a review and comprehensive legislation, the reasonable and prudent approach would be to extend the life of the Rent Restriction Act for a period of three years commencing on February 24, 1993.

I wish to thank Members on the other side who are absent at this time for their contributions to this debate, and in so doing, I shall clarify some misconceptions and set the record straight.

The Member for St. Augustine spoke of the genesis of the Rent Restriction Act. He spoke about the conditions which existed in this country in 1941, and the war effort, but it was recognized that it was important to provide adequate shelter. Therefore, restrictions had to be imposed on shelter that existed.

I agree with the Member for St. Augustine on this point and I hasten to say that since shelter is not adequate today, such restrictions are still needed.

4.15 p.m.

The Member for St. Augustine admitted that we cannot provide adequate shelter for our people, and I can only assume that he was unable during his tenure as Minister of Housing to address this matter. You see, the housing problem escalated during 1986 to 1991 and the squatter problem also went from some 8,000 households to some 50,000 households—25,000 on state lands and 25,000 on private lands.

The Member for St. Augustine ended this segment of his contribution by stating that:

"What I would like to do on this occasion, Madam Speaker, is to try to encourage this debate to take the direction of seeking to find the solution to the shortage of shelter. I believe that it is relevant because rent restriction is based on shortage and we can avoid having to restrict rent."

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Having said that, I can only conclude that the Member for St. Augustine agrees with extending the life of the Rent Restriction Act until the problem of adequate shelter is solved.

I now turn to the Member for Tobago West. Unfortunately, she is not here. She began by saying, "Let us work together for a brighter future". I think those are noble words. She went on to state that under the PNM administration \$2 billion had been spent on housing. This is quite true because the policy of the PNM Government was to provide housing for the population and as at the end of 1986 some 50,000 units had been so provided. What one must consider is that under the NAR administration the question of affordability was always absent from their thinking and this led us to the point where it is said that not a single house was built during that period.

When this Government assumed office I was mandated to look at the question of affordability and I observed that under the last administration persons had to pay up front some \$25,000 to \$30,000 before they acquired a parcel of land. This has now been changed to persons simply paying for the raw value of the land, and infrastructure works would be spread over the life of the lease—some 30 years.

On the question of squatting, there were two pilot projects at Bamboo Settlement No. 3 and Maturita Triangle where the same concept of affordability was applied and the persons there would be regularized pursuant to Act 20 of 1986. What one could have gleaned over the last few months is that this Government is staying as close as possible to the pronouncements in its 1991 manifesto.

The Member for Tobago West admitted in her contribution that this motion was a straightforward and simple one. I want to thank her, in advance, for her support because the Member may well remember that under her tenure this legislation lapsed—that was in 1990—and that resulted in the fact that the Land Tenants (Security of Tenure) (Rent Review) Regulations and Order had to be postponed for some time.

The Member for Tobago West read the list of the units her administration had revalued and also went on to indicate that under her tenure certain units were constructed. She referred to Bath Street, and I wish now to put the record straight. The Bath Street apartments formed the second part of construction activity on that site. In 1979 the first apartment building was erected at Bath Street and the plan for the second building was being worked upon, when there was a dispute concerning the land. It is very clear that the Member for Tobago West cannot take any credit for the Bath Street project.

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I also wish to point out that Powder Magazine, Phase II, which comprised 143 units, commenced in 1984. However, it was completed in 1989.

Also, I wish to refer to Embacadere in San Fernando and to state that the project was originally constructed by National Development Services Limited. It was started in 1986 and completed in 1989 but disposed of in 1990. I have made these points for the record.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I simply wish to state, as I said before, that the purpose of this motion is clear. We should prolong the life of the Act for another three years pending, of course, more comprehensive legislation.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved:

That the Rent Restriction Act, Chap. 59:50, shall continue in force for a period of three years commencing February 24, 1993.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Minister of Local Government and Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Kenneth Valley): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that we now consider Motion No. 4 on the Order Paper.

Assent indicated.

4.25 p.m.

CUSTOMS DUTIES (EXEMPTIONS)

The Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism (Sen The Hon. Brian Kuei Tung): Madam Speaker, I beg to move,

Whereas it is provided by section 56 of the Customs Act, that it shall be lawful for the Senate and the House of Representatives from time to time by Resolution to provide for the exemption from duties of Customs goods which may be imported into Trinidad and Tobago for any purpose specified in the Resolution for such periods as Parliament may determine:

And whereas the Resolution of the Legislative Council dated December 21, 1959, providing that certain classes of goods which would be exempt from import duty was from time to time extended by further Resolutions of the Senate and the House of Representatives and is due to expire on December 31, 1992.

And whereas it is expedient that certain goods be exempt from duties of customs.

Customs Duties (Exemptions)
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Be it resolved:

That this House, in accordance with and subject to the provision of section 56, Chapter 78:01 of the Customs Act hereby exempts from import duties of customs the classes of goods imported or entered for use in Trinidad and Tobago for the respective purposes specified in several items set out in the List of Conditional Duty Exemption given in the Third Schedule to the Customs Amendment Act 1979, for the period beginning immediately after the expiration of the last such Resolution of the Parliament and ending December 31, 1994.

This Resolution comes into effect on January 1, 1993.

This motion seeks to give the Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism the authority to exempt from customs duties goods which may be imported into Trinidad and Tobago for specified purposes.

Madam Speaker, you will be aware that the Customs Act, Chapter 78:01, provides legislative background for incentives aimed at encouraging the development of industry in Trinidad and Tobago. Section 56 of the Act provides for conditional exemption of goods used for specified purposes from custom duties. The Act states *inter alia* :

"56 (1) The House of Representatives may from time to time by resolution provide that any class of goods in the resolution shall be exempt from—

(a) import duties of customs if the goods are imported or entered for use by any person for any purpose specified in the resolution;

during any period fixed by the Minister..."

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), an exemption provided for by any resolution under this section—

(a) may be complete or partial, as the Minister may in his discretion determine; and

(b) shall be operative only in favour of a person who holds a licence issued to him..."

by the Minister.

(3) The Minister may on application made to him in writing in his discretion issue to any person a licence entitling such person to the benefit of an exemption provided for by any resolution under this section and any such licence shall specify the extent of the

exemption, the period during which and the conditions subject to which the licensee shall be entitled to such benefits.

- (4) In this Section "Minister" means the Minister responsible for Industry.
- (5) Nothing in this section shall be construed as authorising any exemption from any duty on goods, other than those specified in the Third Schedule.

The authority granted under the resolution as indicated in the motion, which was passed by Parliament in January, 1992 expires on December 31, 1992 and hence the need for this present motion.

As I have said before, the duty exemption scheme in Trinidad and Tobago is governed, in part, by section 56. This facility is administered through the grant of concessions to organizations in the industrial sectors which are granted Minister's or duty exemption licences relative to the items to be imported, and these licences in the past have been renewed annually.

The system is intended to reduce the relevant cost of production; namely the raw materials cost, plant and equipment used in the manufacture of local goods and so to help enhance the competitiveness of the local firms particularly in the international markets.

To give an indication as to the extent of support which these measures have given, let me show what this means in dollars and cents. In 1986, for example, Government subsidized the local manufacturing sector in terms of duty exemptions to the tune of \$235.5 million for machinery, equipment and raw materials whilst in 1990 the total subsidy increased all the way up and amounted to \$950.6 million. In 1990, approximately 800 beneficiaries utilized the duty exemption system.

Effective January 1993, we have introduced some new guidelines which I should like to share with this honourable House. The following guidelines will now be used in the granting of Minister's licences or duty exemption licences as they are more commonly called.

Let me inform this honourable House that, generally, the duty exemptions shall be more on a partial basis rather than on a full duty exemption basis. With regard to partial duty exemptions in respect of imports of raw materials, duty of at least five per cent will be payable on these imports even though the common external tariff requires that duties should be applicable and range from five to 35 per cent.

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Secondly, full duty exemption will be granted on raw materials only on the approval of Cabinet.

Thirdly, full duty exemptions will be maintained only on imports of plant, machinery and equipment which are given in order to assist manufacturers to improve their efficiency levels. Madam Speaker, I repeat that. Full duty exemptions will continue to be applied and maintained on imports of plant and equipment, the intention being to ensure that the manufacturers can re-plant, re-tool and that they can bring their operations to a level which will allow them to be able to seek efficiency and so meet international competitiveness. I should like this honourable House to note that garment manufacturers under the 807 Programme and hotel operators will continue to be exempt from the imposition of the five per cent duty on raw materials.

Again, the 807 Programme is a special programme in which raw materials are brought in, in the form of cut garments, sewn locally and are taken up entirely for export. In other words, it is not intended under the 807 Programme that these garments, once sewn locally, should enter the local market. For that purpose it is Government's intention not to burden those garments with any artificial duties and, therefore, they, too, will continue to enjoy full duty exemption.

In the case of hotel owners, Government is committed to assist in our tourism drive and therefore in order to ensure that the hotel owners and developers continue to enjoy some support from us we are suggesting that the hotel owners and operators continue to enjoy full duty exemption from duty on raw materials.

In fostering the development of an export oriented manufacturing sector, through the elimination of import duty exemption, our programme nevertheless recognizes the need for the manufacturing sector to be in receipt of incentives if they are to enhance their competitiveness and successfully penetrate foreign markets. In this context, although duty exemptions will be eliminated, a system has already been put in place to provide for a rebate of the duty paid to the extent that the product manufactured has been exported.

4.35 p.m.

Under this system also, manufacturers who are net exporters—and this includes petroleum and petrochemical operations—and whose annual exports equal or exceed 80 per cent of their total annual sales, will automatically qualify for the rebate of all duties paid on imported raw material inputs. What this means, Madam Speaker, is that it has to be seen in the context of being an incentive for manufacturers to get up to where their exports account for at least 80 per cent of their total sales.

It should be noted, as indicated previously, that the duty exemption scheme will be eliminated at the end of a period of two years, a period which begins on January 1, 1993 and ends on December 31, 1994.

In addition to the rebate scheme as outlined, local manufacturers will continue to enjoy some measure of protection from imported goods by the present system of temporary import surcharges which also will be phased out by December 31, 1994. They will enjoy some measure of protection by the anti-dumping legislation which has been passed recently and by some protection of consumers, legislation for which should be brought soon.

The Government is also committed, in the light of all of these factors, to a system of incentives for the non-oil manufacturing sector, that it be restructured in order to accommodate the export-led growth and the removal of any anti-export bias. The elimination of the import duty exemption scheme will, by December 31, 1994; in fact, be replaced by an alternative system of duty rebates. So, in effect, manufacturers who are export-oriented will continue to obtain the raw material inputs at world prices.

What the rebate system will do is revitalize and stimulate the growth of our export sector by persuading, hopefully, manufacturers to look towards export, before they can enjoy benefits which were previously available to them as an import duty exemption; such exemptions being a full exemption.

It is proposed, therefore, that the resolution authorizing granting of these exemptions be extended to December 31, 1994.

Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved:

That this House, in accordance with and subject to the provision of section 56, Chap. 78:01 of the Customs Act hereby exempt from import duties of customs the classes of goods imported or entered for use in Trinidad and Tobago for the respective purposes specified in several items set out in the List of Conditional Duty Exemption given in the Third Schedule to the Customs Amendment Act 1979, for the period beginning immediately after the expiration of the last such Resolution of the Parliament and ending 31 December, 1994.

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Motion made, That the House do now adjourn to Friday, February 19, 1993 at 1.30 p.m. [Hon. K. Valley]

Question put and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 4.40 p.m.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

**Agricultural Tribunal
(Allowances)**

The following question was asked by Mr. Subhas Panday (Naparima):

109. Could the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources state:

- (a) The number of matters which have been pending at the Agricultural Tribunal of Trinidad and Tobago (North) for each of the following years:-
 - (i) 1990
 - (ii) 1991; and
 - (iii) 1992?
- (b) How much allowance is provided to each member of the said Tribunal per sitting?
- (c) How many sittings of the said Tribunal have been held for the year 1992?
- (d) How many sittings of the said Tribunal have been aborted for the year 1992?
- (e) What are the average lengths of adjournment of matters of the said Tribunal?
- (f) What is the date of filing of the oldest matter now engaging the attention of the said Tribunal?
- (g) How many matters have been heard and determined by the said Tribunal for the year 1992?
- (h) Have members of the said Tribunal been awarded their allowances for their attendance of sittings of the said Tribunal which were either not held or aborted during 1992?

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- (i) If the answer to (h) is in the affirmative, could the Minister indicate how many members were given their allowances and how much did each member receive?
- (j) What steps, if any, are being taken to rectify this situation?

The following reply was circulated to Members of the House:

The number of matters which have been pending at the Agricultural Tribunal of Trinidad and Tobago (North) are as follows:

- (a) 1990 15
1991 15
1992 23
- (b) Each member of the said Tribunal is awarded an allowance of \$30 per sitting, plus \$100 per month travelling.
- (c) Six sittings of the said Tribunal have been held for the year 1992.
- (d) Four sittings of the said Tribunal have been aborted for the year 1992.
- (e) The average length of adjournment of matters of the said Tribunal is between one and two months.
- (f) The date of filing of the oldest matter now engaging the attention of the said Tribunal is June 12, 1980.
- (g) No matters have been determined by the said Tribunal for the year 1992.
- (h) Cheques have been prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources for six out of the eight members of the Tribunal who attended sittings in January and April, 1992. However, only two members have collected their cheques.
- (i) Vouchers have been prepared by the Secretary of the Tribunal for payment for attendance at sittings during the latter half of 1992. The vouchers have not been signed to date by members for processing by the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources.

Foreign Missions

The following question was asked by Miss Hulsie Bhaggan (Chaguanas):

119. Would the minister of Foreign Affairs indicate the locations, number of staff and details of expenditure for each of our foreign missions abroad for the year 1992?

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The following reply was circulated to Members of the House:

(a) Mission Locations 1992

London
 Washington
 New York (Mission to The United Nations)
 New York (Consulate General)
 Toronto (Consulate General)
 Ottawa
 Caracas
 Kingston
 Geneva (Mission to The United Nations)
 Brasilia
 New Delhi
 Bridgetown
 Brussels
 Lagos

(b) NUMBER OF STAFF AT MISSIONS 1992

OVERSEAS MISSIONS	HEAD OF MISSION		Consul General	OFFICERS		LOCAL RECRUITS	TOTAL STAFF
	High Commissioner	Ambassador		HOME BASED STAFF Diplomatic	Support Staff		
LONDON	1			4	5	24	34
WASHINGTON		1		4	7	12	24
NEW YORK (Mission to the United Nations)		1		4	2	8	15
NEW YORK (Consulate General)			1	1	4	10	16
TORONTO (Consulate General)			1	1	4	7	13
OTTAWA	1			2	2	10	15

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(b) NUMBER OF STAFF AT MISSIONS 1992 (Cont'd)

OVERSEAS MISSIONS	HEAD OF MISSION		Consul General	OFFICERS			TOTAL STAFF
	High Commissioner	Ambassador		HOME BASED Diplomatic	STAFF Support Staff	LOCAL RECRUITS	
CARACAS		1		2	2	9	14
KINGSTON	1			2	2	7	12
GENEVA (Mission to The United Nations)		1		3	2	7	13
BRASILIA		1		1	2	12	16
NEW DELHI	1			1	2	23	27
BRIDGETOWN	1			2	2	7	12
BRUSSELS		1		2	3	8	14
LAGOS	1			1	1	14	17
TOTAL	6	6	2	30	40	158	242

(c) DETAILS OF EXPDNDITURE FOR EACH MISSION FOR 1992

OVERSEAS MISSION	Personnel Expenditure	Goods and Services	Total Expenditure
LONDON	\$3,942,966.00	\$2,946,318.00	\$6,889,284.00
WASHINGTON	\$1,527,064.00	\$1,295,443.00	\$2,822,507.00
NEW YORK (Mission to The United Nations)	\$1,230,829.00	\$2,328,201.00	\$3,559,030.00
NEW YORK (Consulate General)	\$1,065,052.00	\$3,070,126.00	\$4,135,178.00
TORONTO (Consulate General)	\$836,151.00	\$1,128,099.00	\$1,964,250.00
OTTAWA	\$937,504.00	\$1,115,515.00	\$2,053,019.00
CARACAS	\$529,880.00	\$360,237.00	\$890,117.00
KINGSTON	\$374,572.00	\$677,348.00	\$1,051,920.00

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(c) DETAILS OF EXPENDITURE FOR EACH MISSION FOR 1992

OVERSEAS MISSION	Personnel Expenditure	Goods and Services	Total Expenditure
GENEVA (Mission to The United Nations)	\$1,553,295.00	\$1,441,961.00	\$2,995,211.00
BRASILIA	\$483,041.00	\$570,115.00	\$1,053,156.00
NEW DELHI	\$516,810.00	\$604,883.00	\$1,121,693.00
BRIDGETOWN	\$455,266.00	\$498,466.00	\$953,732.00
BRUSSELS	\$1,436,219.00	\$1,234,446.00	\$2,670,665.00
LAGOS	\$223,413.00	\$632,105.00	\$855,518.00
TOTALS	\$15,112,062.00	\$17,903,218.00	\$33,015,280.00