

*Leave of Absence**Wednesday, June 14, 1995***HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES***Wednesday, June 14, 1995*

The House met at 1.35 p.m.

PRAYERS[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, I have granted leave of absence from today's sitting to the Member for San Fernando West (Hon. Ralph Maraj).

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**Preysal****(Establishment of Post Office)**

119. Mr. Raymond Palackdharrsingh (*Caroni Central*) asked the Minister of Public Utilities:

- (a) Would the Minister indicate whether the community of Preysal qualified for the establishment of a post office?
- (b) If the answer is in the affirmative, would the Minister indicate what steps are being taken to provide this facility?
- (c) If the answer is in the negative, could the Minister state what services are provided to meet postal needs of the community?

The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries (Sen. The Hon. Barry Barnes): Madam Speaker, the Post Master General has advised that the criteria normally used for establishing a post office include *inter alia*:

- (a) the volume of postal services demanded;
- (b) the distance from an existing postal facility, that is a minimum of 9.6 kilometres from an existing post office;
- (c) potential for the development of the area.

Based on the development criteria, the community of Preysal does not qualify at this time for the establishment of a post office.

The community of Preysal located between Couva and Gran Couva is currently serviced by:

- (i) Couva Post Office which lies approximately 5.7 kilometres to the west of the community of Preysal;

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- (ii) Gran Couva Post Office which is approximately 4.6 kilometres to the north of the community of Preysal.
- (iii) Calcutta Settlement Postal Agency which is only 0.8 kilometres to the north of the community of Preysal.

In addition to counter services, the Couva Post Office provides a home delivery service on a daily basis to approximately 70 per cent of the households in Preysal.

Gran Couva Post Office, on the other hand, provides only counter services. The Calcutta Settlement Postal Agency provides two types of counter service—the collection and postage of mail and the sale of stamps.

Given the present available financial resources of the Postal Services Division, the Couva Post Office is unable to provide a home delivery service to some 200 households in the newly developed areas in the community of Preysal.

Nevertheless, the Postmaster General is considering the possibility of establishing a postal agency in close proximity to those houses.

Madam Speaker: I had indicated to the Police Commissioner that whenever there are marches around the Red House as soon as the sitting starts, the police should ask the demonstrators outside to tone down the volume of whatever they are using so that the business of the House can proceed.

Mr. B. Panday: They paid \$2,000 for that tassa—

CNG Filling Stations (Safety Requirements)

120. Mr. Raymond Palackdharrysingh (*Caroni Central*) asked the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries:

Would the Minister state:

- (a) What are the basic safety requirements for setting down CNG filling stations?
- (b) Whether the CNG filling station at Montrose, Chaguanas, has met those criteria?
- (c) What mechanism is put in place to deal with complaints, real or perceived from persons residing in close proximity to such filling station?
- (d) What alternative or emergency plans exist for such residents?

- (e) Whether victims and/or their families would be fully compensated in the event of an accident or disaster?

The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries (Sen. The Hon. Barry Barnes): Madam Speaker, the installation of CNG Regulations 1994, which require that CNG systems conform to standards issued by the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards or other regulatory organizations approved by the Minister. The regulations were published as legal Notice No. 196 on October 18, 1994.

The National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited was granted approval for the installation of CNG dispensing facilities at S. Maharaj Service Station, which is presumably the Montrose, Chaguanas station referred to in the question. As with all other existing gas stations, the installation is governed by the rules, regulations and procedures that are legally required for the safety of gas stations.

Persons in the vicinity of a gas station who have real or perceived complaints may lodge such complaints with the national Petroleum Marketing Company and thereafter with the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries where all such complaints are investigated.

In terms of petroleum fuels, experience has shown that CNG is among the safest. Moreover, CNG equipment is rigorously designed, operated and controlled. As a result, there is no necessity for special emergency plans over and above the standard safety precautions which apply to gasoline stations.

Both the gas station dealer and the National petroleum Marketing Company are required to maintain accident insurance under the terms of the gas station licences.

Squatters (Arena and Carlsen Field)

121. Mr. Raymond Palackdharrysingh (*Caroni Central*) asked the Minister of Housing and Settlements:

- (a) Would the Minister state what progress has been made in the regularization of squatters in Arena and Carlsen Field?
- (b) Would such regularization be completed in 1995?

The Minister of Housing and Settlement (Dr. The Hon. Vincent Lasse): Madam Speaker, preliminary site investigations by the National Housing Authority have revealed that the squatter settlement at Arena comprises some 68 families. The site is considered to be well laid out and some of the residents have

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basic amenities such as electricity and water. The NHA is currently liaising with the Lands and Surveys Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources with respect to the change of ownership of the lands at Arena from the Praesto Presto Camp.

Investigations at Carlsen Field have revealed that this site, on which there are several pockets of residential squatters, is not well laid out. A more structured arrangement is required in order to minimize infrastructural development costs and obtain regulatory approvals. These lands are State lands and investigations indicate that the squatters were in occupation before 1986.

Some of the lands on the site require approvals for change of use from agricultural to residential purposes. Here again ongoing discussions are taking place with the Lands and Surveys Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources.

1.45 p.m.

These two areas are not included in the regularization programme for 1995.

Mr. Palackdharrysingh: A supplementary question, Madam Speaker. Would the Minister indicate what measures are put in place to prevent his heartless Government from demolishing people's homes?

Madam Speaker: That is an entirely different question. It does not have any bearing on this one. The Member may file that question for answer in due course.

ARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

The Minister of Trade and Industry and Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Kenneth Valley): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that the House now consider at page 3 of the Order Paper, Motion No. 1, under "Private Business."

Agreed to.

NO CONFIDENCE (PRIME MINISTER)

Mr. Basdeo Panday (Couva North): Madam Speaker, I beg to move, the following Motion:

Whereas recent events have revealed the Prime Minister's woeful incompetence in dealing with the nation's affairs;

Be it Resolved that this honourable House express its lack of confidence in Prime Minister Patrick Manning.

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It is a simple Motion, not many "Whereases". It is simple and to the point. I am extremely elated that the Prime Minister has taken this Motion so seriously. Had he not done so, he would not have attempted a mobilization of the kind that we have seen today. I am so happy.

Never in my life have I been greeted with so much love and affection as I walked through, into what was anticipated would be the lion's den, and I have never received so many handshakes and kisses from so many beautiful women. I thank the hon. Prime Minister for that. It is a pity you had to stop the tassa, Madam Speaker, because my learned colleague, I understand, paid \$2,000 for that and she should have been given the opportunity to enjoy it a little more.

As I say, I have never had so much fun in my life. I never thought I was so loved among what was formerly the PNM support. But it is my information—if I am wrong, I stand corrected—that many of the URP jobs have been closed down for the day. We would have an investigation afterwards, of course, but I am merely saying that people have been promised the day's pay; they are provided with transport; some maxi taxis. I know two buses came from San Fernando, because one of my colleagues called me and said: "Bas, they ask me to come up; I am going up eh, but I am still voting for you." They have also been provided with \$10.00, a jersey and snacks after the demonstration.

I want to make only one point. I want to tell every person who came here today that if the Government reneges and does not pay them, I am a trade unionist; just come to me and we are going to carry out the struggle for payment, for every cent it promised them.

You would note, Madam Speaker, that the Motion is not a motion of no confidence in the Government; it is not that. That may come at a later date. It is a Motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister, Member for San Fernando East as Prime Minister—qua Prime Minister.

The Motion is very clear. It speaks of recent events. If I may read the Motion again, it says:

"Whereas recent events have revealed..."

That is to say, we do not intend to bore this House with matters that have happened a long time ago. As a matter of fact, a Motion of no confidence against the Member for San Fernando East as Prime Minister could very well have started with the first *faux pas* he made on becoming Prime Minister, that is to say, as soon as he assumed office he disclosed that the Government was considering the

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floating of the dollar. This resulted in a flight of foreign exchange, and so on. But we are not on that because that is not recent.

We could have also referred to the untruth he told about the level of reserves in the Treasury when the PNM took office. We will not talk about that; that is too far. We shall not deal with the sale of his car and house which ended up in the possession of drug lords. We will not deal with that. We will not deal even with the 1994 statement he made that an oil boom was on the way and it would occur in 1994. We shall not deal with that; that is not recent enough. We shall not even deal with his statement that in 1995 prices will fall flat, although everybody almost fell flat laughing at that one. We will not deal with that.

We will not deal with the misleading of this House when he said that there was only one Collymore report for Project Pride. We will not deal with that. That is not recent enough. We will not even deal with his promise of a soup kitchen in the bye-election following upon the death of the hon. Mr. Morris Marshall. We will not deal with that. That is not recent.

We propose to start with recent events, recent as December 1994—matters which occurred within the last six months. That is how recent we are going to base this debate on. If you look at the events that took place involving the Prime Minister—as I say, it is not a Motion of no confidence in the Government; it has nothing to do with it—if you look at the actions of the Prime Minister within the last months, it would show beyond a shadow of a doubt that this Prime Minister is totally lacking in credibility; that unfortunately he is arrogant beyond measure; that he suffers from an overdose of illusions of grandeur and he is probably in need of psychiatric help. That is what bothers me. Such has been his fall in credibility that since the hon. Prime Minister returned from Hong Kong he has been christened in some quarters as "Patlick Laiying." That is not an unparliamentary word. It is spelt L-a-i-y-i-n-g.

1.55 p.m.

I want to assure Members of this House that I was motivated to bring this measure before this House not out of malice, spite, or ill-will, but because of my concern for the welfare of this nation and its peoples.

I move this Motion with the same sense of sincerity and motive that the Member of Parliament for San Fernando East did when he moved a Motion of no confidence against the Member for Tobago East [*Interruption*]

Madam Speaker, we start with the decision of the Prime Minister in December, 1994 [*Interruption*] That is far too recent. Is it not? I know how he would love to forget it. I am tempted to go back but I will not.

Madam Speaker: Gentlemen, order.

Mr. B. Panday: We can start from 1994 when the Prime Minister decided to spend \$69,000 for a one-day jaunt to Haiti with an entourage of 127 people to entertain 52 soldiers who had been there for less than three months. That is where we should like to start. He did not even invite his Minister of Foreign Affairs—though any follow-up contact must pass through that Ministry—but that is a matter for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

It was a total waste of money. That money would have been better spent had it been given to the families of the soldiers who were out there serving the nation. Instead, it was used for a jaunt that brought absolutely nothing to this nation. It was a senseless waste of scarce public funds. As a matter of fact, I understand that the Government still owes one DJ who went on that trip—so that those who came here today got paid upfront.

The country was probably willing to stomach all of that in the interest of stability, but the last straw came with the \$2 million extended Hong Kong trip. The straw that broke the camel's back and snapped the tolerance level of most of our citizens. At a time when this country is crying out from a scarcity of funds, at a time when people cannot get soup kitchens, at a time when they cannot get jobs, at a time when they cannot get water, \$2 million was spent on a trip to Hong Kong. I intend to examine that in detail to show what this country has got from it.

This trip was shrouded in secrecy and mystery. We shall hear later why that, in fact, was so. As far as I am aware, there was no invitation issued by anyone in Hong Kong to our Prime Minister. One would have expect that before the Prime Minister embarks on such a trip somebody would have invited him. Or, if nobody invited him and he thought it was a good idea to go there, for reasons which we shall discover later—as far as I am aware he sent no advanced team of high powered public servants to negotiate agreements with government or private agencies and others.

I believe he complained that there were no officials to meet him at the airport, no fixed itinerary. The trip seems to have been kept a secret, even from his Minister of Foreign Affairs. Later we shall find out that his avant-garde, his contact-men, so to speak, were not public servants but Mr. and Mrs. Sterling Belgrove and one Rev. Choi Tai Lai.

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Who are these people whom the Prime Minister singles out in his address to the nation for being so helpful to him on his trip? No evidence of public servants. Is that not how it is done when a Prime Minister is going to look about the nation's business? He takes public servants, officers from the Ministry of External Affairs who deal with all the protocol and all the arrangements for the Prime Minister. And those going to deal with the matter; he sends them ahead to negotiate and make the necessary arrangements. What do we have in this case? No evidence of that. In fact, we are told that the team—we mentioned two names—and the Prime Minister in his speech, as you would recall, congratulated Mr. and Mrs. Sterling Belgrove. So these people are the nation's ambassadors—the nation's ambassadors are not in the public service, not responsible, in any way as public servants are responsible, but they are the ones who made all the advanced arrangements for the hon. Prime Minister.

I think it is going to be very interesting for this nation to find out who are these ambassadors of our country, who are these people who replaced public servants and do the job that our responsible and capable public servants should have done.

I am indebted to an article that appeared in the *Mirror* on Friday, May 19, for information about who was Mr. Sterling Belgrove. I wish to quote from that article lest it be said that I am making up these allegations. If they are unfounded. I have seen no retraction either from the Prime Minister or from the persons involved. The Public Information Division has not said this is untrue. The article said:

"On September 30, 1991 at exactly 12 noon Sterling Belgrove with a band of faithfuls at his side stood atop the St. Ann's hills and proclaimed that he had just seen an apparition of the blessed Virgin Mary.

But on that fateful Monday, Belgrove and his faithfuls who saw the Virgin Mary called themselves the Holy messengers of God and insisted they were not affiliated to any particular church group

A report about the sightings stated led by Brother Sterling Belgrove the holy messengers of God prayed, sang hymns and recited the rosary several times before the apparition began."

Brother Belgrove said that the blessed Virgin Mary appeared several times and that the apparition continued for about 30 minutes. He predicted:

"that seven major earthquakes of tragic proportions and another social uprising will occur if the rosary is not recited daily over the next three months.

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He later went to Venezuela with his claim about the Blessed Virgin Mary but he was thrown in jail.

“A source recently revealed that sometime after Brother Belgrove saw the Virgin Mary he held a number of private meetings with Mr. Manning.

What they spoke about is unknown

But he was like a confidante or an advisor to Mr. Manning said the source.

I don't know whether Virgin Mary had to do anything with their relationship.

Belgrove recent outings confirmed that he may be a diplomat of high rank.

Mr. and Mrs. Belgrove were members of the three-man advanced party which went to Hong Kong five days ahead, reconnoiting and making contacts for Mr. Manning's trip to be the success. the Prime Minister brags, it was in a newsreport which was confirmed.”

And that is the information we have about this gentleman. who went to represent this nation and to make arrangements for our hon. Prime Minister's visit.

2.05 p.m.

Let me quote the Prime Minister accurately. I am reading from page 12 of the written script of the address he gave on television to the nation.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank the entire team which accompanied me to Hong Kong for the success of this mission. However, I would like to acknowledge and give special thanks to the Chinese Baptist Church in Trinidad and Tobago and in particular, Rev. Choi Tai Lai and Mr. and Mrs. Sterling ..."

Who is this gentleman? Again, I am indebted to an article appearing in the *Sunday Guardian* of May 14, 1995 at page 5, headed "Our man from China". This article is one intended to find out who was Rev. Tai Lai.

"The Chinese Embassy had never heard of them. The Office of the Prime Minister said check the Foreign Affairs Ministry. The Foreign Affairs Ministry took a message because no one there could help. The churches said: not us. The Chinese said: who? The Baptists said they'd never heard of them.

No one, it seems, knew anything about the Chinese Baptist Church in Trinidad and Tobago whose members accompanied Prime Minister Patrick Manning on his recent Hong Kong trip.

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But in his now historic address to the nation on Sunday last, PM Manning acknowledged and gave 'special thanks' to the Church and 'in particular Rev. Choi Tai Lai and Mr. and Mrs. Sterling Belgrove whose contributions to the mission's success were invaluable'.

The three had been sent as an 'advance party' reconnoitering and making contact for the Prime Ministerial entourage which arrived five days later."

That is all the information we have had because to this day the Prime Minister has not given us any other information about who went and for how long they went. I continue:

"After a long search, Timothy Choi Tai Lai, the PM's man in Hong Kong was found in a house that has been converted into a small factory manufacturing plastic bags ...

Choy Tai Lai scurries off and returns with a large brown envelope from which he extracts a yellowing certificate covered with Chinese calligraphy.

This, he explains, is from when he was ordained as a Chinese Baptist preacher in 1955 in Taiwan."

Is the hon. Prime Minister sure that he went to the right place? This man is from Taiwan.

"He extracts another, which records his ordination last year by the Trinidad Chinese Baptist Church of 36 Streatham Lodge Road in Tunapuna, by an ordaining council ...

The church, he explains in Chinese-sounding English, has a little more than a hundred members locally. ..."

I think it is interesting for me to mention this.

"He says they also want to establish a church in St. Lucia, because of the garment industry there. 'They take a lot of young lady from Hong Kong,' he says."

So his interest in forming a church in St. Lucia is based on that.

"He says it was because of his knowledge of Mandarin and Cantonese, he was chosen for the Hong Kong trip."

"It all started a couple years ago," he said, although he could not specify how long, when a trip to the Far East was discussed.

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Look at the way the decisions of this Government evolve.

"Then in April last year, he said, he was summoned to the Prime Minister's office for their first meeting. After that, he'd had a few telephone calls until a few months ago when Hong Kong was selected."

How was Hong Kong selected?

"'We have chats with Mr. Patrick Manning, the Prime Minister,' he says 'and we prayed for it (together), then we contact Hong Kong ...'"

He had come to TT in 1964 looking for business opportunities and got a job with a cold storage firm. (The plastics business is really his son's, who lives abroad, like all of his four children.)"

That is the level of his commitment to the country.

"Along with the Belgroves (who didn't know Hong Kong), he feels his role was to narrow down the list of things to be done because Hong Kong is so developed and there are many areas ..."

And among the many things they were promised was that they would take on a male dancer. I was worried about why a male dancer and not a female one. I got the answer from the interview with Mr. Lai:

"There are many female ballet dancers in Hong Kong, he says, but no men. It's working out well, he says."

The point I am making is that instead of using public servants to do the job, this is the way this Government is being operated by the Prime Minister. He does not take the Minister of External Affairs on this trip. First of all, there is the question of Haiti. Very few Prime Ministers travel without their Ministers of External Affairs. In fact, one was worried that the Prime Minister was going on a jaunt and taking 127 persons, leaving out the Minister of External Affairs.

When the Minister was asked why he did not go on the trip, he truthfully said that he was not asked. He was not even asked. But that was Haiti. It is not that they were going on a binge and the Minister of External Affairs is a fellow with a big mouth who would talk about the things they do. They were going to Hong Kong apparently on State business, and the Prime Minister does not take along his Minister of External Affairs.

2.15 p.m.

Madam Speaker, I must say that I am not here to hold any brief for Mr. Ralph Maraj, former Minister of External Affairs, because in any case, he says that he is PNM and if he is PNM, he must suffer for that.

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That is his suffering, it is not mine. We are not here to hold any brief for him, we are here on principle.

If this Prime Minister knew what he was doing, one would have expected that the Ministry of External Affairs would have made all the arrangements, set up all the appointments, had the preliminary meetings accompanied by members of the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Those arrangements would have been made, that Consul in Hong Kong, Mr. Alexander Lau, would have been contacted and would have known what was going on.

Instead, the Prime Minister takes along two people who have no diplomatic experience at all. Could the hon. Prime Minister say, what services were performed by these people whom he has thanked so profusely, how much they were paid for their services? That is important. If they were not paid for their services, were they performing an act free for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago? That is how this Government is run! This Government went on a mission and got people to go free to make advanced arrangements. Who paid their expenses for their trip?

Hon. Member: Oh! *[Laughter]*

Mr. B. Panday: That is exactly how I felt when I read about the trip. Oh God! In what capacity did they go? Did they go as advisers to the Prime Minister?

When a Prime Minister is leaving this country, he must leave as a dignified person accompanied by his Ministers and so on. When the Prime Minister lands abroad, he is looked upon as having some dignity. What status of people is the Prime Minister accompanied by when he lands abroad? What office do they hold in the land? How are they described? Are they described as the Minister's advisers? Are they the Minister's advisers for free? What authority did the Government have to pay for their going, if indeed, their expenses were paid from the public purse? These are matters that raise serious doubts about the capacity of the Prime Minister.

And the farce does not end there. *[Interruption]* I may be speaking of things to come. Our hon. Prime Minister lands in Hong Kong—presumably by plane—and there is no one there to meet him officially and he has to travel to his hotel by bus. *[Interruption]* That is what I read. I have not heard anything else. *[Interruption]* Presumably the transport was arranged by Mr. Belgrove. *[Interruption]* If the Prime Minister was clear about this, he would not have allowed that kind of speculation to take place about his trip. *[Interruption]*

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We have a Consul in Hong Kong, where is our Consul, Mr. Alexander Lau? The Prime Minister's first response to that is that he does not know. He cannot find the office of the Consulate. Those were matters that he reported to this country. This is incompetence of the worst kind. A Prime Minister lands in Hong Kong, he has an office there and he cannot find the office of the Consulate. Had this trip been a serious trip, intended to benefit this country, the Prime Minister would have had his advance team not only contact Mr. Lau, but make all the necessary arrangements for him. But the Prime Minister does not know even where Mr. Lau is. He does not even know where the office is.

So the Prime Minister seeks to demonstrate his obvious annoyance at not finding Mr. Lau there when he ought to have been, and on April 27, 1995, Mr. Lau is fired by fax. Could it not have been a fax telephone, Madam Speaker? *[Interruption]* Or he was not fired by fax? He was fired by fax and what are the reasons given by the Prime Minister for firing his Consul by fax. Initially it was for not being their to receive the Prime Minister.

The reason the Prime Minister gives, turns out to be another fiasco and points to the Prime Minister as a person who is totally incapable of speaking the truth. The first reason came on April 29, 1995, when he spoke at a PNM meeting of Central constituencies. He told that meeting that Mr. Lau was fired because he was not there to meet the Prime Minister and his office could not be located.

On May 5, 1995, the Minister of Foreign Affairs informs the country that Mr. Lau had in fact, informed the Minister that he would be out of the country during the period that the Prime Minister was going to be there and the Prime Minister was so informed. One wonders whether it is because the Minister is bold enough to speak the truth that he suffered these indignities. I do not know, but no one has denied—so far as I am aware—what the then Minister of External Affairs said: that the Prime Minister had been informed that Mr. Lau would not have been there when he arrive.

The Prime Minister went to his constituency meeting and said that Mr. Lau was dismissed because he was not there and he could not find his address. This is later confirmed by Mr. Lau who refers to the Prime Minister's statement as a lot of balderdash. What is Mr. Lau talking about balderdash? One would recall that I have mentioned that the Prime Minister had gone on the airwaves and had, in fact, referred to Mr. Lau. I read from the Prime Minister's speech. One would remember first of all he said it was because Mr. Lau was not there and he could not find him.

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"I also deem it important to clarify some events that have been taking place in the country and widely reported in the newspapers since my return from Hong Kong. These relate to our Honorary Consul in Hong Kong.

It has been a source of great concern to the Government that those unfortunate incidents have occurred. I wish to state how very disappointed I am that one who has served the country during this term of government and also during the previous administration in representing Trinidad and Tobago, should have taken his review of appointment in such a very bad way.

I wish to remind you that this government is not an administration that operates on the basis of whim and fancy, or removes someone from office merely because that person may be affiliated to another party.

Permit me to remind you that while the Honorary Consul was appointed by the last administration, when we came into office it was felt that it was not necessary to change him, and therefore no changes were made. So if after this time the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago along with his colleagues decides that it is now time to restructure, we do not see why there should be any problem with this."

The reason now is not that he was not there to meet the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister could not find the office, the reason is now is that they wanted to restructure.

2.25 p.m.

He adds insult to injury when he continued in that most unfortunate speech.

"It is important that the country understands what was indeed told to the Honorary Consul in the correspondence written to him and signed by Ambassador Gift, and that is: in the light of a review of our Foreign Policy arising from the recently concluded Heads of Mission Conference held in Port of Spain, it was decided to terminate his Commission."

One knows when that Heads of Mission Conference was held. It was decided to terminate the commission of Mr. Lau only when he could not be found. He comes to the country and gives a completely different reason. He displays a kind of arrogance that is frightening. One's blood chills when one reads this:

"Indeed, Ladies and Gentlemen, it was because of what the Prime Minister saw as his valuable services to Trinidad and Tobago that the Prime Minister intended to retain him to serve the country in a much better and higher capacity."

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Note that he has begun to speak of himself in the third person. The only two persons I know who do that are the Queen and the Pope. The Prime Minister must have taken us for little children when he said that the Prime Minister intended to retain him to serve the country in a much higher capacity. The Prime Minister sent him a note by fax telling him that his services were no longer needed; he said nothing about the higher capacity—and he expects this country to believe that is what he intended. He takes us all for fools. He went on:

"One option that was available and to which consideration was given, was to have him head the new Trade and Investment Mission that we will soon be opening in Hong Kong."

Could that not have been said in the letter sent to him by fax? Do not courtesy and decency demand that? Is that not an act of enormous arrogance? The arrogance continues. He said that he has better things for Mr. Lau but because he had quarrelled and grumbled, he would not get anything. Listen to what he said:

It has, however, been a cause of great embarrassment and great disappointment to the government that the Honorary Consul, on his expected visit to Trinidad and Tobago, did not deem it necessary to first come and speak personally to the authorities to find out more,."

One needs not ask who the authorities are—

"in which case he would have avoided the embarrassment that he has caused himself and the government and people of Trinidad and Tobago."

He went on:

"You would understand, Ladies and Gentlemen, that the actions of the Honorary Consul now prevent the Government from exercising any of the options that were under consideration and therefore I wish publicly to thank him for his services to Trinidad and Tobago."

"His Imperial Majesty"! That is arrogance. He said, I have things for you but you cannot keep quiet. I did not call you about it but that is irrelevant. You must keep quiet, you must not come and grumble. If you do not grumble, I will spin you like a coin. What deceit! What falsehood! That speech will go down in history as one of the most embarrassing moments for this country. How many potential investors may have changed their minds from coming here when they heard this speech is anybody's guess.

When one looks at excerpts from this speech one cannot help but wonder whether the Prime Minister is not losing his marbles; whether his feet are no

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longer on the ground; whether his illusions are so great that he has lost touch with reality. Let me just read a few of these passages starting at page 2. Let me go back.

Hon. Member: To 1994.

Mr. B. Panday: Madam Speaker, listen to this:

"My delegation and I realised very early in the visit to Hong Kong that we, the people of Trinidad and Tobago, need to understand who we are, and how greatly blessed we are. For we were told on many occasions that Hong Kong was originally only a rock, a rock with no minerals, a rock with nothing to distinguish itself. Its main resource was its people; and of course a Government of extraordinary vision."

Hong Kong would have been the wrong place to go because Hong Kong took a rock and made it a prosperous nation. You took a prosperous nation and made it a rock. He said they spoke to the movers and shakers of Hong Kong. He said:

"... there was no reason why Trinidad and Tobago cannot be developed into a Hong Kong in the Caribbean. But the achievement of this requires the hard work of the people. For with all the resources that a country may have, if its people do not have the conviction to work hard then they will not be able to achieve what they set out to achieve. And this is one of the most important lessons ..."

He continued:

"It is acknowledged worldwide that the Chinese are a very resourceful people, and our visit has certainly helped to strengthen our conviction..."

The said—one does not know what he is talking about—:

"The bud may have a bitter taste but sweet shall be the flower.."

Hon. Member: That is not what I said.

Mr. B. Panday: That is what is written here. He went on:

"For you know you must put the seed into the ground before the tree can grow. We already have minerals in the ground waiting to become fruitful."

Mr. Palackdharrysingh: That was a crusade.

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Mr. B. Panday: He said:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, the more you share, the more will your blessings multiply. Therefore when we look at divestment and liberalization and diversification, we should not look at them in such a negative way."

In fact, what he said was that they should be looked at as sharing. He went on:

"But there can be no unification if there is no sharing ... remembering that when one shares with one's neighbours, one gives a blessing unto oneself, one does good things to one's self."

This is the kind of address that this nation has been subjected to.

The crunch came when the hon. Prime Minister sought to refer to himself as the father of this nation. I want to read that too because that is so audacious as to be embarrassing. He said:

"Today I speak to you as the father of the nation and as the leader that you have chosen, not because I may, but because I know I must."

What does he mean by that?

"It is important for you to understand that a lot is spoken about vision, but vision is more than saying that you have a vision. Vision is working to have a vision work. And this you must understand."

We know why you chose Mr. Belgrove; he had a vision. He went on to say:

"I wish to say that our trip to Hong Kong cost us approximately \$2 million, but the fruits of it and the benefits that we have achieved from it are priceless."

The only benefit I know, so far, is that the team came down here and they intend to remain anonymous. They will not even tell the press why they are here.

2.35 p.m.

The Prime Minister spends \$2 million to go there; a team comes down here; nobody knows who is paying them; why they come here and they have will tell nobody why they are here. Nobody knows if the Government has paid them as consultants to come and do a consultancy service. Nobody knows. But he says, do not worry; things will come. He states to the nation:

"...but remember Rome was not built in a day, neither was Hong Kong, neither can Trinidad and Tobago be. It is time, it is a sacrifice, it is hard work, it is patience. You choose a leader, believe in your leader and God will do the rest."

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I do not know what is becoming of this country. In that same speech, referring to the Honorary Consul, he says:

"You would understand, Ladies and Gentlemen, that the actions of the Honorary Consul now prevent the government from exercising any of the options that were under consideration, and therefore I wish publicly to thank him..."

He goes on to say:

"It is unfortunate also that some persons in authority make reports that are very erroneous in nature, and this is something of which the government must be very careful especially when such reports come from public figures."

Speaking in parables, but not deep enough that I cannot understand. Obviously he is speaking about the statement of the Minister of External Affairs in saying that the Prime Minister knew about Mr. Lau, because he goes on immediately after—the immediate paragraph reads:

"What has happened in this matter therefore, Ladies and Gentlemen, demonstrates quite clearly why it was necessary for the Foreign Minister and other important figures to remain in the country while the Prime Minister, together with key Foreign Ministry personnel, went on our Mission."

It said that the Prime Minister felt that all key personnel should not be out of the country at the same time. And *en passant*—the speech is about to finish—an afterthought, he says:

"Because of the ongoing trends and because of the developments that are to take place in terms of the expansion of trade and investment and development as would have been seen in the recent visit of the trade mission from the Venezuelan State of Sucre, Mr. Ralph Maraj will now be given a portfolio that will give him a greater measure of flexibility in the pursuit of these aspects of our foreign policy objectives.

I have today advised His Excellency the Acting President to appoint him as Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of the Prime Minister.

I have also advised His Excellency to appoint Mr. Knowlson Gift as Senator and Minister of Foreign Affairs."

The Prime Minister, under the Constitution, has the right to appoint his Ministers and be free to remove them. I have no business with that. But what is important here is the manner in which the affairs of the Government are

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conducted; the manner in which people are removed. One person is fired by fax, and the Minister says that the first time he hears about his removal from his office is when he listens to the television. That is indecency; it is callousness; it is rudeness of the highest order!

Obviously the reason advanced for removing Mr. Lau is patently false. The Prime Minister does not have to give a reason, you know, but once he gives a reason he opens up himself to questioning, and he gave reasons in his speech when he said that he was moving him to appoint him in an area where he would have more flexibility. But he does not tell him that. He does not call him as any decent person would, and say, "You are my colleague; we sit in the same Cabinet together, come.

Hon. Member: Were you formally removed from External Affairs?

Mr. B. Panday: That makes it right, does it? I knew he was going to come with that. This Minister cannot help opening his mouth and shoving his foot in it!

I want everybody to listen. He has great things for him. He is going to appoint him as Minister without Portfolio to look after the Venezuelans. He does not call him and say, "Colleague, I want you to do this job for me; here is what we plan." To indicate the falsity of this Prime Minister; to indicate the incapacity of this Prime Minister to speak the truth, to face the truth, having appointed him to this position of Minister without Portfolio to pursue foreign policy objectives arising out of the Sucre development, does he appoint him as that? Some days later he appoints him as Minister of Public Utilities. What has happened to the Sucre project? Obviously, the Prime Minister was not speaking the truth.

But do you know what he does? He pours salt in the wound and puts a knife in it and "coree" it.

Hon. Member: What?

Mr. B. Panday: I will teach you that on another occasion. That he does by not only removing the Minister, but also appointing in his place and stead at the very moment of his removal, his Permanent Secretary. Do you know what I want to say? That is a dangerous thing to do to the public service: to fire your Minister and at the same time take his Permanent Secretary, in whom he must have confidence and who must have confidence in him, to replace him.

Does he know what he is doing to the public service? Does he know that Ministers cannot be blamed if they now begin to look at their Permanent Secretaries as possible successors? That is what he did. I feel terribly sorry for

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Mr. Gift. Not only does he remove him from his job—I suppose he resigned; one does not know the logistics. It just shows the highhanded manner in which these things are done. He removes him from his job. Before he appoints him as a Senator, he announces that he is Minister, then appoints him as a Senator to be sworn in as Minister. That is how these things go.

But only a person with the utmost contempt for people and for the grossest kind of incompetence would have done such a thing. One is tempted to think that the appointment of Mr. Gift was an act of viciousness, so cold-blooded, and clumsy in its execution that it raises serious questions about the mental health of the Prime Minister. Such an act is bound to destroy the relationship between Ministers and their Permanent Secretaries.

I do not know if Mr. Gift was a member of the party. Maybe he was not; maybe he was, it does not matter, because we appoint people to the Senate who are not members of our party, but we do not make them Ministers. What we do is, we appoint them here to give them a voice so that they may argue their case.

Madam Speaker: The Member will appreciate that because he is the mover of the Motion I did not interrupt his 45 minutes, but he has 15 minutes more on the last 30 minutes.

Mr. B. Panday: I am much obliged to you, Madam Speaker.

One is bound to ask: Did the Prime Minister get any advice on the appointment of Mr. Gift? As I said, he did a disservice to Mr. Gift.

2.45 p.m.

Were Mr. Gift's credential checked to find out if he was qualified to be a Member of Parliament, to find out if he was a bankrupt, de facto or de jure to find out if he had financial difficulties if he will be embarrassed when he is appointed? Does the Prime Minister, a man with so much political experience, not know that once you are appointed to office you are going to come under scrutiny? Why did he do such a cruel act to Mr. Gift? It seems the Prime Minister has a penchant for appointing to the Senate and making ministers persons who are owing a lot of money and who are undeclared bankrupts or some such thing.

The appointment of Mr. Gift not only embarrassed Mr. Gift, it exposed the poor man to all kinds of humiliation and ridicule internationally. Surely if an investigation were done he would have known that the Jamaican Government had protested against his appointment in an ambassadorial position *[Interruption]* You investigated it? I am glad. With the appointment of Mr. Gift, the Prime

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Minister was further compounding a complaint that had been made in this country.

With the appointment of Mr. Gift as Minister of External Affairs there were then six unelected persons holding the highest offices in this Government who had not faced the polls. That would seem to indicate to us that the Prime Minister prefers to surround himself with persons over whom he holds the absolute sanction and control. To move a person who has a constituency, who was elected an official to have in the House the Member for Port of Spain North, Mr. Desmond Allum, such a distinguished person, in the House *[Interruption]*

Dr. Rowley: It is none of your business.

Mr. B. Panday: It is my business and the nations business—to appoint somebody, who was not elected, to a post over one who was. Do you know this thing would have tasted a little better had the Prime Minister appointed that gentleman as Minister of External Affairs? You are violating the Constitution. That is the point I am making. It is my business that you violate the democratic spirit of the Constitution when you appoint so many persons who were not elected to hold high office when there are persons who were elected, and you walk all over them. That brings me to the appointment of Sen. Dr. The Hon. Lenny Saith.

Madam Speaker: There is a Motion to that effect, Motion 11—anticipation.

Mr. B. Panday: This is just an example of what I am saying, the Prime Minister wants to have around him only wimps: People who cannot squeal. It is a violation of the democratic spirit of the Constitution to have a person acting as Prime Minister of this country when there are people in this House who are his Deputy Political Leaders. *[Interruption]* Why are you so vexed?

Mr. Manning: Nobody is vexed.

Mr. B. Panday: It is an insult to the two Deputy Political Leaders, who have been elected by the people, that every time the Prime Minister has to appoint someone to act as Prime Minister, it is someone who has not been elected by the people of this country. The Constitution anticipates that the Prime Minister of this country should be someone elected from this House. Because it says, "the Prime Minister shall be the person who leads the party that has the majority of seats in the House of Representatives" and, therefore, the Constitution must have meant that people exercising that power should be responsible directly to the people and not responsible to the Prime Minister.

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When a Senator is appointed to act as a Prime Minister, is that an expression of no confidence in your Deputy Leaders? Is he telling them that they are not fit and that a Member who was not elected is more fit to sit as Prime Minister than they who have been elected by the people? These Deputy Leaders do not have the guts to ask. Have they ever dared to ask him why he does that?

In the last few minutes that I have, lest, it be said that I am moving this Motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister because we are on this side, and they are on that side and, therefore, we are partisan, I remind this House that I am not alone in suspecting that all is not well with the Prime Minister.

I refer to several editorials appearing in the newspapers. The first is one appearing in the Trinidad *Guardian* dated Saturday, May 13, 1995 which is captioned, "Father forgive Manning."

It says:

"Reporting on his mission to Hong Kong in a nation-wide broadcast last Sunday night, Prime Minister Patrick Manning said: 'Today I speak to you as the "father" of the nation and as the leader that you have chosen, not because I may, but because I know I must.'"

I am saying that I am not alone. That is what I am trying to tell you.

"If the Prime Minister wanted to set a conundrum before the country, he could not have done a better job than that surprising declaration."

"What Mr. Manning trying to do is to transfer the devotion that Dr. Eric Williams has earned in leading the country from colonialism to independence to his own head? Surely he must understand the difference and the impossibility of such an effort unless, of course, Mr. Manning is beginning to succumb to delusions of grandeur and a level of arrogance that has been the bane of so many leaders before him."

These are not my words. The editorial further goes on to say:

"Mr. Manning, however, made his claim to fatherhood even more paradoxical by the unforgiving treatment of his political "son", Foreign Affairs Minister Ralph Maraj whom he reduced to a portfolio-less status, declaring it to the country even before informing the Minister himself.

"It neither became 'the father' to insult the intelligence of his 'children' by claiming he had a bigger job for Alexander Lau although he had fired the Hong Kong Honorary Consul by fax two weeks before."

2.55 p.m.

These are not my words. So in case you thought I was being—I am now telling you what other people feel in this country, people who claim that they have no political axe to grind.

“It seem that we, too, are having our experience with leaders of government whose heads have grown too big for their crowns.”

Madam Speaker, that was the editorial of the *Trinidad Guardian* of Saturday, May 13, 1995. I now turn to the *Daily Express* editorial of Thursday, May 18, 1995. Referring to the Hong Kong trip itself, it states:

“It was a trip which precipitated appalled national attention onto how Mr. Manning handles himself as a Government leader and a manager of people. The firing of Mr. Lau, as honorary consul in Hong Kong became a hot national issue because of patently implausible reasons given by the Prime Minister. Of these, the latest and most contemptible was that Mr. Lau had been fired so that he could have been hired for a bigger job!

In his May 7 address, Mr. Manning also gave unprecedented offence by gratuitously referring to himself as ‘father of the nation’. When it became known that he had announced the firing of Ralph Maraj without first having notified the Minister, something else clicked. Suddenly, the nation saw in the person of its Prime Minister, not only deviousness but also a high-handedness and mean-spiritedness hardly becoming of one seeking respect as a leader or father’.”

These are harsh words and they do not come out of the mouth of the Leader of the Opposition. They come out of the mouth of the editor of one of the daily newspapers in Trinidad and Tobago. The article goes on:

“We have now to add to Mr. Manning’s account the ugly fiasco of the Gift appointment and resignation. The short-term result can only be instability in the Government and particularly in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.”

Madam Speaker, it is that motive that has prompted me to move this Motion in this House today—the fear of the insecurity which is recognized by persons other than the Opposition Members. The article continues:

“The Prime Minister has proved himself incapable of finessing the ‘reshuffle’ of a single Cabinet position. Without a doubt, this political and diplomatic disaster could have been avoided had there been better consultation and a routine background check.

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These obviously did not take place before the Gift appointment. Which leads to another troubling question, and it is this: from whom, if anyone, is Manning taking advice?"

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member has two minutes more.

Mr. B. Panday: Madam Speaker, thank you very much.

There appeared another editorial, and, as I said, I am reading this so that people who think that I am motivated by some ulterior motive in bringing this Motion would know that we on this side are not the only persons who hold these views.

The Prime Minister, not only does these high-handed things, but he treats the nation with contempt and even the newspapers have picked this up. I quote from an editorial in the *Trinidad Guardian* of Saturday, May 20, 1995, entitled "Manning's problem".

"In announcing the reshuffle of his Cabinet yesterday, Prime Minister Manning revealed as much by the way he did it as by his shifting around of portfolios. Instead of using the forum of Parliament to declare the composition of his 'new Cabinet', Mr. Manning chose to inform the nation of his ministerial changes by issuing a brief statement to the press via the fax machine ..."

It would now appear that the fax machine is an instrument of great danger in the hands of the Prime Minister. Someone should take away his fax machine.

"After all, what other place could be more fitting for this than the nation's Parliament."

Madam Speaker: Will the Member wind up, please.

Mr. B. Panday: I am winding up, Madam Speaker.

"That Mr. Manning has eschewed this forum and has decided instead to issue a short Press release by fax seems to indicate that he is either oblivious of the creditability crisis that swirls around his leadership or he believes the Cabinet changes he has just made..."

would remove all the problems surrounding him.

Madam Speaker, in my reply I should like to show that in spite of all these editorials, there has come about no change in the Prime Minister. So even as late as Sunday he goes to Cedros and promises this country an end to unemployment.

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Madam Speaker, we are sure that there are many Members on this side who would like to support this Motion and we await their contribution.

I beg to move.

Seconded by: Mr. Trevor Sudama.

The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Hon. Keith Sobion): Madam Speaker, there are fewer moments of greater pleasure in one's parliamentary experience than to have to respond to the Member for Couva North.

We were treated again to a display of theatre, a display of drama, *[Interruption]*

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member for Ortoire/Mayaro is making his contribution. If the persons in the public gallery wish to remain in this House, then please be quiet. Contain yourselves and listen to the contributions quietly!

Hon. K. Sobion: Madam Speaker, I was making the point that it is a great pleasure to have to respond to the Member for Couva North with all his theatre and drama, attempted comedy and, most importantly, the absolute lack of substance in the contribution.

The Member for Couva North was at pains to point out that this was not a no confidence Motion in the Government but that it was a no confidence Motion in the Prime Minister. I would want first to examine what distinction he is trying to make when he said that. The Motion itself, as it is framed, lacks substance and he recognized that when he said that there was no recitation of any "whereases" and vaguely referred to recent events as being the cause of this Motion.

3.05 p.m.

If one looks at the publication entitled *The Table*, at Vol. 62 of 1994, in an article headed Confidence Motions Westminster Parliament, the first statement made in that article is that a confidence motion is an important parliamentary device, as it will determine the fate of a government. It is a serious Motion. It is not a question of coming here and raising matters of pure frivolity and asking this House to entertain that kind of debate. I find it very difficult. I sat here for an hour and fifteen minutes and made notes of the Member's contribution.

Dr. Rowley: Where are the notes?

Hon. K. Sobion: These are the notes I have made—one page and one line on the second page. The authors of that article say that a confidence motion—and

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that includes a no confidence motion—is a matter of serious import as it will determine the fate of a government. For us here as parliamentarians—all 36 of us—to come here and listen to the contribution of the Member for Couva North, is in my view a waste of parliamentary time, and as my colleague points out, a vote of no confidence in the Member for Couva North.

Madam Speaker, section 77(1) of the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago says:

"Where the House of Representatives passes a resolution, supported by the votes of a majority of all Members of the House, declaring that it has no confidence in the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister does not within seven days of the passing of such a resolution either resign or advise the President to dissolve Parliament, the President shall revoke the appointment of the Prime Minister."

That is the seriousness of the Motion which was presented by the Member for Couva North. The ultimate objective of a motion of that nature is to call for the dissolution of the Parliament. That is what it means. I am going to approach this matter on that basis of seriousness, quite different from the approach adopted by the Member for Couva North. There is seriousness about the Motion even if he does not recognize it.

We on this side, are part of a team, and we understand the implications, not only by constitutional theory. There is the whole concept of collective responsibility, so if Members opposite seek to pass a motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister, they are seeking to pass a vote of no confidence in the Members of this team. That is what they are seeking to do.

Our constitutional arrangements are quite simple. The Prime Minister has the prerogative to appoint the Ministers of Government, he has the prerogative to assign portfolios to Ministers of Government and we on this side, as Ministers of Government and Members of Parliament, fully understand our responsibility to the country and to the Parliament when we are dealing with the nation's serious business. We are therefore going to approach this debate in a very particular way.

We struck a pledge with the people of Trinidad and Tobago in 1991. When we presented our manifesto to the people, we struck an arrangement with them. We said then what we were going to do on behalf of the people of Trinidad and Tobago, and my colleagues and I on this side are going to demonstrate what we have done in order to uphold that pledge. That is our approach to this debate.

I could fully understand the difficulty of the Member for Couva North. The one and only time that he was ever in government, he was part of a pick-up side that came together and therefore had no responsibility one to the other, which led to the disintegration of a government which had struck a deal in 1986 with the people of Trinidad and Tobago. We on this side are not part of any such pick-up side arrangement as this country saw in the last administration

I could understand why the Member for Tobago East had difficulty with the Member for Couva North. The goodly Gentleman does not understand responsibility. Does not understand team spirit. Does not understand those things which go to make up good government. Quite simply, that is his problem—and I sympathize with the Member for Tobago East in that regard.

Instead of seeking to build a nation, as he ought to have done in the last administration headed by the Member for Tobago East, the Member continues to talk about alienation. That is all he does. The only thing he does is talk about divisions within the society without seeking to be part of a responsible body and organization which is seeking to carry the country forward. He comes here with a frivolous Motion—and if I were in another place, Madam Speaker, and if you were in that other place as well, I would have made a no-case submission on this Motion.

Quite simply this Motion lacks substance, I have borrowed that from my Friend the Member for Diego Martin Central. There is no need for me to refer to it. It is what lawyers would call frivolous, vexatious, null, void and of no effect. That is what it is. I suspect that the Member is getting bad legal advice from the Member for Couva South.

I am concerned that the Member for Couva North does not understand some of the equitable principles which the legal profession understands. I saw an article today, I believe it was in the *Newsday* at page 2, headed "No Confidence in who?" I was forced to observe that one of the principles of equity that I have learnt, was that those who come to equity must come with clean hands. I am beginning to wonder whether the Member for Couva North understands those principles. The Member launched into a airy-fairy attack on the hon. Prime Minister, for his management of what clearly is a cohesive team.

3.15 p.m.

I was at pains to try to understand how the Member for Couva North—I wondered if he had looked at his hands to determine whether they were clean or not; I wondered whether he understood his treatment of the Member for

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Chaguanas. I seem to recall that he did not even, as he is suggesting as being improper, use a fax machine, but his response was, "Hulsie Who?" He had dismissed her from his own mind altogether. I would not even get into the concepts that are expressed in Greek mythology as to how he described the Member for Chaguanas. I am not sure how the Member for Couva North could stand here in this Parliament and seek to move a no confidence Motion in the terms in which he has moved it.

Let me deal with some of the matters that were raised. They occupy the better part of one page. There are matters which do not require my attention because of the constitutional arrangements which exist. The Constitution, as I said before, provides for the Prime Minister to select a Cabinet and to assign portfolios. If anyone is to speak on those matters, it would be the Prime Minister of this country. I am not authorized to speak on those matters, and no one else is, more particularly the Member for Couva North who cannot manage his own ship but wishes to direct the sailing of other people's ship.

I want to speak about the termination of the services of the Honorary Consul in Hong Kong and to set the record straight once and for all on this matter. It may be appropriate to first look at the functions of honorary consuls and the terms and conditions of their appointment.

I quote from the official document of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"Functions: Honorary Consular Representatives shall perform in the area of their jurisdiction such duties as designated by the Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs."

In respect of their terms and conditions, I will refer to a few of those listed here which are relevant:

- (1) They shall be issued with a commission of appointment signed by the Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs for submission to the government of the state wherein they shall have jurisdiction. This document will certify their capacity and show their full names, category and class, the consular district, the seat of the consular post, and the supervising post.
- (2) Will have their appointment terminated at any time for unsatisfactory performance of duties including failure to discharge consular functions and involvement in activities considered by the Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs to be inimical to the national interest of Trinidad and Tobago.

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- (3) At the time of resignation, retirement or dismissal compensations/gratuities shall not be paid.
- (4) Will receive a fund of actual expenditure incurred for official purposes such as postage, telephone calls, telex, fax messages subject to control by the supervising post. However, prior approval must be obtained from the supervising post before committing the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to significant financial expenditure.
- (5) Must bear in mind that the archives of the Honorary Consulate, that is, all official documents including the accountant's notes, files, messages prepared by or addressed to the Honorary Consul in his official capacity are the property of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and not to be used in any way privately in whole or in part or disclosed to any third party without the consent of the head of the supervising post.
- (6) Will during periods of absence defer all routine business of the Consulate until his return to office. Other matters should be referred to the supervising post."

Those are some of the relevant terms and conditions of employment of Honorary Consuls by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

The Government has a responsibility to ensure that its affairs, not only internal but also external, are conducted in such a way as to serve the national interest. By these terms and conditions, honorary consuls are aware of their duties and responsibilities to the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has a duty to act in such a way so as to ensure that the national interest is served and continues to be served.

What happened—and the record of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will bear it out—is that prior to the Government's team going to Hong Kong, the Honorary Consul advised the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I shall read the letter. It is a very short letter which was received from the Honorary Consul. It is a letter which came by fax to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. It is dated March 24, 1995. The Honorary Consul wrote to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who we saw, from the terms and conditions, is the person responsible for certifying him and ensuring that he carries out his function. By fax, the Honorary Consul said:

"Dear Minister,

I treat 1995 as my sabbatical year and I have decided to visit Trinidad in May. My first port of call will be San Francisco on March 28, 1995 and

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thereafter Toronto, New York, Miami, etc, and I will leave for Piarco from Miami on May 03, 1995.

During my absence I have supplied the necessary chops ..."

which I understand is the term used in diplomatic circles for the seals of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago—

“and authorizations to Ms. Costa Khan, the Consulate's Secretary, for the issuance of visas.’

The Government, through the Minister of Foreign Affairs, was advised that the Honorary Consul was treating 1995 as his sabbatical year. I understand that to mean—that he is taking the year off, and that he was leaving the official seals and documents of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago with his Secretary.

3.25 p.m.

Prior to that, I may point out just to paint the picture completely, by memorandum dated September 2, 1994, from the Chief Immigration Officer to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, under the caption: Lack of communication with Honorary Consul, Hong Kong" the Chief Immigration Officer had this to say:

"Since the relocation of the Consulate of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Hong Kong, this department has been unable to communicate with that office.

A facsimile message has recently been sent asking that office to confirm receipt of the fax, the new address and the new telephone and fax numbers but there has been no response.

A number of matters that the Consulate has been asked to attend to are still pending.

Kindly advise whether you have any other means of communicating with the Consulate in Hong Kong."

That is the state of play before the hon. Prime Minister and his team went to Hong Kong. The office of Honorary Consul is what it says; it is an honorary position. It is a position which you would note, my having read the terms and conditions of service, is intended to serve the people of Trinidad and Tobago in that extended area outside our national borders.

So that when the official team arrived in Hong Kong and found that the nation's business could not be conducted in the way that it ought to be conducted,

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it was necessary for action to be taken to protect the national interest. There is no other way that one can run a country. No honorary consul or any other person supposedly acting on behalf of the Government can take it upon himself to act in a way outside the narrow interest which is required in serving the interest of the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

I have referred to the terms and conditions of employment of service of honorary consul. One of those that I referred to, I believe at (xiii), was that honorary consul:

"Must bear in mind that the archives of the Honorary Consulate, that is, all official documents, including their contents, notes, files...are the property of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and not to be used in any way privately, in whole or in part, or disclosed to any illicit third party without the consent of the Head of the Supervising Post."

Yet we have, by fax communication from the Honorary Consul, that he had left all the official documents with his executive secretary.

You will note as well, that under the terms and conditions of honorary consul—it is stated at (xv):

"Will, during the period of absence defer all routine business of the Consulate until his return to office; other matters should be referred to the Supervising Post."

In those circumstances and in order to protect the national interest and the interest of the people of Trinidad and Tobago there was no other course available to the Government but to take the necessary measures to ensure that all official documents, etc., housed in the Consulate were taken control of by the necessary and relevant authorities.

So that in the circumstances, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the body responsible for certifying the post of Honorary Consul, the person who issues the certificate—the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—was directed on April 24, 1995, to write to the Honorary Consul then for Hong Kong in the following terms:

"Dear Mr. Lau,

This is to acknowledge receipt of your recent facsimile message in which you conveyed information to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of your absence from Hong Kong on sabbatical leave during 1995.

I have also been directed to advise you of changes which will affect the Trinidad and Tobago Consular representation in Hong Kong, in the context of

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our foreign policy review arising from the recently concluded Heads of Mission Conference held in Port of Spain earlier this month.

In this regard, the Government has decided to terminate your Commission as Honorary Consul.

During my official visit here in Hong Kong, I shall be making appropriate arrangements for the Chief of Protocol, Mr. Patrick Edwards, to collect all Consular paraphernalia on behalf of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

Thanking you for your valuable services rendered in the past."

It was signed by the Permanent Secretary on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Quite clearly, there was a circumstance existing when the affairs of Trinidad and Tobago in Hong Kong were virtually in a state of limbo, having regard to the communication coming from the Honorary Consul, that for a period of perhaps a year, there was going to be a state of suspension, putting it at its best, of the activities of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in Hong Kong, and it became necessary, having regard to all those matters, including the terms and conditions of honorary consul, for any responsible Government to take the action which was taken.

That, quite simply, is what is considered "the Lau Affair". That, quite simply, is what transpired.

Mr. Sudama: Would the Minister give way to a question? Could the Minister inform this House whether having fired Mr. Lau, he appointed someone else to carry on the functions of Consul in Hong Kong immediately or thereafter?

Hon. K. Sobion: Madam Speaker, I referred to the acts of a responsible government, and certainly a responsible government would take the necessary steps immediately to ensure that the business of the people of Trinidad and Tobago continues.

The Member for Oropouche was too short in government to understand some of governmental operations. *[Interruption]* I will be more serious than your Leader was—the Member for Couva North.

A responsible government would take the necessary steps to ensure that the business of the people of Trinidad and Tobago continues, and the necessary steps were initiated. By letter dated May 5, 1995, immediately on the return of the prime-ministerial delegation to Hong Kong, the High Commission in London was

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advised in the following terms. This is a letter from the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the High Commission in London. We must remember that Hong Kong is a colony of the United Kingdom. It states:

3.35 p.m.

"I wish to inform that on April 24, 1995 the Government of Trinidad and Tobago terminated the services of Mr. Alexander Lau as Honorary Consul of Trinidad and Tobago in Hong Kong. (Please see copy of letter attached for ease of reference).

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is therefore seeking Exequatur for the appointment of...as Honorary Consul in Trinidad and Tobago...
[Interruption]

I will not be interrupted.

Mr. Sudama: Could the Member tell us whether the Government of Trinidad and Tobago informed the United Kingdom Government of the visit of the Prime Minister to Hong Hong?

Madam Speaker: Let the Minister reply and then I will entertain the question. Proceed, please.

Hon. K. Sobion: Madam Speaker, the Member for Oropouche is getting impatient. He asks a question, I am in the midst of answering it and he pops up and down like a "Jack in the box"

In response to the Member for Oropouche. Immediately upon return of the Prime Minister and his delegation from Hong Kong a communication was dispatched to the High Commission in London advising in the following terms:

"I wish to inform that on April 24, 1995 the Government of Trinidad and Tobago terminated the services of Mr. Alexander Lau as Honorary Consul of Trinidad and Tobago in Hong Kong. See copy of letter attached.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is therefore seeking Exequatur for the appointment of "X" as Honorary Consul of Trinidad and Tobago in Hong Kong and "Y" as the Vice-Consul."

And giving the pertinent information with respect to the two gentlemen.

"It would be appreciated, if you would formally notify the British Government of the termination of Mr. Lau's appointment and seek Exequatur for the appointment of 'X' and 'Y' as Honorary Consul and Honorary Vice-Consul respectively.

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Please exert all efforts in persuading the appropriate authorities to expedite the granting of approval for the appointment of the new Honorary Consul and Vice-Consul.

Your urgent attention to the foregoing will be appreciated."

Madam Speaker, that was the immediate action taken by a responsible Government immediately upon the termination of the services of Mr. Lau. I have refrained from calling the names of the persons involved because the matter is still before the British Government for final approval.

In response to the other question which was raised previously by the Member for Oropouche; yes, the British Government was informed of the Prime Minister's visit and did approve of the visit to Hong Kong.

Mr. Sudama: In what capacity?

Hon. K. Sobion: Is it a supplemental question? Those are the facts relating to this matter. Not fax. Everyone is caught up by this whole question of 'fired by fax' and it sounds like good headline, so that the Member for Couva North is persuaded by the Member for Couva South to bring a Motion of no confidence in the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Prime Minister with no facts. Set-up again! It happened before and I have warned the Member for Couva North—he is a friend of long standing—to be careful from whom he takes advice.

That basically was the substance of the argument advanced by the Member for Couva North in support of his Motion. He raised other matters which fall within the province of the Prime Minister and those will be dealt with appropriately. He raised the question of Haiti, which everyone knows was not any jaunt, was not any foreign affairs mission.

It was a visit by members of the National Security Council to the soldiers of Trinidad and Tobago who were serving in Haiti during the Christmas and Carnival periods. As a measure of goodwill it was thought appropriate that the soldiers in Haiti should be entertained and should be exposed to some measure of good-will coming from Trinidad and Tobago.

Madam Speaker, I was on that mission and I can tell you that not only the soldiers of Trinidad and Tobago, but also members of the West Indian and American contingents who were confined to barracks in Cap Haitien well appreciated the gesture of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

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That example having been set, other governments that now have soldiers stationed in Haiti are also following the course which the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has set.

We have set a course for this Government. We have set that course not in a whimsical way. It is a course which was developed by treating with the population of Trinidad and Tobago prior to 1991. It is a course which was documented in the manifesto of the PNM in 1991 and which was presented to the population. *[Interruption]*

"We care about you." That is the motto which underlines the manifesto. We also pride ourselves, not only on that motto "We care about you," but also on another motto, "Getting the job done." And that is what we are doing.

Let me say first, we are getting the job done. The international image out there of Trinidad and Tobago, after three and one half years of this administration is greatly improved. I recall a statement reportedly made by the Member for Tobago East, and one has to be careful about how one analyzes that statement. The statement quite simply said, as reported, that the Member for Tobago East indicated to the media that whenever he travels abroad he is treated as though he were still the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.

There are several ways of trying to understand that statement. One possible interpretation is that the Member for Tobago East considers himself to be highly respected and, therefore, he finds himself being treated in a particular way when he goes abroad.

The second possible interpretation may very well be the fact that the image of Trinidad and Tobago has so grown under this administration that even a former Prime Minister is treated with the kind of respect that former Prime Ministers of other Commonwealth countries and other countries are treated. My only concern when I analyze the statement is that I wonder whether the Member for Tobago East advises those people who think that way, that he is no longer the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.

3.45 p.m.

In getting the job done, we have been able to portray Trinidad and Tobago in a certain light; we have been able to develop the image of Trinidad and Tobago as a progressive, developing country. *[Interruption]* Even if one treats it as pure symbolism, the fact that the Association of Caribbean States has agreed to have its headquarters in Trinidad and Tobago is an illustration of that fact.

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We propose, in the course of this debate, to demonstrate how over the last three and one-half years we have been able to get the job done. If one analyzes previous administrations, one will find that there have been few which have sought to deal in a very serious way with what was considered to be intractable problems. My colleagues will demonstrate how we have approached our ministerial responsibilities in the best interests of the people of Trinidad and Tobago. For the moment I shall only foreshadow some of those matters, but the relevant Ministers will deal with them.

We are treating this debate in a serious way, unlike the Member for Couva North. We understand quite clearly the implications of the debate. We understand the need to express in this debate the policies that are being followed by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and how they have manifested themselves in the action taken by the respective Ministers and ministries. This is the team that is working under the motto, *We care*. As any good team, there must be a good leader and we on this side are satisfied that not only do we have a good team, but we also have an excellent leader. *[Interruption]*

The Member for St. Augustine must be living in some other place. We have had today a manifestation by the population of Trinidad and Tobago of how they feel about this Motion which was presented by the Member for Couva North.

I indicated that I would foreshadow some of the matters which will be raised by my ministerial colleagues. I think it is necessary in order to demonstrate, under the wide umbrella of getting the job done, what this Government has achieved in the last three and one-half years.

When the Government announced its intention to liberalize the economy, there were howls of protest that thousands of jobs would be lost. It started at 43,000 and gradually, as the policies were introduced, it was reduced to 20,000 and we have seen, after a couple years of our implementation of that policy, that the unemployment rate has dropped to 17.5 per cent.

We have seen the benefits of liberalizing the economy; the benefits of liberalizing the foreign exchange rate and I think it was just today that there was a report in the newspapers where the Governor of the Central Bank reported that the reserve was US \$350 million, and that after we took that decision to float the Trinidad and Tobago dollar, also there was US \$400 million held by individuals in Trinidad and Tobago in commercial banks.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member's speaking time has expired.

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

Question put and agreed to.

Hon. K. Sobion: Thank you, Madam Speaker, the whole purpose of the Government's action is set in the context of investment attraction, providing a climate whereby local investors will have confidence in the economy of Trinidad and Tobago and put something back into the system.

Linked to that are the policies in the energy sector and we have seen that bear fruit already. We have seen the level of investment in the energy sector that has taken place over the last three and one-half years and again, those are matters which will be addressed by my ministerial colleagues.

With regard to the handling of the national debt, we are now in a position where we can more comfortably deal with Government revenues.

In the field of education, the unretractable problem of Common Entrance Examinations and secondary education has been addressed by the Minister of Education in the education paper presented to Parliament. We have developed a programme which will see the phasing out of the Common Entrance Examination and the moving into a system of universal secondary education. Those are problems which previous administrations did not seek to address in any meaningful way.

Decentralization of the health sector has proceeded apace. We have tackled what has been the bane of many an administration before—how to address the problem of health. The Ministry of Health has developed a policy and programme which, when fully implemented, will ensure better health care for the population of Trinidad and Tobago. I can go on and on, but my ministerial colleagues will deal with matters such as the condition of our roads and the delivery of services in terms of water and electricity.

These have been some of the problems which previous administrations have had to face but did not grapple with. This is why I say that this administration, which the Member for Couva North is seeking to impugn by his puny Motion of no confidence, is a Government that is getting the job done. We will not be distracted by the 'ole' talk. We will not be distracted by the mischief, histrionics, fasting or whatever. Madam Speaker, I find they false'.

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3.55 p.m.

One other area, perhaps I should touch on, is the administration of justice which falls largely within my purview. Perhaps you will permit me, Madam Speaker, to say a few words about it.

This is an area which, over the passage of time, has been left to fester and become more and more of a problem. In March, 1992 a few months after coming to office, we appointed a team of persons to analyze the problem and to come up with solutions. That report is commonly known as the *Gurley Report*.

We are at the point where we are implementing some of these proposals. We have done a number of things and they all impact on the crime situation, the administration of justice and together, when we get all those measures in place, I am certain that we are going to roll back some of the difficulties which we have experienced over the years.

In terms of legislation alone, off the top we can speak about the bail legislation—strenuously resisted by my friends on the other side—which provided a mechanism for dealing with repeat offenders, ensuring that they were not unleashed on an unsuspecting public. The preliminary inquiries legislation, again, resisted strenuously on the other side—a measure which is intended to expedite the hearing of preliminary enquiries, and therefore, expedite the criminal justice process.

We have seen other measures such as the identification parade regulations which we have been hearing about year after year, administration after administration; people talking about one-way mirrors and two-way mirrors for years until this administration. The regulations were put in place, the relevant identification mirrors were put in place in several police stations all in an attempt to deal with some of the difficult and intractable problems which administration after administration had left there to fester.

We have dealt with the young offenders, providing in an amendment to the young offenders legislation, a mechanism whereby young offenders can be exposed to training outside the detention centres, in an attempt to deal with the problem of youth-crime and so on. These are problems which were left there, not attended to at all, and this is part of this administration's approach to deal with that kind of problem.

The dangerous drugs legislation, Madam Speaker, the same thing, again, strenuous resistance on the other side. International treaty signed by the last

administration providing for certain obligations to be undertaken, when we presented the legislation, we were met with strenuous opposition until they were forced to capitulate in the wake of public opinion. That is the kind of Parliament we have to conduct in this year of our Lord, 1995. Yet they come here talking about vote of no confidence in the Prime Minister.

Madam Speaker, you would hear today, this evening, tonight and tomorrow morning, from my ministerial colleagues. The Member for Couva North introduced the Motion and the only way to deal with a Motion of no confidence, is to demonstrate that the people have confidence in the Government. To demonstrate that, we shall state our policies and actions one by one, Minister by Minister, Member by Member, until tomorrow morning.

Mr. Humphrey: Does that include the Prime Minister?

Mr. Manning: Yes.

Hon. K. Sobion: We are transforming a society. We who are Members of this team, are moving towards the 21st century. I end simply by saying, we, the Members of this team, this administration, this Government, affirm full confidence in the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and in the team of PNM Ministers who form the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago and those others who represent constituencies in Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Trevor Sudama (*Oropouche*): Madam Speaker, I would not be saying much about the speech by the Member for Ortoire/Mayaro, he did not say much and there is really very little for me to respond to. The Minister said that the Member for Couva North's speech lacked substance, and I am wondering if he is now an expert in substances. [*Laughter*]

There is just one point I want to address that the Minister raised. The Minister talked about our parliamentary system of government—the Westminster system where a vote of no confidence is designed to bring the Government. The reality of our local political system is that whatever misdemeanors the Prime Minister and his Government may commit, there is a culture that they support the misdeeds of one another to the bitter end.

It is quite a different culture in the United Kingdom parliamentary system. That is a larger parliament where people operate on different bases and the hard party lines drawn and the support till death, are not a feature of that system. So to come here to say that the objective of this Motion is to bring down the Government is to fool whom? Everybody knows what happens to the PNM.

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The objective of the Motion is to highlight the incapacity of the Prime Minister to carry out the functions he has been designated to do as Prime Minister of the country. This is the objective of the Motion and in the final analysis the country would decide, whether in fact the Prime Minister has performed his job in his prime-ministerial capacity has been done with any degree of competence, any kind of assurance and whether it has been done in the interest of the Trinidad and Tobago.

That is the only issue of the Motion that the Member raised. All he was doing was merely rehashing the so-called virtues of the PNM Government, but that would be dealt with in due course.

I want to locate this motion, firstly, in the so-called Westminster system in which we operate. The question is, whether the Prime Minister is suited by temperament, character, personality, experience, education, whatever qualifications [*Interruption*] Is the Member for San Fernando East suited, does he have the competence to hold the office of Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago? [*Interruption*]

Mr. Maharaj: No, he does not.

Mr. T. Sudama: That is the gist. Do not anticipate me, wait until I am finished.

Mr. Humphrey: Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister thinks he is suited to be the father of this nation.

Mr. T. Sudama: This Motion deals with whether the Prime Minister understands the standards of behaviour that go with that high office, and whether by his actions he has adhered to those unwritten standards.

I want to emphasize to this House the enormous power which resides in a Prime Minister under our system of Government. The Prime Minister has the power and authority as chairman of Cabinet, as the Executive of this land, and his views always carry in the Cabinet. He is the head of the Executive; he has powers of appointment and revocation without question.

I want to draw a little reference. In the American system of government the President is elected directly. Party affiliation is merely a secondary consideration in that direct election. Therefore with the American President, has much greater claim to hire and fire at whim, because people have elected him directly—his Cabinet, senior judicial officers etc.

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In the American system Cabinet Ministers are subject to veto power of the Legislature. The President can only recommend a Cabinet Minister. If the Senate says that he ought not to serve as a Cabinet Minister, then that person has to be replaced. We do not have those checks and balances in our system. Here the Executive is supreme, it sits in the Legislature, it dominates the Legislature and the Prime Minister is head of that Executive. Do you understand the lack of restraint in our system? Therefore any Prime Minister who understands the values, and the traditions, who understands the ethos of the Westminster system would act with a certain degree of restraint in the exercise of his power.

4.05 p.m.

The Prime Minister has this enormous power. He has veto power over senior public servants—Permanent Secretaries, chief technical officers, Commissioner of Police, Chief Justice, whatever it is. He has the final power to approve such a person. Even those posts recommended by the service commissions or other agencies. His views dominate the Cabinet and the Executive. The Executive dominates the Legislature; unlike the American system.

The positions taken would, in the vast majority of cases, carry the day—that is the position the Prime Minister wants to be taken—both in the Executive and in the legislature. There are few checks and balances in our system. As leader of the party, he has the power to dispense patronage. Therefore, there is very little check and balance in the system on the exercise of power in this country, and there are very few options for accountability.

Let us take what happens in other practising democracies. They have a very vibrant media. The less said about the media in Trinidad and Tobago the better. Those who have the controlling interest in the media in the final analysis, bow and bend to the whims and fancies of the Government. That is what happens here.

Mr. Manning: That is not true.

Mr. T. Sudama: We do not have media to exercise that kind of authority. We have an excuse for media. What we do have also is a system where the Opposition in the Parliament does not have the power. Because of our system where there is no accountability, no proper committee system; one cannot question Ministers or the Prime Minister. One cannot do anything here. It is always at the end of the day the “ayes” have it, and that is the end of story. This is the system we operate. Later I shall discuss the Prime Minister's attitude. Where a special majority is required to pass legislation to amend the Constitution and we

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have a little residual power, he wants to abolish even that. I shall come to that later.

This system we operate here provides the conditions for the exercise of power by a constitutional dictator. This is why we have been arguing in this House for a reform of the system, so that some checks and balances can be put, particularly on people like the Member for San Fernando East who, by an accident of history, became Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. The use of power and prime-ministerial power requires some restraint. It must be rooted in the traditions which we are alleged to have inherited from the United Kingdom. We have not really acquired those traditions. We are merely exercising executive power and prime-ministerial power without any form or check or restraint.

The Prime Minister is supposed to be an exemplar in the society. He said in a speech in this Parliament on January 7, 1992:

"If we consider ourselves to be the exemplars, as we ought to be, surely we have a responsibility to so conduct our affairs in a manner that redounds to the credit of the society and in a manner that will uphold the dignity of this honourable House."

Has he conducted his prime ministerial functions and responsibilities in a manner to redound to the credit of the society? The answer has to be a resounding no. He has been most incompetent. He is a man who has tried to speak untruth; a man given to propaganda—as I shall outline later on. What do we expect of a Prime Minister? Leadership qualities, a man who has vision. Does one see the Member for San Fernando East having vision of anything?

Mr. Maharaj: Give them, Trevor!

Mr. T. Sudama: Except the vision of the fellow who was praying in the square, whom he took to Hong Kong with him. A man of vision; a man with the strength of convictions. When he believes in something, he does not twist and turn. If he feels that Ralph Maraj ought to be dismissed, then the strength of convictions should say let him remain dismissed.

Mr. Maharaj: Yes, but he is weak!

Mr. T. Sudama: He has no commitment except trying to hold on to power—like all the other Ministers—by the hook or the crook in the PNM Government. Despite the disenchantment among them, they will not vote for this Motion because their culture is to hang on to power by any means, even to the disrespect of their own convictions.

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A Prime Minister is a man who must exercise judgment in running the affairs of a country. Was judgment exercised in dismissing the Member for San Fernando West and in appointing his Permanent Secretary, Mr. Knowlson Gift, without checking Mr. Gift's record to see whether he is worthy of holding political office?

He must uphold the integrity of his office. By his utterances and actions he has fallen far short. He must have a capacity for decision making. He must have a sense of justice. I wonder if in the dismissal of the Member for San Fernando West he has exercised that sense of justice. He must have a capacity to speak the truth. The Member for San Fernando East has not, in his long career in the Parliament, displayed any capacity to level with the population and to state the realities, the truth.

4.15 p.m.

When we make an assessment of the Prime Minister against these criteria that I have outlined, where does the Member for San Fernando East fall? Let me give some examples. One has to question here today whether the utterances and promises of the Prime Minister reflect competence or incompetence; whether they reflect knowledge or ignorance; whether they reflect naivety, deceit and dissimulation; whether it is a penchant for blatant propaganda and hollow promises; whether one also has to question whether the Prime Minister's performance in this Parliament and elsewhere in the country reflects—and I am saying here today that his performance as Prime Minister for the three and a half years that he has been here, reflects gross incompetence, a gross ignorance of certain basic matters, naivety, above all deceit and deception.

Let us look at the first issue. His promise that before he even got into power he had a grand plan for the creation of jobs which he would have implemented immediately he got into power.

Hon. Member: I thought they were only talking about the past six months.

Mr. T. Sudama: I have to lay the background. I am coming up to the present day, what he said at Cedros. But in order to fully appreciate what he said at Cedros and the man's capacity to speak the untruth and to delve in blatant propaganda, I have to go back a little. The Prime Minister said:

"We have a plan as soon as we get into Government, we are going to create jobs as they have never been created before."

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Trying to fool the population. But you know, when he was in the Opposition he said on March 19, 1991, in the *Daily Express* there is a report as follows:

"Manning: Government promising jobs to fool the people."

I wonder what he is doing now. But there is a history in his attempt to fool whole sectors of the population, but he would never really succeed in that.

In the Trinidad *Guardian* of April 16, 1992 the headline states: "\$1 billion for jobs. 21 projects to begin soon." One billion dollars in construction projects was promised at the National Symposium on Employment and Job Creation. The attempt is to give the public the impression that jobs will be here in their thousands and that everybody will be happy; there will be no end to the job creation.

On page 8 in a statement he made to the nation on January 4, 1993, people have recognized that all this activity he boasts about is lies, untruths.

"All this activity in 1993 spells one thing, jobs, especially in South Trinidad which had been subjected to depressed economic activity for some time now."

I want to ask the Member for La Brea how many jobs were in his constituency since the PNM got into power in order to relieve the depressed situation. How many jobs in the whole of South?

Mr. Bereaux: Many.

Mr. T. Sudama: He has constituents complaining day in and day out.

Then in the *Express* of December 26, let me read:

"Grandiose promises..."

This is 1994 now. So you see how I am coming up; I am laying the foundation to show the manner in which he attempts to deceive this population. The man has a gift of deception, among other gifts.

"Grandiose promises of a big construction boom that would push-start the economy and create thousands of jobs remained just that as the year 1994 came to a close.

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The past year has been a virtual outpouring of pie-in-the-sky promises—of oil booms, soup kitchens and construction booms, little or none of which has materialised.

Prime Minister Patrick Manning in his address at the signing ceremony for the expansion of the Trinidad and Tobago Methanol Company declared that: 'Construction goes into boom in 1994!.'

So if we did not have a construction boom, we are having an oil boom and if we do not have an oil boom, we are having a tourist boom. All I could conclude is that we have, a "boom-boom" government. They are moving from one boom to another, and their performance over the years has shown this.

I come now to the Prime Minister's statement at Cedros only on Monday. Do you know what he said? He is either ignorant of economics, or something has to be wrong with him mentally. He said that there would be jobs for all. No system in the world has ever had jobs for everybody. That has never been the experience of any country in the world in the history of the world. The only time when you get somewhere near to full employment—and there is a difference between full employment and jobs for all. In full employment there is a minimum level percentage of structural unemployment and that is appreciated and acknowledged, but people still call that full employment. Here he is promising not full employment, but jobs for all. The only time that you come anywhere near to jobs for all or full employment is under conditions of war or in a totalitarian regime. In no other kind of society any Prime Minister would make such a stupid, foolish and ignorant statement, that his Government would create jobs for all.

So you would understand why I had to go back a little in time.

On the economy, remember just before they came into Government, the Prime Minister was speaking about a letter of comfort to the IMF. There is no such thing as a letter of comfort. You give comfort to a little child. You put something in his mouth called a comforter. I want to tell you, the IMF is no little child, but he wants to give a letter of comfort to the IMF. It shows his ignorance of these basic matters. No Prime Minister ought to be going round the world and be recorded as saying his Government will give a letter of comfort to the IMF. He just makes himself a laughing stock.

4.25 p.m.

He goes beyond. He does not understand economics, ignorant and incompetent as he is. Let me quote the Prime Minister on his idea of how to create

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growth in the economy. I wonder if his Minister of Finance agrees with that? What they were trying to do was to make a case for paying the public servants the money which was owed to them. I am not here debating that the public servants ought not to be paid their money. Of course, they should be paid their moneys; but will the manner in which it is done, create growth in the economy? The hon. Prime Minister, this bush economist said:

“The point that we are making is that as you cut the disposable incomes of a significant section of the population and in a significant way you see the negative effects of that in the taxation revenues from individuals and that, you do not get. It has the effect of increasing the disposable income in terms of a significant section of the population and it is on that basis, together with other measures, that have been included in the Budget that this Government is able to predict economic expansion in 1992.”

So you inject money into the system by Government increasing the wage bill and that is the way he was predicting economic expansion in 1992.

Why stop at that? If economic expansion is dependent on the Government injecting money into the system via wages or any other means, then the more the merrier. I wonder if the Member for St. Ann's East has the view that that is the way to create expansion of the economy. If he does not share that view, he must advise the Member for San Fernando East to be a little more circumspect when he speaks about how to prime the economy to create expansion.

I am saying he has displayed incompetence in his capacity to understand basic economic issues, and therefore, he does not have that capacity to hold that high office of Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. He should first educate himself or keep his mouth shut. He should not speak on matters on which he has no knowledge. *[Interruption]*

I am speaking on the Motion. You spoke for one and a quarter hour and you said absolutely nothing.

I am trying to outline the propaganda that he has been pouring forth from time to time in an attempt to deceive and befuddle this population. I am saying he is not fit to hold the office of Prime Minister of this country. *[Noise from public gallery]*

Madam Speaker: Persons in the public gallery, I warn you, again, to contain yourselves.

Mr. T. Sudama: I want to quote from a statement made by the Prime Minister on Monday, January 4, 1993 to the nation. In that statement the Prime

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Minister went to lengths to speak about the energy policy, the revitalization of the energy sector and the enormous investment inflows that were coming into the energy sector.

When one looks at all that he has spoken about up to today, June 14, 1995, one sees that this country does not have an energy policy. There is a half-baked "White Paper" on energy which was put before this House and we have heard nothing about that. But the boast goes on that with all these ventures, the merger of Trintoc/Trintopec will create enormous investment and so many jobs. Petrotrin will initiate a heavy oil project which involves the early drilling of 106 wells. This of course, is going to increase the employment levels especially in the service sector in South Trinidad.

4.30 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

5.07 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Mr. T. Sudama: Madam Speaker, when we took the tea break, I was making the point that in his speech to the nation on January 4, 1993, the Prime Minister gave the impression, and obviously he was trying to deceive the nation, that there were a number of investments in the energy sector the end result of which would be to create a large number of jobs. The Prime Minister spoke about the merger of Petrotrin and their having been involved in heavy oil projects. He spoke about Amoco (Trinidad) Oil Company intending to drill the deepest well. He spoke about the Southern Basin Consortium. He spoke about Unocal Corporation drilling in Block 89/3 off the north-eastern coast of Trinidad.

The Prime Minister also spoke about the Trintomar field, the South East Coast Consortium licence being successfully reassigned to Enron Exploration Company, and he spoke of a number of these investments in the energy sector. Then he said that all this activity in 1993 spelt one thing—jobs, giving the impression that the unemployment situation would be significantly affected by these levels of investment.

His own Minister of Finance, the Member for St. Ann's East, has said time and again that we are not going to solve the unemployment problem in this country by investment in the energy sector and by investment in capital intensive industries. So, the Minister has one view and the Member for San Fernando East, so intent on deception and propaganda, speaks to the nation with another view.

Again, every time people raise the question of lack of jobs there is talk about investment coming in the billions. Just hold on and wait. That is the strategy that is being employed.

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Way back in January 1993, this Prime Minister told the country that:

"Sponsored by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), the Mission will comprise potential investors in agribusiness, tourism, energy ..."

There has been some investment in tourism, but of what long-term benefit to the economy, I should like them to tell us. I should also like to know at what cost the investment in the energy sector was attracted. Hear the areas:

"agribusiness, tourism, energy, banking, light manufacturing ..."

From 1993 to 1995, two and one-half years have expired, I should like them to tell me here, how much investment they have in these sectors and what impact it has made on the unemployment situation in the country? As I said, the man is a stranger to the truth. Let them tell the country the facts rather than holding out false promises.

Let me come to a nice one—the reduction in the utility rates, so confidently promised by the Prime Minister. I am quoting from the *Daily Express* of April 5, 1993. I should like to preface this quotation by saying that this is laying the foundation for the pretext of bringing private foreign involvement in the public utilities. The real reason, I suspect, is what deals they can make with the private investors coming here. They want to “bamboozle” the population that it is only through those means that they will have an efficient utility service and reduced rates.

I should like to tell persons in the public gallery—and I wish I could have told those outside—that when the hike in electricity and water rates comes about, I wonder if they would still be waving PNM flags. *[Interruption]* They will still be waving PNM flags?

The article reads:

"... we may very well ask some investor to come in to develop water and send it to the distribution system at a fee and that water, I assure you, will be lower than the cost at which water is now produced by WASA,' Manning said. He added that the result will be a lower price of water for the consumer and a better water supply.

Recognizing that half of the available water in the country was lost through leakage, Manning said the leakage detection programme needed to rectify this would take as much as five to seven years.

It was too long a timeframe, he argued, stressing that new sources of water had to be found.”

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I should like the Government to tell us where these new sources of water have been found since April 1993 and who has found them?

"Here too the stark reality that faces us is that we now have to consider private investment involvement in the electricity generation'. He added that this may not be a bad thing as some people may think, in fact, it may be a very good thing because one of the advantages of that is that the power generation company that comes in to make available its expertise in terms of maintenance arrangements can have access to preferential arrangements for the purchase of spares.

This will have the effect of reducing the operating cost of TTEC and therefore lowering the cost of a unit of electricity, Manning said."

Here we have the Prime Minister stating in very unequivocal terms that we shall have lower water rates by private sector involvement and lower electricity rates. I should like to quote from Mr. Milton Quashie, Director of Operations of the Water and Sewerage Authority. He makes two statements which I would like to quote from the Daily *Express* dated Saturday, June 3, 1995.

"This country's water problems will not be solved until people pay more for water.

Ironically, this country's water problems will not be solved simply by increasing the Water and Sewerage Authority's operating budget. Fixing pumps and sealing leaks will not solve the problems, but higher rates will ...

He says people will not appreciate the value of water until they pay for it at its economic rate—about 6 or 7 times what WASA's customers pay today ..."

Milton Quashie ought to know, and if I am to believe anyone, I would believe Milton Quashie who is the Operations Director of WASA, rather than the word of the Member for San Fernando East, a man who only speaks the truth when his tongue slips. I continue:

"Faced with the task of changing the consumption patterns of the entire population, the operations director suggests closing up shop, forgetting about WASA's 3,000 miles of underground pipe and 144 booster stations, and offering truckborne water like private contractors. Quashie has no problems with such operations because, he says, at \$120 per truckload, people pay an economic rate for the water they use."

Do you all hear and understand? Do you understand?

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5.15 p.m.

Madam Speaker: Would the Member please address the Chair?

Mr. T. Sudama: Through you, Madam Speaker. Do you understand why we say that we cannot take the Prime Minister's word? He is a deceiver; he ought to know the facts. If he does not know he should consult his Minister of Public Utilities as to what the facts actually are with respect to the increase or decrease in water rates. As I speak, the evidence builds up about the incapacity of the Member for San Fernando East to hold the high office of Prime Minister of this country.

I want to deal with the personality traits that are emerging. There is a saying that power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. The Prime Minister's behaviour was very different when he was not Prime Minister. His accession to power, as I pointed out earlier on, to virtual absolute power under our system of government, has brought to the fore certain character traits of which this country has to be very sceptical.

I want to quote from a noted sociologist and political thinker. He says:

"As in private life..."

Madam Speaker: Could the hon. Member quote the author for the benefit of the reporter?

Mr. T. Sudama: Yes, Madam Speaker, I will give it to the *Hansard* Reporters. The quote continues:

"...one differentiates between what a man thinks and says of himself and what he really is and does, so in historical struggles one must distinguish still more the phrases and fancies of parties and leaders from their real organism and their real interests, their conception of themselves from the reality

Madam Speaker: Who is the author?

Mr. T. Sudama: The author is the noted sociologist and political thinker Karl Marx. *[Interruption]* Do you think that this is correct? *[Interruption]* I am quoting now from Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Do the Members opposite have any objection to Archbishop Desmond Tutu? *[Interruption]*.

Did you hear what the Minister said, Madam Speaker? Disrespect to this imminent reverend gentleman.

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The Member for Diego Martin West said I started with boom-boom and I am coming now to tutu. *[Interruption]* It is not on me, it is on the very illustrious gentleman. What I am coming to, is how this Prime Minister behaves, his attitude to a different view. I quote from an article by Archbishop Desmond Tutu from the Sunday *Express* dated January 1, 1995:

"We are aware too of an impatience with, indeed a hostility towards different points of view."

He is talking about certain regimes, Madam Speaker.

"People are scared that there may be too many options competing for their patronage in the market place, thus exacerbating their present uncertainty and sense of insecurity."

They do not want to hear another view.

"Hence the upsurge of fundamentalism."

Here we are talking about political fundamentalism.

"There can be only one truth authoritatively propounded by someone who cannot be challenged—in reality not authoritative but authoritarian."

Let me go back to this Prime Minister. In a speech to this House on the Central Tenders Board (Amdt.) Bill on January 15, 1993, this is what he said of the Opposition (he cannot tolerate another view) he should not be operating in this system at all. He said:

"What they believe the end result is going to be is the destruction of the Government."

Then he raised a Motion here and asked for an investigation. The quote continues:

"What, in fact, they are doing is seeking to undermine the integrity of parliamentary democracy..."

By our merely asking for an investigation into the irregularities in the Government, they conclude we are trying to undermine the integrity of parliamentary democracy.

That is laying the foundation, Madam Speaker; that is someone who cannot brook an alternative view and he wants to get rid of the Opposition. Having said so in 1993, this is what Prime Minister Manning said in the Sunday *Guardian* dated March 19, 1995:

"Manning: We need to get rid of the Opposition." *[Interruption]*

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Of course, Madam Speaker, one can see that the mentality is still there.

"Political Leader of the ruling PNM, Prime Minister Patrick Manning yesterday called on party members to get rid of the Opposition."

[Interruption]

Madam Speaker: Persons in of the public gallery, I am again warning you that if you have to run a running commentary on the Member for Oropouche, I am not going to allow it. You are to sit and assimilate what Members are saying, come to your own conclusions and judgments, but be quiet. After you have gone outside you can discuss it very freely, but as long as you are in this House you will be quiet. This is the last time I am warning you.

Mr. T. Sudama: Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister wants to get rid of the Opposition, he wants a new system and he was referring to the Government's failure to get passage of crucial pieces of legislation in Parliament.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member's speaking time has expired.

Motion made, That the hon. Member's speaking time be extended by 30 minutes. *[Mr. R. Palackdharrysingh]*

Question put and agreed to.

5.25 p.m.

Mr. T. Sudama: Madam Speaker, we come from a situation where we are accused of undermining parliamentary democracy because we ask for an investigation, to their now wanting to rule the Opposition altogether. They want a one-party state, according to their philosophy and dictates. This is why I said that emerging as a result of his accession to power are all his blatant, autocratic, dictatorial, fascist tendencies. Fascism is what is now coming out in the utterances and behaviours of the Member for San Fernando East. He does not stop there. He wants to get rid of the Opposition, which is a stumbling block to his having his way.

He also wants to get rid of the service commissions. "The service commissions Must Go!—Manning's attack on the service Commissions. At a meeting at San Juan Secondary School on March 25, he said that the commissions had outlived their usefulness and were hindering the 'reform process'. He gave it as his opinion that even if the commissions were important at the time of Independence, this country's population was now sufficiently educated and mature to do without them.

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He followed this up on April 01, 1995 at a meeting at Sangre Grande, by saying that Government will remove the service commission if it sees it is necessary to do so.

The Member for San Fernando East, as all the other Members in this House, took an oath, and I want to remind the House of that oath. It states:

“I ... will bear true faith and allegiance to Trinidad and Tobago and will uphold the Constitution and the law and I will conscientiously, impartially and to the best of my ability discharge my duties and do right to all manner of people without fear or favour, affection or ill will.”

The Prime Minister took an oath to uphold the Constitution and the law. I have a copy of the Constitution. The service commissions are part of the Constitution. His duty is to uphold the Constitution. The Constitution has not been changed, but the dictatorship in him wants to change it overnight. The autocracy and Fascism in the personality of the Member for San Fernando East!

Miss Nicholson: All of them.

Mr. T. Sudama: Madam Speaker, is the Member for San Fernando East fit to be the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago?

Let me give another instance of this man's thinking. It brings to mind an Orwellian scenario! Remember, George Orwell, who wrote *Animal Farm* and other such books? If he were here today he would have commented very well. Do you know what the Prime Minister wants to do? Let me quote from his contribution of December 11, 1992. Listen to his vision for solving the social problems of Trinidad and Tobago.

“...the PNM conceives that for administrative purposes and for the purposes of identifying the social problems of the country, the country be divided into a grid with the size of the grid dictated by the population density, by the economic circumstances of the particular area, the entire country being involved in it.”

He went on:

“...as a generic social workers, somebody whose responsibility it is to be in touch with every household and with every individual all over the country.”

Big Brother wanting to go into every household, identify the problems of everybody and then Government would come with a solution. Whether one has problems or not, whether one wants the Government to intrude in one's private

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life and identify one's problems or not, Big Brother wants to set up a grid. Now he has graduated from Big Brother to father. This is a Government that cannot provide for 50,000 or 60,000 persons in this country, and cannot solve the problems of vagrancy thinking? A thinking that has come to light as a result of his coming to power. "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely,"

Let me come to his denial of their relationship with big business. This is a free country and everyone is entitled to support whomever one wants. The point I am making is that while they are hand in league with big business, they go out and tell the changing masses in Woodford Square, "You know, we are for you; we are on your side." Let me put this in perspective. I am quoting from someone who knows the PNM very well as a senior Minister of Government.

I quote from the *Guardian* of March 23, 1992. The person being interviewed was Mr. Karl Hudson-Phillips, one-time big wheel in the PNM, who ought to know the PNM inside out. Members opposite go and fool people and make them wave flags. And balisier. With all their mobilization, they could bring out only a few hundred persons. They shut down URP. *[Interruption]*.

Mr. B. Panday: I love them. They kiss me all the time.

Mr. T. Sudama: Madam Speaker, I quote from the article as follows:

"Q: But the NAR is viewed as the party of big business. How do you respond to that?"

Hudson-Phillips: Part of it is the political conditioning of Trinidad and Tobago. Williams (Dr. Eric) was very skilful in squeezing money out of the private sector and big business, while at the same time still cursing them. It was a characteristic. And remember until 1986 the state was all pervasive as far as the conduct of business was concerned. You couldn't do certain things without a licence, you couldn't get concessions so there was this real threat always."

So the link between the PNM and big business is a historical one. It goes on:

"I think what happened was that when there was an attempt by the commercial sector to liberate itself, the accusation became more strident. Not only against them, also against any approaches to them. I do not think that sort of accusation is an honest accusation because the PNM more than any other party in this country has been funded by big business. All the evidence is there."

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They are in the palm of big business, but pretend to support the little man. Do you understand the deception that the present Prime Minister is trying? He is trying to be Eric Williams without knowing who was Eric Williams. That is his strategy. He wants to be “Father of the Nation” without determining how, in effect, Dr. ferric Williams came by that title. As I said, their relationship shows:

They tell the trade unions that they are on their side and they are not for big business. Yet, this same Prime Minister, in his address to the nation, on January 01, 1993 quietly threatened the trade union movement as follows:

“I wish to advise the country that too aggressive a trade union stance, while poisoning the investment climate, also adversely affects vital economic activity, the natural consequence of which could well be a forced return to the IMF to impose tough discipline...”

He wants to get rid of the Opposition; he wants to remove service commissions; he wants to bring the trade union movement to heel. The man is a budding Fascist.

Dr. Rowley: The Member is not quoting Marx, though.

Mr. T. Sudama: That is all I can say, given the tendencies.

Hon. Member: Marx is not a Fascist, boy!

Mr. T. Sudama: He does not know; he is too ignorant of these things.

Hon. Member: Who is Ramesh?

Mr. T. Sudama: Madam Speaker, I have a curious statement here. They say one thing—particularly the Prime Minister—about financial integrity, relations with big business, everything is above board. I was amazed when I was looking through this document. The Prime Minister made a statement which I find very amusing, to say the least. They spent enormous sums of money in the 1991 campaign. When we questioned where the PNM was getting money from, listen to what he said in this speech of January 15, 1993:

5.35 p.m.

"Mr. Manning: Madam Speaker, I think I should tell the hon. Members present that the PNM had financial guidelines for the conduct of the election campaign. No candidate of the PNM was authorized to accept from any one source, any sum in excess of \$5,000."

The maximum you are supposed to spend by Elections and Boundaries Commission rule is \$5,000, but in his financial guidelines to his PNM is that you

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could take \$5,000 from one source, and if you have 50 sources giving you \$5,000, that is all right; that is only \$250,000. If you have 100 sources giving you \$5,000, that is \$500,000; and it is all right. All PNM candidates were given that guideline.

Mr. Valley: Madam Speaker, for the Member's guidance, the period of that \$5,000 counts from nomination day to election day. It does not talk about contributions before nomination day.

Mr. T. Sudama: Madam Speaker, the rules of the Elections and Boundaries Commission are clear. Is it envisaged that you could spend any amount of money? You see, this Member for Diego Martin West is a late comer, the contender for the political leadership of the PNM. I have before me the *Trinidad Guardian* of December 21, 1991. After the Member for San Fernando East appointed 15 Ministers, he came to the Member for Diego Martin West, who comes here and gives all this talk about he is this big wheel in the PNM. I do not want to go into this in detail, but it says here:

"...15 members have been sworn in. Notable absentees in yesterday's line-up were the party's deputy political leader, Dr. Keith Rowley."

So you understand from day one, he was in the doghouse. He does not seem to understand that. Whatever happens in this country he would never act as Prime Minister, although he is deputy political leader.

Madam Speaker: We are dealing with a Motion; you are straying.

Mr. T. Sudama: Madam Speaker, we are dealing with the stewardship of the Prime Minister and his relationship with Ministers as part of the Motion.

Madam Speaker: All right. Just structure it in a way that we could—

Mr. T. Sudama: His capacity to hold his team together. We have heard a lot about holding the team together. I have with me a statement by the Hon. Ralph Maraj, Member for San Fernando West. He did say his current experience has not caused his loyalty to swerve from the PNM, so he has made that position clear. It is very curious that he is not here today and it is a critical Motion, because the Government might fall. According to the Ortoire/Mayaro Member, every Member should be here. But conveniently they sent him away.

"But Mr. Maraj's political future will only be determined by him and no-one else. I'm not prepared to gloat or find any pleasure in the suffering discomfort and humiliation of another human being..."

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Referring, of course, to the Member for San Fernando East. It goes on:

"I have no intention of using his dilemma opportunistically as other so-called politicians are doing."

This is after he was fired, you know, unceremoniously dismissed and given a ministry without portfolio. But he is not going to use that dilemma opportunistically. It goes on:

"I respect him as a person..."

referring to the Member for San Fernando East—

"We share common views with respect to poverty, crime, unemployment, alienation etc., but I don't share his PNM philosophy."

I want to find out one thing. How many PNM philosophies are there?

Madam Speaker: The Member is misquoting. That is the Leader of the Opposition speaking.

Hon. Member: Shame on you!

Mr. T. Sudama: Madam Speaker, let me continue.

"While Maraj said he is clear about his political affiliations..." *[Interruption]*

Madam Speaker: I am sure if the Member for San Fernando West were here he would definitely demand an apology.

Mr. T. Sudama: Apparently this was the Member for Couva North. But he was speaking on behalf of the Member for San Fernando West. It continues:

"While Maraj said he is clear about his political affiliations, he added:—
[Interruption]

Madam Speaker: Let us get back some order in the debate.

Mr. T. Sudama: Let me talk about the relation now between the Member for San Fernando East and the Member for San Fernando West.

"While Maraj said he is clear about his political affiliations, he added: 'What remains unclear is my continuation in the Cabinet and this will be determined only when I know what my new job entails. I'm not going to sell my soul for a mess of pottage.'"

This is Ralph Maraj now. Apparently the Ministry of Public Utilities is not a mess of pottage. That is the only conclusion I could come to. It is just a mess. So do

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you understand what holds them together, Madam Speaker; what is the binding thing? We are not trying to defeat the Government with this Motion. We know what holds them together; the mess of pottage. They are holding on to political power at any cost.

There was mass dissension among the Members when the Member for San Fernando West was dismissed and when Knowlson Gift was appointed the Minister of Foreign Affairs. They had meeting after meeting. I do not understand that if there was not dissension among the ranks you would have meeting after meeting and you would have all these fellows coming.

Dissension or no dissension, when they come here and they face the prospect of losing political power—and that is their *raison d'etre*. It is not to benefit this country, not to lead Trinidad and Tobago in a new direction, but to hold on to political power by corrupt and any other means. That is their objective and has been the objective of PNM administrations of the past.

The Member for San Fernando East cannot even service his constituency. Not only is he incapable of being Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, he is also incapable of even being a Member and serving as a Parliamentary representative.

5.45 p.m.

On May 22, 1995, in the *Trinidad Guardian*:

"Manning, we want pipe water."

This is the Prime Minister; this is the man with all the power at his disposal.

"Cocoyea residents have gone three months without a pipeborne water supply.

According to one upset resident, Marie Saunders, the residents along Forres Avenue in Cocoyea, San Fernando, have been struggling with the relevant authority to learn exactly why their water supply has been interrupted and when it will be restored.

Residents told *Guardian* that they have to tote buckets of water from other areas, as far away as Pointe-a-Pierre, for bathing and other necessities.

The residents noted that their Parliamentary Representative is Patrick Manning, who father still lives in the area."

He cannot even be a proper parliamentary representative.

I want to deal with this question of the Prime Minister's attitude to inquiry and open government. Every time we raise queries in this House, every time we ask

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for the appointment of parliamentary committees, they have a stock response. Parliamentary committees which will have the powers of investigation—

Madam Speaker: the Member has seven more minutes.

Mr. T. Sudama: Madam Speaker, I want to show an attitude displayed by this Prime Minister and, indeed, his Government. They want reform, but their reform is to get rid of the Public Service commission and the Opposition. When we ask for a reform of the parliamentary system to let the Parliament exercise its authority under the Westminster system, they do not want that.

We have had questions about the Prime Minister's involvement with respect to the sale of his car to known drug lords and with respect to the sale of his house. We asked for an independent inquiry into this; we have asked for independent inquiry into the corruption in the Ministry of Works and Transport; into the award of Project PRIDE to Pegasus where, when they did set up an independent investigator to submit an amended report to suit his purposes.

When we raised this question, and we asked for an independent commission inquiry, do you know what they say, Madam Speaker?

In the Central Tender's Board (Amdt.) Bill debate of January 15, 1993 in this House the Member for San Fernando East had this to say—the autocratic nature of his character:

“What they seem to ignore is that an essential part of the investigation has to be the reaction of the person or persons who stand accused.”

In this case it was the Member for Diego Martin East. Accordingly, the letter was sent to the Minister of Works and Transport and the Prime Minister asked him for his reaction to it.

If I am being accused of something and I am being asked about it, what would I say? Would I not try to absolve myself?

The Member for Diego Martin East has been accused of certain irregularities. The Prime Minister asked for his reaction. He goes on:

“The hon. Minister of Works and Transport replied to the Prime Minister by way of a document—which I have not yet read—

“Having read the substance of what the Minister of Works and Transport said, which seems to be substantiated by the letters...the Prime Minister was satisfied and saw no reason to take the matter any further.” So “himself

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investigate himself” and they come here and boast about the Westminster system that they claim to be upholding, but they want closed and secret government so that they could carry on their corruption unrestrained and unchecked. That is the attitude on the other side.

Dr. Rowley: What corruption?

Mr. T. Sudama: Why do you not investigate it if you say there is no corruption? Further in the same debate, do you know what he says, Madam Speaker?

“Do you know what they want? The only investigation that they will now accept is a select committee of the Parliament or a joint select committee of both Houses with powers to summon and to conduct what can be described as a kangaroo court.”

They do not want to reform the system. They do not want to subject themselves to investigation and inquiry—and this is exactly one of the functions of the Senate in the United States political system. It is a different political system but we, here, adopt their economic system and their cultural hegemony, but when it comes to having a more open political system, a political system that is more accountable, that is a different matter.

They do not want that. They want everything else which the United States has. They want all the elements of that society except and open political system. Do you know why? Because they do not want their corruption to be investigated—that is a kangaroo court to them. *[Interruption]* No, no, their corruption is investigated, not as you all here who cover up.

Madam Speaker, I want to quickly finish the quotation and then to give an idea of the attitude of the Government to their upholding of parliamentary democracy, their attitude to every form of check and restraint in the political system, and the chief person behind this attitude, the chief autocrat and dictator, the man with so many Fascist tendencies emerging. The Member for San Fernando East and Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.

There is clearly a difference between the Westminster system of democracy and the system of democracy as practiced in the United States of America.

Mr. Valley: Is that true?

Mr. T. Sudama: Yes, we want to reform our system. Are you happy with this system? Why do you want to get rid of service commissions? Why do you want to get rid of the Opposition?

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“What the hon. Members opposite have been suggesting for some time is a system of parliamentary committees that departs very significantly from the Westminster system which is the tradition in which this country has grown up, seeking as they are to take up closer and closer to a system of democracy that has no basis in the cultural history of the people of Trinidad and Tobago. I can only assume—because I have watched it long enough—that that in itself is a strategy to bring about complete change in the system of government by the process of encroachment”.

When we on this side tries to make the Executive, and the Prime Minister and his Minister, accountable, we are accused of trying to encroach and to bring in another system of government which is not in accordance with our cultural history.

The question I ask is: What is our political and cultural history which they are trying to so defend?

All I have said the evidence is clear that the Member for San Fernando East is incompetent, a stranger to the truth and is not fit to hold the office of Prime Minister.

The Minister of Finance (Hon. Wendell Mottley): Madam Speaker, we have no this side a team and we are not necessarily going to have to get into all the character debasement and so forth, to prove our point. The fact is that this Government has been elected for a specific purpose and we have a team and in any team there is a leader.

As the hon. Attorney General clearly demonstrated, the nature of this Motion is such that it calls into question, not only the leadership, but the whole team, and we are going to demonstrate that Government, acting as a team, is discharging the mandate that the people have given it and that it is not possible to discharge that leadership without team-manship”. No team can work without a strong and good leader, and that is the position of this Government.

Madam Speaker, what was the job we were elected to do? We were elected to reverse—

Mr. Maharaj: Madam Speaker, I want to take a formal objection on a point of order. This Motion is against the Prime Minister and if the Government has no answer to defend the Prime Minister, it cannot use defences of what Ministers do in their ministries. *[Interruption]* The Member for Diego Marin West is not the Speaker.

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5.55 p.m.

Section 77(1) of the Constitution states:

“Where the House of Representatives passes a resolution, supported by the votes of a majority of all the members of the House, declaring that it has no confidence in the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister does not within seven days of the passing of such a resolution either resign or advise the President to dissolve the Parliament, the President shall revoke the appointment of the Prime Minister.”

Section 77, therefore, anticipates that there will be situations in the House of Representatives where a Motion would be presented against the Prime Minister—and it is a Motion against the Prime Minister separate and apart from the Government.

The Motion that is before this House and about which Members on this side have spoken is about the actions and conduct of the Prime Minister as Prime Minister, and it is not permissible for the other side to respond to that Motion by giving the actions and conduct of other people. If they do not have a defence, they cannot defend themselves.

Madam Speaker: I have listened to the submission of the hon. Member. Having regard to the wording of this Motion, it is open to the Members of the Government to put whatever interpretation they wish on the Motion and to so slant their arguments and contributions in accordance with that interpretation. Members of the Opposition are also free to put whatever interpretation and so slant their arguments accordingly.

Hon. W. Mottley: Madam Speaker, there is the doctrine of collective responsibility. The Prime Minister is not being attacked on some personal basis; he is being attacked as head of the Government in connection with the discharge of his functions as Prime Minister. Therefore, the whole collective responsibility of Cabinet now applies. It is the Government that stands or falls on the basis of this particular Motion, not the individual, and this Government will defend itself.

Our job has been discharged. We have come into Government to revive confidence; to reverse the despair that there was about the economy; to win investments and create jobs. We have to remember what our inheritance was. At the time we inherited this Government, there was a \$2.4 billion debt, so that debt service peaked at 33 per cent of the imports of goods and services into this country.

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We had a position of minus US 54 million in reserves when we came into power. Not only did we have an economy in shambles, but we had all the dark fringes surrounding the political problems of Abu Bakr and the burnt-out sections of Port of Spain. That all contributed to an aura of despair and a great lack of confidence. If anything, Trinidad and Tobago was known for political upheaval. That was the situation we inherited.

We set out on that journey to restore confidence amid all kinds of storms along that journey. We were not helped by circumstance. We had very damaging calls for immediate settlement of debts to public servants that had accrued over the last few years. We had thousands marching around the Red House, though not as many as we had this afternoon. We had the certain promise of 40,000 job losses. That was the threat and the fear that were being engendered in the society as a result of Government policy, they claimed. We had dire predictions of \$10, \$15 and \$20 exchange rates.

We had bad advice to walk away from our international debts. Even in this House we had the terrible shame of a matter agreed on both sides that we should change the budget year and yet when we came to this House we found that Members on the other side walked away from that and voted against a simple matter that they had agreed on that would have suited all of Trinidad and Tobago.

This debate is yet another invitation to shift Trinidad and Tobago off course. We would have none of it. We held course even in the darkest days when we were trying, without much resources, to get this country back in order. We went around and explained our policies that we have worked with in Opposition. I pay tribute to the hon. Prime Minister for his leadership in Opposition. Leadership did not come out of fair circumstance in Government; it came out of hard work in Opposition. It was then that the qualities of the Prime Minister shone.

We have since explained to our countrymen the details of our economic and political policies. Many of them complained. I know that the hon. Member for Tobago West said that sometimes we do things and she wonders why there are no riots, because some of our policies have led to pain.

Trinidadians and Tobagonians trust this Government, not inherently, but because we have explained our policies. We have gone from corner to corner; from Cedros to Mayaro to Scarborough to explain the details of divestment, trade liberalization; why we act the way we do. We are responding to global circumstances. This has been the history of this Government and this has been led by the hon. Prime Minister.

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Now, after the years of travail, now that the journey has made good progress and right up to the top of the mast head someone is seeing land ahead and land ho! Seeing the results of all the work; and as the ship gets closer to shore, under the proper guidance of this captain, so that even the deckhands are able to see some of that benefit, the hope is that even those in the bilges and the engine room on that side will see the progress.

The facts are that there is beginning to be hope in this land after so many years of economic travail and belt tightening. We are seeing the reversal of the brain drain. There are so many good, young, qualified people coming back to Trinidad and Tobago. There is almost 10 per cent growth in the construction industry. There are jobs being generated. There is a White Paper on Education that promises to revolutionize education. We are in an apprenticeship programme and we sent our trainers to Germany for this programme and they have qualified at the top of their classes in Germany. These are the facts.

6.05 p.m.

This has been a time when there has been a change in the baton and an honourable person, like the hon. Michael de La Bastide has accepted the Chief Justiceship of this land, sacrificing millions of dollars in income. Surely, these are different times.

What is the record of accomplishment? What is it that this Government stands on? In relation to the economics over which I have some jurisdiction, we stand on the record of reviving the main drive of our economy, the petroleum economy. We took the courageous step, even when oil prices were down and we had to take the fiscal pain of reducing petroleum taxes so that we could stimulate investment.

What has been the result of that stimulation when we reduced the petroleum taxes? In 1990, there was US \$5.23 million in oil expenditure, exploration drilling. In 1994, it was US \$78.87 million; we moved from \$5 million to \$78 million. I could go on and list all the other details of much increased expenditure in the oil sector. I will not do that, I shall merely say also that since the PNM came to have sovereignty over our oil business, we moved from one operator that is Amoco, plus of course the local companies, to a situation today where we have drilling by Unocal, Exxon and so on, and solid production by Enron as well.

We are going out, as distinct from when we went out early in 1990, for bids for acreage where we only had two bidders, to a situation where bids for the East Coast will close at the end of June 1995. We have dozens of bidders for that extra acreage. That is the number one thing we did and we did right.

We put our fiscal and monetary house in order; I will not go into the details of that. We exercised discipline in this regard. We were able to tighten our tax collection—and let me say a word of praise to the honourable public servants, especially the Customs and Income Tax Departments who worked solidly in difficult times to collect more, even while rates of taxes were falling. They have done a tremendous job.

We took the resolve not to walk away from our debts despite all the advice we got; that would have been a fatal error. We took the population in hand, we told them our policy and we said we had to meet our international commitments. We started first by meeting our local debt commitments. The first thing we did in the first budget was to restore the 2 per cent and that immediately cost the Government \$500 million.

It is not true to say that we dealt only with foreign debts: we dealt first with the local debts: that was one of the first things we did virtually weeks after coming into power. Then we paid those foreign debts. We took those hard decisions to the point where now debt service has fallen, from 33 per cent to about 25 per cent this year. The debt stock is also coming down from almost US \$2.5 billion just to about US \$2 billion this year. Those are the facts.

We took tough decisions on divestment of many companies that were a burden on the State, but at the same time we took the courageous decision to get the divested companies like Fertrin, amid much criticism—When Fertrin was divested, there was in the memorandum of understanding that after a certain period had elapsed the company then had power, if it so wanted, to send home workers. That period has elapsed and the new company Arcadia is building a new ammonia plant right now and is contemplating further investments in ammonia and methanol, and in fact, is hiring more people. Minister Valley will talk about the new spirit in BWIA, I do not need to get into all of that.

We liberalized our exchange regime so that we freed the population from exchange control jail. That has had a tremendous boost in confidence throughout the country, and we also managed well. We co-operated with the banks and our citizens. That was not a feat of accomplishment on the government alone, but a feat in which all of Trinidad and Tobago co-operated and all of us are today enjoying the benefits of it. All of Trinidad and Tobago is to be congratulated on that.

We had market openings—the Ministry of Trade and Industry pushed agreements with Colombia and Venezuela in association with Caricom. Our manufacturers are streaming out into the nearby hemisphere to the extent that

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non-oil exports last year increased 37 per cent. Do you hear that statistic? Thirty seven percent. This is the record that we are standing on.

Investment facilitation and promotion are going on apace. In addition, the Government is moving solidly to support all this economics with the proper infrastructure: physical infrastructure, agricultural access roads, improvements in port facilities at Point Lisas, as well as institutional infrastructure. Bills, like the Securities Bill, are with the joint select committee of both Houses of Parliament.

Al this is going on, it is a restructuring of our economy for survival, and that is what we have been working on. In all this we have recognized that in any change, sometimes there is hardship and from very early, this Government took on itself to put in place measures in support of those who might have been hurt in the short term by some of those economic changes.

I want to report about some of the social safety nets. The expenditure on the social safety net is real resources. We have only been able to make these additional expenditures on the social safety net because the country has been growing and we are getting more resources that we can put to the social safety net. We do not have to take from Peter to give to Paul. We can do so out of a larger pie.

For instance, the Unemployment Relief Programme in 1992 was \$119 million, but this year, it is \$130 million; the Civilian Conservation Corps did not exist in 1992, \$3.5 million now; old-age pension \$179 million in 1992, \$228 million now; social assistance \$41 million then, \$57 million now; food subsidy \$60 million then, \$96 million now; urgent temporary assistance \$3 million then, \$5 now; feeding programme for the needy or SHARE \$3.5 million then, \$9.6 million now.

Madam Speaker, I want you to especially note school feeding, \$23 million in 1992, \$78.5 million in 1995. On the capital expenditure side, YTTEP has moved from \$20 million to \$25 million; Aided Self-Help from \$2 million to \$8 million.

Refurbishment of schools—we always hear the complaints of schools needing refurbishment—the provision has gone from \$25 million; construction of community centers from zero to \$18 million. Among these items we have listed here, the social side has moved from \$476 million to \$751, an increase of almost 60 per cent in the three years.

6.15 p.m.

I make the point again that we can only deal with the social sector with real resources gathered from growth as a result of the investments and strong

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economic policies which the Government has put in place. Dr. Rowley will tell you, "one cannot feed fowl without having corn".

Dr. Rowley: They know that.

Hon. W. Mottley: That is a fact we have to understand in Trinidad and Tobago. All the platitudinous business of fatalism which we hear from the other side, at the end of the day, if this Government had not succeeded in turning around this economy, we would not have been able to stand like this.

Let us not pat ourselves on our backs, let us see what other people think of the Government's performance in these economic measures. I refer to the Trinidad and Tobago economy, the sustainable growth at hand by SKJ Investments.

Mr. Sudama: Who is SKJ?

Hon. W. Mottley: I want to read the first paragraph in their most recent statement. It is out of Toronto, Canada. It says:

"The 4.7 % real growth in the Trinidad and Tobago economy in terms of GDP, in 1994, has provided clear evidence that the long and deep recession has just about run its course. It is now becoming increasingly evident that a period of sustainable non-inflationary growth is at hand. The Manning Government must be given full credit for having the courage and determination to implement, in large part, the economic reforms it promised during the last elections, as unpopular as some of them have been."

That is number one.

The latest *Quarterly Economic Bulletin* of the Central Bank states:

"The Trinidad and Tobago economy continued on a low inflation growth path in the first quarter of 1995, maintaining virtually the same rate of expansion as in the preceding quarter."

The report goes on to talk about low inflation despite some food price increases and, at the same time, about a sound performance, not only in the oil sector but the non-oil sector as well, in the first quarter of 1995. That is number two.

Number three. The IMF has just completed the review of Trinidad and Tobago's economy and says in its report:

"The Government's overall economic policies in 1994 were broadly satisfactory and consistent with their objective of promoting sustained economic growth with low inflation. The Government's program for 1995

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aims at reducing inflation further, raising official net international reserves to a more comfortable level that would permit judicious interventions in the foreign exchange market, and achieving a significant growth in output...To help attain these objectives, the overall public sector deficit is to be reduced,..."

Strong commendation from the IMF on these matters.

Number four. I want to read from the *Journal of Commerce*, dated Tuesday, May 30, 1995, under the by-line "Washington".

Mr. Sudama: All these obscure journals.

Hon. W. Mottley: Obscure journal! The *Journal of Commerce*. I am ashamed for the Member for Oropouche. It states:

"Six Latin American and Caribbean Countries ..."

Hear the countries:

"—Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, El Salvador, and Trinidad and Tobago—will score hefty economic gains this year and next, a U. S. business survey suggests.

The survey, by the Association of American Chambers of Commerce in Latin America, estimates that the economies of each of the six countries will average 5% or more annual growth through 1996."

It goes on to shower praises on these economies. These are the facts and the accomplishments of the team under the able leadership of the hon. Patrick Manning.

Mr. Sudama: It is a pity the IMF does not vote here.

Hon. W. Mottley: In addition, I have here a report from a survey of prospective investment. It was done by the US Embassy and this is the latest one. They are forecasting 1995 investment at US \$1,356 million in Trinidad and Tobago. If you do not want to take our statistics, take this one. These are the facts. These are our benchmarks of success. This is what the people of Trinidad and Tobago elected us to do and this is how we have been discharging our responsibilities under the leadership of the hon. Prime Minister.

I shall make a point, and less it be said that I am making this point only now. I refer you to *Hansard* in the winding up of the last budget debate when I pointed out that difficult economic decisions can only be made in the interest of the wider

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population when there is unity in the Cabinet. No Minister of Finance, if there is severe bickering among ministries, has the capacity to mould the economic performance of a country and, in that situation, I will attest to the solid backing of the hon. Prime Minister.

Let me make the point further that we need not take for granted. The Ministry of Finance is a vulnerable position. I draw reference to recent events in other Caribbean countries, to make the solid point that there is a team, in this PNM regime and that the hon. Prime Minister holds honourable leadership of that team and the team sticks together. He is our captain.

What is the record of our accomplishments? What is the way forward? We have a comparative advantage in our energy sector which we are rapidly working on to go from comparative advantage to competitive advantage. In the oil, gas and chemical sector we are doing extremely well.

There are new plants under construction that will assure the country GDP growth in 1995 and onwards. We have the real prospect of a serious decision on the LNG plant later in this year. In our manufacturing and agricultural sectors great leadership capabilities have been shown. They have stopped the grumbling and have realized the inevitability of reshaping the world that is out there. The manufacturing and agricultural sectors have opened up important bridge heads in exports that are behind that 37 per cent growth, and they are forging ahead. We assume growth possibilities in downstream steel and petrochemicals and the Ministry of Trade and Industry and Tidco are doing solid promotion work in that area. We see the real possibility of Trinidad and Tobago as a major trans-shipment centre for the rest of Latin America.

6.25 p.m.

We are working quietly with the assistance of consultants and with live-wire real investment possibilities in creating a financial center here, and an offshore center, which will be located in Port of Spain. We are working quietly and practically with real companies in data processing and software development in this country that would use the higher grade skills of our people as they come out of our upgraded schooling system.

Since I am also the Minister of Tourism, you will understand if I spend perhaps a little more time in explaining the progress that we have made in tourism. There has been a per cent increase in overall stayover arrivals in Trinidad and Tobago since we started the heavy promotion work in tourism. The airlift to Tobago is expected to have an 80 per cent increase in 1995 from what it was in

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1994. Occupancies are expected to average 70 per cent over the next winter season, up from the current 50 per cent.

In just a month or two in Tobago we shall be opening approximately 250 extra rooms at Le Grand Courland at the Coco Reef and at the Manta Lodge in Speyside. In addition, the Tropikist has just had approval for another 50 rooms. I have signed just yesterday the approval for the Blue Haven lands to be transferred to an Austrian investor, who is going to construct a large hotel on that particular site in Tobago. I want to read this letter from Tobago Plantations Limited, the owners of the Lowlands property; it is addressed to the Town and Country Planning Division. It says;

“The Tobago Plantations Limited Board acknowledges with thanks receipt of the recent TCPD approval for the Lowlands Project...”

While there have been many ups and downs in the course of the negotiations leading up to the receipt of the TCPD approval, as is to be expected...”

As a result of this, it goes on:

“...we wish to place on record our appreciation of the efforts by the TCPD to issue the approval within the deadline...”

We assure you of our commitment, as a responsible developer and corporate citizen of Trinidad and Tobago, to develop a resort complex at Lowlands of which the entire country (and Tobago, in particular) will be proud, one that will prove a model resort development in bringing tangible economic benefits to the country in general and Tobago in particular while combining economic viability with environmental sensitivity.”

This is the combination of Angostura, Guardian Life and Hilton on that major flagship project in Tobago.

That is the way forward. For Trinidad itself, there is a strong commitment to developing cruise shipping in Port of Spain, and especially home cruise porting in Port of Spain, and the very vibrant yachting industry that we have created at Chaguaramas as a result of working co-operatively with the investors in Chaguaramas in attracting yachtsmen to this country, to repair their yachts here and develop and use the skills that Trinidad and Tobago possesses in all the areas of stainless steel welding, fibre glass work, painting etc.

So that literally hundreds of new jobs are being created at Chaguaramas with the expanding industry. It is a phenomenal growth in a new industry in Trinidad and Tobago.

That is the vision that we hold forth. It was a vision in the preparation and presentation of the budget speeches we honed in this House and now we give you more practical insights as to its implementation.

I want to tell you that this implementation has not come *vaille-que-vaille*. It has come out of careful thought; the leadership of the team by the Prime Minister in preparation of these economic charts; the steady hand; the assurance as the plan is being implemented. Corrective action as he sees them, sometimes, drifting off course—a sure and steady hand. That has been our experience in Trinidad and Tobago, much admired overseas and much admired increasingly at home, as is exemplified by the increasing confidence in our affairs at home, as is exemplified by the increasing confidence in our affairs in this country.

So what are the tools we now have for implementing this. We have to make sure that we continue to ensure market access as we are successful in agriculture, in petro-chemicals, in manufacturing. That is why we had the Nafta discussions. Nafta is important as a trading possibility, but it also has significance far bigger than that. Nafta is the assurance for continued foreign investment in this country. We have to understand that. And Nafta approval is a good housekeeping seal of approval that investors require.

We understand that Nafta approval is not automatic; we worked, and therefore have now got Caribbean parity legislation being discussed at this time in the Congress in the United States, so that if there is any delay in Nafta, we shall have an approximation available to Caribbean countries that will serve the same stead. There are some of the tools that we are employing to assure economic success. So that there is more than that. There is training that is going on; there is investment facilitation; there is legislative reform—all of these are part of an ongoing process to ensure our success.

I want, however, to focus seriously on one aspect that, perhaps, has not been touched on before. This debate is extremely relevant to it. We are talking about serious matter: long-term economic survival, and with that, the standard of living of all of us, the leadership of the team under the hon. Prime Minister, the cohesiveness of the team. These are important matters because they begin to suggest that economic matters have an import only when you begin to look at what are the surrounding values that make them possible.

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Because, you see, there are large numbers of countries that are setting about the same course as we have done. There are many countries that are seeking to develop their own human and natural resources as we are. What differentiates the winners from the losers in this global race is what values those populations bring to that economic race.

It is this that has to become increasingly the focus of Trinidad and Tobago, and hence the importance of this debate and why this Government seized on this opportunity to display the cohesiveness of our team, because we wanted to signal the requirement of other forms of societal values that are ultimately required if we are to be successful.

There is a value, for instance, of self-discipline. Successful societies in the Far East, Hong Kong included, have the great advantage of self-discipline. They have, in Chile as well, very high savings rates. Crime is relatively low, Education and training are valued by families. These are what we need beyond the initial impetus with which we have succeeded, and which we will require to hone in on, if we are to continue to be successful. Because this is never a race that finishes; it is a continual race for self-improvement and refinement on which we are embarked in Trinidad and Tobago.

6.35 p.m.

Madam Speaker, another value that is of great importance, besides cohesiveness, is professionalism. If Trinidad and Tobago is to become a financial sector, then we shall be trading on the margin. We shall be having very small gains in value added over larger numbers of transactions. That means, to manage that, we require much professionalism in our affairs.

It means the kind of excellence and quality, as beacons, that we will have to strive for if we are to succeed in this area of our life. It means as well, as we interact with foreigners—foreigners will be coming here because we are setting up to be an intermediary—that the question of civility, the value of civility will become of great importance in this country.

Trinidadians and Tobagonians sometimes take civility too lightly. For our tourism, a certain kind of civility is demanded, but in the financial intermediary, in doing data processing and interlinking with the international world, a whole lot of other values around that civility will also be required if we are to be successful.

I raised this because some investors came to this country not too long ago, and they told us that we have many of the qualities to be successful. They noted, for

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instance, that some of our press reports were leaning—to put it mildly—on the side of hyperbole, and that that kind of thing might cause investors concern as to why they should take other people's money and invest it here.

These points were made to us very recently by some specialists in investments. I say this not to pour scorn on the press, but merely to point out that professionalism will be required across many aspects of our public life, not only of politicians, not only of public servants not only of the press, but of the Judiciary and all our institutions if we are to be successful in the direction in which we are setting up.

The PNM has articulated this vision for Trinidad and Tobago—a distribution center, a transshipment point, data processing, financial center—and all these things will use our much valued human skills and resources and not only our natural gas. But to take the next step forward we would be required now to hone in on a number of values—cohesiveness, civility, self-discipline, professionalism and respect.

Madam Speaker, I want to tell you that the distance that we have come in this journey is quite far indeed, and we have to stay together as a team on this side because we understand what is represented on the other side—and the county recognizes that too. That is their greatest problem—that they have not been able to persuade the country that cohesion and long-term direction are capable of being implemented by the hon. Gentleman on the other side. I expect that they will turn their attention to that, rather than looking at our business on this side.

We have sound economic policies, sound social policies, and we have sound leadership of those policies. I am predicting that this Government will continue to continue to consistently apply good leadership and sustainability of policies over the long term, and continue to educate the wider population as to the inevitability and surety of results, in the long term, from the directions that we have taken. We will build the consensus in Trinidad and Tobago around these policies that the PNM have been following.

This attempt to blow us off course is because they have recognized, as we have said loud and clear, land ahoy! This is the last chance they have to derail us. Never happen!

The Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Works and Transport (Mr. Jarrette Narine): Madam Speaker, I am happy to join the debate at this time in support of our beloved Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, the Hon. Patrick Manning. As a matter of fact, like the Member for Couva North, it seems that nobody on the other side is prepared for this debate. It seems to me that the Member for Couva South probably misled the Member for Couva North in this

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debate. My information is that he has somebody for that seat so it may not be too long.

We attended a function two weeks ago and the prospect is already in the arms of the Member for Couva North, so the Member for Couva South may well watch his position at this time—*[Interruption]* a male candidate, a former Member of Parliament.

It is clear to me from the last speaker, the Minister of Finance and Tourism, that we are on the brink of the talkers coming back. This is the season of the talkers; they have been talking for the last four years and they will continue to talk for the next year. But we on this side have been the doers.

As seen in this debate, everyone of our Members who got up has shown the performance of a Government that was returned in 1991; a Government that the people of Trinidad and Tobago love; a Government that is led by a Prime Minister who has 24 years' continuous service in Parliament—very young, very handsome—and will continue to lead Trinidad and Tobago. It is perhaps the envy of the other side. Maybe the Member for Couva South could have a function to send off the Member for Couva North properly. It seems to me that he is suffering from amnesia.

Every statement that the Member for Couva North has made today was that of the *Trinidad Guardian*. I have with me a clipping from the *Trinidad Guardian*, dated May 15, 1995 which states:

“The Alienation of B. Panday”.

Madam Speaker, you will remember that the Member for Couva North went to great lengths to link the *Trinidad Guardian* with the illegal narcotic trade in Trinidad and Tobago. How unfortunate.

I should like to read into the *Hansard* record part of that article.

"Mr. Panday without supplying a shred of evidence to his fellow parliamentarians and standing tall under the cloak of privilege covering him in that august chamber which he promptly reduced to the level of a rum shop asked: Why is the Guardian holding itself as protector of those in the drug trade?"

6.45 p.m.

The credibility of the one who moved the Motion of no confidence in our Prime Minister is demonstrated by what took place outside the Red House today.

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Even Members of the union to which I am affiliated were telling me that they cannot do better than the PNM. He has agitated our people. We will march the streets of Trinidad and Tobago. We will mobilize because he has caused it. Any time we call an election now his credibility will be at stake because of certain things that have happened during his lifetime in politics. The *Trinidad Guardian* is just part of that.

You will remember some time in 1993 the Member for Couva North came into this Parliament and questioned an article in the *Daily Express* of Thursday, March 4, 1993. I was called a liar and told that the Opposition were not allowed to send names for the Unemployment Relief Programme—the programme which the Member for St. Ann's East spoke about; the safety net that we had, that safety net that is second to none according to a UNDP report that I have here to which I will come to later on in my discussion.

On that afternoon the hon. Member for Couva North—and I quote from *Hansard* stated:

"I did not raise this matter on the last occasion because I was awaiting a reaction from that statement which is a lie, untruth, false, pernicious, misleading and attempted to involve this side in the corruption that was taking place in the URP on the other side."

You will remember that I came to Parliament and I refuted those statements because at that time he was also saying:

"I would like to ask him where I met him, because I do not meet him. Where did I speak to him, because I do not speak to him either. I want a copy of the letter which I sent to him with names."

Madam Speaker, you will remember that at that time I produced two letters in Parliament which were written by the Leader of the Opposition and Member for Couva North. At that time, I left for the records of *Hansard*, a total package of everything that took place as far as that programme was concerned. I continue:

"Mr. Panday: Madam Speaker, on a point of order. I have no clients whom I sent names to him. The Parliamentary Secretary is compounding a wrong that he has done. He says here Opposition Leader, Basdeo Panday recently sent a list of names; I want him to tell this House that this is untrue. I did not send him names either recently or at any other time. I never sent him any. I have appointed no agents... Do not involve me in your corruption."

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At that time, I had these letters which were written to Rienzi Complex on February 20, 1992, Exchange Village, Couva.

"Mr. Riaz Rajab,
Area Supervisor,
Region No. 6
S.I.D. Programme (Formerly L.I.D.)
Couva.

Sir,

LIDP Projects, Couva North"

Madam Speaker: Your argument is in support of Government's performance?

Mr. J. Narine: Yes, Madam Speaker. I am dealing with the credibility of the Member for Couva North who has called me a liar in this Parliament.

"Reference is made to our letter of 11th February, 1992 on the above subject matter.

I would appreciate if arrangements can be made to tour the various projects recommended to the L.I.D. Programme in the Couva North area. We wish to propose the 25th February, 1992 at 10.00 a.m. starting from the Rienzi Complex, Couva.

This was wrote by the Mr. Basdeo Panday, MP, Couva North.

Mr. B. Panday: Is the Member saying that this letter was "wrote" by me?

Madam Speaker: I think the Member meant "written."

Mr. J. Narine: Madam Speaker, I am subject to correction.

It is quite clear that the letter was written and signed by Basdeo Panday, MP, Couva North.

Another letter from Mr. Basdeo Panday, MP, Couva North, is dated December 3, 1992:

"The Administrative Officer IV
ufs Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Works
3 Edward Street
Port of Spain.

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Dear Sir/Madam,

This is to introduce you to Mrs. Dora Seenath of Steven Street, California. She has eight years (8) experience as a domestic. She has four (4) children and is a single parent. She is presently seeking employment as a cleaner in a Secondary School.

As a result I shall be most obliged if this application is taken into consideration and is acknowledged.

Yours respectfully,

/s/ Basdeo Panday"

As a matter of fact, the person did gain employment because of our policy of no discrimination in the programme. I will now read the letter dated February 11, 1992 to which I referred:

"24 Waterloo Road
Carapichaima

11th February, 1992

Phone No. 673-0288 (H)
623-8342 (W)

Mr. Reyaz Rajab
Engineer (L.I.D.)
Couva.

Dear Sir,

LID Project, Couva North

Greetings.

Reference is made to our discussions on Saturday 8th February, 1992 at M.P. Hulsie Bhagan's office on the above matter.

I wish to advise you that I have discussed the various projects with M.P. Basdeo Panday for the Couva North area and agreed with the following:

Continuation of:

Carlibay Project

Orange Valley Pavement

Waterloo Road Pavement"

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I can tell you that all three projects have been done, based on the recommendations made by the Member for Couva North.

6.55 p.m.

Madam Speaker, these were listed as repairs to Joyce Road Bridge, which was done—although I understand it was done by the Chaguanas corporation; paving of Capildeo Block Road, Couva; paving of Extension Road, Felicity; paving of Balkissoon Extension, Felicity, Children’s Play Park, Waterloo Recreation Ground—and this is Mr. Mulchan Seuchan’s Park. Building pavement between Carapichaima AC School and Carapichaima Muslim School; Carapichaima Muslim School Road—the hon. Prime Minister had the privilege to open that new Islamic School in Carapichaima; that road and bridge were done by URP.

The letter continues:

“It would be appreciated if you would advise us whenever you are recruiting labour for these projects in order that we may be in a position to make a few recommendations.

Please be guided accordingly.

Yours sincerely
Mulchan Seuchan
Co-ordinator – Couva North.”

This is another letter written from the office of the Leader of the Opposition:

“Office of the Leader of the Opposition,
Chepstow House, 56, Frederick Street, Port of Spain

August 13,
Mr. Jarrette Narine,
Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Works and Transport,
Salvatori Building, Frederick Street,
PORT OF SPAIN”

This letter came asking for persons to get employment.

Madam Speaker, I gave you a listing of persons who had sent listings to have people employed and we were not discriminating. The Leader of the Opposition ordered all his Members to stop requesting that projects be done or to submit names of employees for employment in the programme. Without revealing any

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names. I should like to make the point that it has never stopped. It seems that the Members on the other side have absolutely no respect for their leader.

I have a letter here to Mr. Bobb dated February 7, 1995, from the Member for Fyzabad. *[Interruption]*

Mr. Sharma: Madam Speaker, on a point of order. If the Member is identifying the Member for Fyzabad he has to identify the contents of the letter because we do not know what he is speaking about. *[Interruption]*

Mr. J. Narine: Madam Speaker, I would not incriminate the Member, they already have Members lined up for his seat.

Does the Member know Mr. Sudesh Ramsawak? The letter states:

“The bearer Mr. Sudesh Ramsawak is the owner/operator of Truck Reg # TAT 848 and wants information as to making himself available for work. Kindly assist.

With thanks.

Sincerely,

Member for Fyzabad
/s/ C. Sharma.”

This was signed by the Member of Parliament for Fyzabad. *[Interruption]*

Another letter from the same Member of Parliament:

“Dear Mr. Bobb,

The bearer Ms. Victoria Charles I.D. #19501007024 of St Mary’s Village South Oropouche needs your help.

A pavement runs in front of her home and she required to have access to a driveway.

Any assistance offered to her would be deeply appreciated.

With thanks.”

This is another letter from the Member of Parliament for Fyzabad. He has no respect for his leader, unlike Members on this side; the PNM knows discipline. We have a truthful leader, we have confidence on our Leader, we are a team and I am going to deal with that later on.

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This letter is from the desk of the Member for Siparia:

“17 Fraser Street, Penal.
Trinidad, W.I.”

Apparently, the Member for Siparia did learn from the Member for Couva South, in that he did not direct the letter, but he marked “To Whom It May concern” knowing full well that it would be sent to the URP office. There is nowhere in Fyzabad that one could send someone. “to whom it may concern.” He has learnt from the Member for Couva South.

There is another letter dated March 26, 1994 stating [*Interruption*] The Member for Siparia did get around the Member for Couva North’s way of saying do not send anybody to URP, so he wrote these letters, marked “To Whom It May Concern”, telling the people that they could carry them to Mr. Salick and they would get employment.

Madam Speaker, I have a very new list here and I notice that the Member for Pointe-a-Pierre probably had to vacate his seat. The Member indicated to me that he wanted to have persons employed. I said I had no problem with that, but if he checked [*Interruption*] Apparently when we sent that \$5 million to Tobago for the URP they controlled the whole thing; we did not interfere. In Trinidad, however because of that incident, instructions were given to Members on that side to stay away from the URP. No names to be submitted; no projects were to be requested, and anybody who did not follow those instructions would be dealt with by their political leader, the Member for Couva North. The Member for Pointe-a-Pierre came in after those instructions were given.

I indicated to him that his political leader instructed “so-and-so” and that it was recorded *Hansard*. I advised him not to go in that direction, because although he had not visited Pointe-a-Pierre since the by-election—he was thinking about fighting Caroni East—but Pointe-a-Pierre vacancy came before that, and he would be well advised to have some discussion with his political leader.

Since then I received correspondence from him in which he indicated that he would deal with his political leader when the time comes. They are talking about leadership. That is the leadership they have, but they come here in Parliament and try to chastise us.

The type of support that we have shown today is an indication that the PNM is alive and well, brother; we would be alive for the year 2,000 and beyond. My checks yesterday indicated that although this was recently sent, approximately

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seven or eight persons have been given employment. Yes, it is that we check the needy and we give employment to persons who are in need. If they are willing to identify those persons in need, we are willing to treat with them. *[Interruption]*

It seems to me that the Member for Couva North really suffers from amnesia. Every time he does something he says something else. On another occasion he would say something different.

Much has been said about the Member of Parliament for San Fernando West. One should understand the Prime Minister, in treating with Members of Parliament on this side; I would indicate. The first instance involved the Minister of National Security. The Prime Minister brought him within his fold like a good father, treated him well and then sent him back to his Ministry.

The very thing happened with the Member for San Fernando West; he was not chastised; he was brought into the fold. Like a good father the Prime Minister would have brought him into his ministry and he would have seen to it that after a matter of time—and it came sooner than later—that the Member was given a portfolio, very high in this county; Minister of Public Utilities, unlike what happened to the Leader of the Opposition when he was Minister of External Affairs.

7.05 p.m.

And look at what has happened to the Member for Chaguanas who unceremoniously, was deprived of even coming to the tea room. This is the way the females on that side are treated from day one. She never survived after that. She is still walking around with a food basket. The Leader of the Opposition has to be given a lecture on leadership.

I understand—and the Member for Tobago West will know because my information was received from Tobago—that while the Member for Couva North was at the Ministry of External affairs the problem with him was that the Guyanese in Trinidad and Tobago had to be fixed up properly so that in any elections he would have a further base. That was the real reason for his being unceremoniously sent home. There were thousands of persons in this country who had to get their citizenship. In that ministry, certain persons from Guyana were given preference. It was not in keeping with the last government's thrust and policy to get people settled in Trinidad and Tobago. I could well wonder what happened.

It is clear to me that this Motion has given the PNM a boost. It has given us another opportunity to report to the nation. I am prepared to go until morning with

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my colleagues here. We are prepared to go until morning to make sure that the nation knows that when an attack is made on our political leader we are very serious and we would stand by him night and day, sunshine or rain, until the next election.

Any time we are called upon we would be at the side of our leader. It is not like, how the Member was going to treat with the international community when he was embarrassed as a Member of Parliament at a function at St. Augustine when the President of India was here. Ravan stood up and talked about Rakshas. One could understand that. In other words, there are so many books and that is the only word he used. I doubt that he ever read the *Ramayan* or the *Bhagavad Gita*. I feel that he has read thoroughly the *Kamasutra*.

We are about the business of the people and we are talking about performance of a government that has, after a five-year lapse, come in. We heard today a first-class presentation—and I congratulate the Member for St. Ann's East, the Minister of Finance. He has articulated everything that we have done since 1991, a success story of the PNM under the leadership of the Hon. Patrick Manning, taking Trinidad and Tobago out of the doldrums that they put us in a five-year period.

We are fighting to get things on stream. We are on rail and, none of them would derail us from supporting this Government and our Prime Minister, and going forward. The next time around we would have more benches on this side; it seems that we would have to extend and bring some of those benches on this side.

The Member of Nariva knows that he is almost on the way out. The Member has given us the opportunity to soberly sit back and give our performance. The public life of any politician is based on his performance.

The Member for Couva North has always been on a destructive path. I have known him for a number of years when I was involved with the Labour Congress. They could not have taken over the Labour congress and formed CPTU. When he could not take over the leadership of CPTU, he fell out from CPTU. When NATUC was formed he got into NATUC but there was no position for him so he fell out of NATUC just now he will fall out with the UNC.

It is better there be a valedictory function for him very soon. Like what happened on Saturday at Arima when there was a valedictory function for the Member for Tobago East. I visited the Member for Arima and I saw many vehicles and I got scared. The number of vehicles that were parked, but there were 50 persons inside. One would have known right away that it was a valedictory

function for the Member for Tobago East. Maybe the Member for Couva North should come soon, before the next election.

When one looks at the destructive path that they have been on for years, one must conclude that the people of Trinidad and Tobago have no choice. The Member for Couva North said in 1986 that he would sleep with the devil to get rid of the PNM. It more seems like the devil slept with the others to get rid of the PNM.

The Government have performed creditably. Over the last three years and more, we have performed. We have taken programmes like LIDP right down from the last 1950s. I am in possession of the UNDP's report on the Unemployment Relief Programme in Trinidad and Tobago, run by the Ministry of Works and Transport—more astute leadership by the Member for Diego Martin East.

7.15 p.m.

The success of the Unemployment Relief Programme would not have been what it is today had it not been for Cabinet through its directives. We came in 1992—we met a programme that was closed down in 1988—a programme which was tried and tested. It was restarted in the year 1991 and was upgraded. The sum of \$180 million was spent by the former administration because that was an election period. We went into 1992 owing \$40 million, a deficit from 1991. From the Ministry of Finance we obtained \$90 million, which meant that we had to start with \$50 million. Through the Cabinet we got \$30 million extra, which meant that in the first year we had \$80 million.

Since then the programme has been so well managed every year we have had an increase of projects. We have had the same amount of money allocated to us in 1993, 1994 and 1995. I am hoping that after this report that I have here, which I shall not read at this time—I am sure that in the next budget debate I shall have permission of read it; it is a draft of a report on the Unemployment Relief Programme done by Dr. Karl Theodore, Department of Economics, the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, March 1995.

What has happened here is that at our university, despite all the reports and all the studies that have been done on unemployment relief in Trinidad and Tobago, none was ever done in detail. The point is that this is one of the first reports coming out of the university, and it is very well done. But we are looking for criticisms in the report, because when we look at them, we can only make the programme better, for we are dealing with a university that has credibility—one of the institutions of which we are proud under the People's National Movement.

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Part of this report states:

“Context”

The UNDP formed part of an evaluative study of rural infrastructure programmes in the western hemisphere. The focus was on four (4) countries, derived from Central and South America and the Caribbean, namely, Colombia, Honduras, Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago.

The respective programme in each country was funded by Regional TSSI Resources of the UNDP. The report proposed to critically assess these special works programmes. It further intended to indicate practical and politically feasible means of improving the cost-effectiveness of the programmes, in terms of the social goal of employment creation.”

The UNDP report came out in praise of the Unemployment Relief Programme, and has recommended that this be used for other countries that do not have this type of programme, that they should follow our example in Trinidad and Tobago with that type of structure that we have.

We have a structure where you have technical people dealing with the infrastructural works. We are working, together with the communities to bring benefits for the people of Trinidad and Tobago, in the meantime, supplying much needed labour for the unemployed. When they move on to other work, then we are satisfied that we have done something to help them in their time of need.

We are creating employment every year for over 150,000 persons—“10-days.” They are spread over the widest possible sections of Trinidad and Tobago. As a matter of fact, our average of fortnights to the number of persons that are employed is approximately two to three fortnights per person. We carry a programme of 20 fortnights. We are productive. We have been paying a decreased wage which helps of get more persons employed, which is a position that we have taken, because if wages are high, people would not want to move out of the programme. So that the wages we pay are higher than in the private sector, but lower than the normal Government daily-paid wage scale. This encourages the people to move on to better jobs.

We have been running a programme over the last few years, and the amenities which were given, for instance, at Caroni—the Member for Couva North has been the Member of Parliament for the area for 20 years—there is a mandir in the sea at Carapichaima, the Siewdass Sadu Mandir—the history is well documented. You will understand under what sort of strain and what circumstances that mandir was built.

There were many organizations which had started over the years that never got off the ground. When we went there last year there was not even a roadway leading to the spot where the mandir was built. Today I am reporting to you, Madam Speaker, and as you are probably one of the persons who are well aware of the fact that we are building that mandir out in the sea—it is a historical site; it belongs to the people of Carapichaima. The Member for Couva North is probably proud of it, but he would not come to Parliament and say so. We have done three months work on that mandir and I am saying in the next two months it will be opened.

We have been working very hard to get that mandir on stream. As a matter of fact, it should have been done last year, in keeping with the 150th anniversary of Indian arrival in Trinidad and Tobago, but we had a programme on stream to build a pavilion at Preysal. The Member for Caroni Central is very proud of that pavilion. It is the best pavilion on any recreation ground in Trinidad and Tobago. It is now accommodating medical personnel and holds something like 350 persons.

As a matter of fact, Preysal did so well this year because of the accommodation that they had, that it is only the rain that deprived them of being the champions of cricket in Trinidad and Tobago this year. Mr. Rangie Nanan and Mr. Theodore Cuffie promised that next year they will be champions because we are upgrading the facilities for them. They are proud of that.

The entire St. Mary's Junciton has changed. I spent most of my vacation there. There is a footpath; there is drainage and we are working on the McBean stretch. There is the Tortuga Community Centre. The Member for Tabaquite is elated when URP starts working in his area. He is getting more than one project. They are moving from area to area. The Bon Aventure footpath is one of the footpaths that he indicated to me was most critical in his area. We have almost finished that.

You name it, we have been doing it. We have been doing a footpath out on the Southern Main Road in Chaguanas under the leadership of the PNM and Mr. Patrick Manning as its Prime Minister. The problems there were that the people who knew these drains would flood when rain falls called us in through their Member of Parliament, and said, "Here it is that you are building bedded pavements and we have a problem here when it rains. It floods." We went in with our technical staff and started to dig and we are going to build suspended pavements.

We work with the community. We do projects that are community-based. We do projects based on the people in the area, the village councils. We have people

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with medical problems; we try to help. As a matter of fact, Biche has one of the best community centers in Trinidad, which will be opened probably in the next month.

7.25 p.m.

I was driving through Cumuto last night and was amazed to see the two bridges, completed; one at Little Coora Road and the other at the Cumuto Main Road. I am talking about bridges that cost millions of dollars to build, yet the Member for Nariva talks about a 200 tonne stone perched atop a tree.

Mr. Jurai: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the Member for Arouca North can say something good about the roads in Nariva and at Little Coora Road.

Mr. J. Narine: It is well known—and when the Minister of Works and Transport, the Member for Diego Martin East speaks, he would again repeat that it is a seven-year programme. It is a programme we started last year. The entire Cumuto Road is paved up to Tamana. He did not see that. All the Member is interested in is Guanapo, Southern Road. I, too, have family living in that area, along the St. Marie Emmanuel Road and they are not peeved; they are helping themselves.

The point is, the Member expects to get everything overnight. But this Government does not make magic. It works, and it works hard. It is getting the job done [*Interruption*] What about the dump? I think that the rain stopped the fire from smoking up the place.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member's speaking time has expired.

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

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. J. Narine: Madam Speaker, thank you. When you look at an area like Biche, there is a community center there that provides for people to do all different types of trades and skills; they are going to do welding, they are going to have tailoring classes. The people are enthusiastic because they are seeing that the Government, over the years, has been doing things. The economic situation is not healthy, but we are managing our finances so well that more is being done than was done before out of the little we have.

As a matter of fact, throughout Cumuto there are footpaths. The last Minister of Works and Transport was born and grew up in Cumuto. His family was living

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there and he did nothing for five years for the people of Cumuto. At least the Member for Nariva can boast that he really did something for the people in Cumuto, through the PNM. The tricks in the trade are always there. *[Interruption]* He lives in Haleland Park, his office is in San Juan, and he represents Nariva.

Mr. Jurai: I want to give you the assurance that I give effective representation to the constituency of Nariva. The people are 100 per cent in support of me.

Mr. J. Narine: I do not want to get into that. There is screening within the PNM; we talk to our people about what representatives did, and that is how they are selected to go up for election. I do not think if I say all that the Member did it would persuade the Member for Couva North to select him for the next election. I am sorry, brother.

We have performed, not only with the Unemployment Relief Programme, but you have heard and you would continue to hear until morning if we are to be here till them, from the Ministers of Education, Health Agriculture, Works, Sport and Culture, you name it.

In closing, I am about to indicate that when we came into office in 1991 we had four Parliamentary Secretaries. Recently we have had the addition of the Member for Laventille West—very well done by her. There are now five Parliamentary Secretaries.

What has happened over that period is that we have had training sessions through the Office of the Prime Minister. We have also had retreats through the Office of the Prime Minister.

Speaking on behalf of the Parliamentary Secretaries, who are not Members of Cabinet, I must say that we are treated almost like Ministers. We have been attending discussions, we have been attending all the training sessions, we are allowed to speak our minds, we are representing people in the constituencies who have trust and faith in us and today, they have demonstrated the trust and the faith they have in the People's National Movement by supporting our political leader, the Hon. Patrick Manning.

Somebody fooled the Member for Couva North. I understand that they have a big public relations firm coming from outside. Which conglomerate would be paying for that? They are saying in their caucus this is the last chance they may have to be in power. They are trying to spend all the money now by bringing in this firm. Probably the Member for Couva South could do better public relations

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than those people coming from outside. Trinidadians do not forgot the kind of PR that was done in 1986 that swept them all off their feet, and by 1987 we started losing COLA; 2 per cent and the back pay. Is that the public relations company?

The people of Trinidad and Tobago have always rallied around the PNM. They have confidence in the PNM, they have confidence in the Member of Parliament for San Fernando East, because he has had credibility over the years. He has had a long stint at being a parliamentarian, 24 years. He did not break off and then come and boast that he is the longest serving Member of Parliament and he was a Chairman of the House of Assembly.

The Member of Parliament for San Fernando East has served continuously. He has served under some of the better leaders in the western hemisphere, in the persons of Dr. Eric Eustace Williams and Mr. George Michael Chambers. He has had the experience. We are 100 per cent behind our Prime Minister and our political leader. Nobody in Trinidad and Tobago is going to divert us from that.

I am saying that from today we have launched our political campaign for the next two years. We are going to continue to move throughout Trinidad and Tobago. Tobago people I understand are very upset and—*[Interruption]* You still shaking “bollie.” I understand that the Member is in deep trouble in her constituency. It is because the PNM has credibility, the people of Trinidad and Tobago trust us.

Only this morning I saw a black car parked in front. I did not know whose it was, but I thought it belonged to the Member for Couva North. A member of his union told me they bought the car for \$100,000. If I lie, I lie after him. A car valued \$50,000 was sold to the union for \$100,000. This is my information. It is still being used by the president of the union and he took the \$100,000 and bought an Audi. I am serious.

The trade union movement is a fraternity. When you have discussions with them you hear many things. I am subject to correction, but I am saying it is ridiculous to know a car that old could be sold for \$100,000 to buy an Audi. We are talking about credibility. We are talking about people who are moving a Motion here against some other person, who, according to my grandmother ‘sifter laughing at soup’ *[Laughter]*. Another favourite expression of my grandmother is that when ‘bachac ready to die they get wings.’ We are looking at a Government that has credibility, that has responded to the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

We have been in control for almost 4 years as a team and we have performed creditably. And the people of Trinidad and Tobago think so. We have seen

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unemployment decrease, but not as significantly as we would like. We would like to see it go down much more than that.

7.35 p.m.

I should like to tell the Member for Oropouche that I had the opportunity to be in India last year and learned that there is an island called Jersey off the English coast which has 100 per cent employment. So, in saying that it can be achieved nowhere in the world is not really telling the truth. This was said at the conference in New Delhi last year. The people of Jersey have a system and have worked, over the years, to bring it to the stage where there is no unemployment.

I have confidence that with this Prime Minister, with his Cabinet colleagues, will bring this country's unemployment down significantly, if not in this five-year period, certainly in the year 2000.

I thank you Madam Speaker.

The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Colm Imbert): Madam Speaker, it is with some disappointment that I rise at this time. We have only two contributions from the other side. I took some notes from the speech of the mover of the Motion, but unfortunately I would have great difficulty in responding to anything said by him. I took a few notes also from the Member for Oropouche and I must say that some of his points would allow me to speak on this Motion for about three days.

I recognize shell shock in the contribution of the Member for Couva North. As he came into Port of Spain and saw the spontaneous outpouring of support of all the people of Trinidad and Tobago in front of the Parliament, I realized that that Member became shell shocked and for that reason I would excuse his contribution.

It was an even greater disappointment, after he made his contribution that the next contribution, from the Member for Oropouche, was lower than that of the Member for Couva North. I find it amazing that the debate from the other side went downhill.

One only has to cast one's eyes in the public gallery to see a former UNC candidate for Laventille West wearing a balisier proudly on his chest. They are shell shocked. That is what they cannot take.

Let me deal with the contribution of the Member for Oropouche. That Member with his usual display of ignorance of any of the laws of Trinidad and

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Tobago. *[Interruption]* That is a demonstration of the arrogance and dictatorial tendencies of the Leader of the Opposition. That was their candidate in the last Laventille by-election and because the man has seen the light of day, because he has seen the truth and the way, he is despised by the Member for Couva North.

The Member for Oropouche accused the Prime Minister of having dictatorial tendencies, of violating the Constitution when the hon. Member for San Fernando East, the hon. Prime Minister, indicated that he wished a reform of the system of service commissions in this country. That is all he did and the Member for Oropouche accused him of being a dictator and of flying in the face of the Constitution. And he read out something about swearing to uphold the law and so forth. As usual it was complete ignorance of the law.

I shall refer the Member for Oropouche to section 54(1) of the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago.

“Subject to the provisions of this section, Parliament may alter any of the provisions of this Constitution...”

Therefore, when the Member for Oropouche accused the Member for San Fernando East of seeking to interfere with the Constitution he just displayed classic ignorance of the law, which he does time and again in this House. It is clear to me that the Member for Couva South does not give free advice. The Member for Oropouche cannot afford the fees of the Member for Couva South, so he is not educating him in law. That is what is going on the other side.

The hon. Attorney General had to bring to the attention of the Member for Couva North the import and intent of the Motion here today. I am quoting section 77 of the Constitution for the benefit of the Member for Couva South. It refers to dissolution of the Parliament. What happens when Parliament is dissolved? There is a general election and a new government is formed.

This misplaced, misguided Motion is really a Motion against the Prime Minister and his Cabinet. One cannot divorce the Cabinet from this Motion. It is clear to me that the members on the other side did no preparation. Why is it that at 7.45 p.m. we have had only two contributions? We started this debate at 1.30 p.m. they have folded up. They are playing gypsy.

Look at what is happening! The Member for Tobago East has gone. The Member for Pointe-a-Pierre has gone. The Member for Couva North's own brother has gone. I am not sure if the Member for Nariva has gone, but he is not here. They have sent out an all points bulletin for them. I see them over there. *[Interruption]* The Member for Naparima has returned.

7.45 p.m.

Let me turn now to some of the mischievous, false allegations of the Member for Oropouche. I have in my possession an advance copy of the *Quarterly Economic Bulletin* of the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, dated March 1995. If one looks at this document, at the employment figures over the last 45 years, one sees that as a result of the leadership of the hon. Prime Minister, the Member for San Fernando East, in 1991, when the Member for Tobago East demitted Government, 407,000 persons were employed. What was the situation at the end of 1994—425,000 persons were employed. So what is the reality, what is the truth?

The Member for Oropouche likes to spout all sorts of misleading statistics, quote from the wrong books, read the wrong text, quote the wrong paragraphs. The reality is that since this PNM Government has come into power, under the distinguished leadership of the Prime Minister, nearly 20,000 net new jobs have been created. But the Member for Oropouche said that the Prime Minister promised jobs and no jobs were created; that the Prime Minister said he had a plan and nothing happened. Where did these 20,000 jobs come from? Did they fall from the sky? No, Madam Speaker, they did not.

When we were in Opposition, again under the distinguished leadership of the hon. Member for San Fernando East—and I was very honoured during the period of Opposition to be contacted by the hon. Member for San Fernando East. In 1998, the hon. Member contacted me—check the date, Madam Speaker, 1988, *[Interruption]* I was already a member of the People's National Movement at that time—and asked me if I would be interested in fighting an election for the People's National Movement.

Mr. Manning: what was that year again?

Hon. C. Imbert: Madam Speaker, it was in 1988 when the PNM was at its lowest ebb. I immediately said, yes. Do you know why I said yes? Because I had already seen that the Prime Minister had gathered around him a distinguished team, the hon. Members for Diego Martin Central, Diego Martin West, St Ann's East, St. Joseph, Arouca south and many other distinguished political luminaries.

I had already seen the caliber of the men that the Member for San Fernando East had been able to draw into his team. The Member for Ortoire/Mayaro came very shortly thereafter into the team. As a matter of fact, he had had a short stint in the Senate and caused panic and consternation in the ranks of the other side during our period of Opposition.

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When I looked at the caliber of men and women that the hon. Member had been able to attract to his team, I had no hesitation, I said yes, and I said I would fight on behalf of the PNM wherever he wishes me to fight. I did that because I had made a value judgment of the Member for San Fernando East and I do not regret it to this day; and I will not ever regret that judgment, I am sure.

The Member for Couva South likes to talk all sorts of things, but as far as I am concerned, in politics, he is a Johnny-come-lately. He appeared on the political scene only in 1991 and he displaced a long-time associate of the Member for Couva North, the former representative for Couva south, *[Interruption]* he displaced Kelvin Ramnath *[Interruption]*

PROCEDURAL MOTION

The Minister of Trade and Industry and Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Kenneth Valley): Madam Speaker, I beg to move that this House continue in session until the conclusion of the debate on the Motion.

Question put and agreed to.

NO CONFIDENCE MOTION (PRIME MINISTER)

Hon. C. Imbert: Madam speaker, I never cease to be amazed at the Machiavellian tendencies of the Member for Couva North. He is a student of Prince Niccolo Machiavelli, without doubt. Machiavelli is here with us in the Parliament today in the persona of the Member for Couva North. The Member had someone who started with him in his political infancy in 1967—I am talking about the former Member for Couva South—a man who stood by him, a man who fought with him in this Parliament. But what does he do? He throws him out of his party and brings in his friend, the Member for Couva South, and he wants to tell us about dictatorial tendencies?

I remember when the Member for Chaguanas, in a legitimate protest on the Uriah Butler Highway *[Interruption]* It was a legitimate political protest. When she was on her way to being incarcerated, what was the reaction of the Member for Couva south? “I aint business with that.” The Member was driving down the road and saw the Member for Chaguanas going the other way in a police jeep; he said, you see me? I going. Down the road!” that is what happened! That is the kind of camaraderie and team that they have on other side—no loyalty to anybody or anything; no principle.

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One of their Members was arrested and on her way to prison or the courthouse—and he is the human rights champion of Trinidad and Tobago *[Interruption]* he is the top constitutional whatever in Trinidad and Tobago. What does he do? Down the road, down the road—“not me and that comess.”

It took the late Member for Caroni East, Mr. Sham Mohammed to attend to the Member for Chaguanas. That is the kind of team they have on this side *[Interruption]* Yes, they hounded him to his death; that is true. I am simply amazed at what happens on the other side. Let us look at the Member for Siparia, for example.

The Member for Couva North wants to terrorize the Member for Siparia *[Interruption]* because he had some difficulty with the leader. What does his leader do? He brings into the other House the same person who ran against the Member for Siparia for another party to terrorize him. *[Interruption]*

Madam Speaker, do you think the Member for Couva North is easy? He is not easy, you know. He tells the Member for Siparia, watch yourself, you know, if you give me any chat this is the candidate for Siparia, not you. That is how they operate on the other side. That is why my hon. Friend and colleague the Member for Arouca North could say that many of them on the other side know that they would not be facing the polls in 1996 or whenever it is. The Member for Couva North has already made arrangements.

7.55 p.m.

The Member for Couva North puts the Member for Caroni East, a virtual newcomer to this House before the Member for Caroni Central. Do you know why? Because the Member for Caroni Central has the audacity to support the Member for Chaguanas. The Member for Caroni Central decides that the Member for Chaguanas fight against the parasitic oligarchy is inside the UNC—that is where it is. The parasitic oligarchy is inside the UNC.

The actions of the Member for Couva North inspired one of the best calypsos for 1994; “Go down with the Hulsie”. It spoke about a parasite in a parasitic oligarchy in the UNC. The Member for Caroni Central has temerity to support the Member for Chaguanas in a principled stand against in justice in the UNC. So you know what the Member for Couva north did? Shut him—“I will bring Caroni East in front of him. I will make him pay. I will show him who is the boss.” That is how they operate. *[Interruption]*

Madam Speaker, I hear mumblings from the Member for St. Augustine. The Member for St. Augustine is always with the Member for Oropouche making

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snide remarks about the fact that the chairman of the People's National Movement conducts the affairs of the Office of the Prime Minister when he is out of the country. The chairman of the party—one of the highest offices within the PNM! The Member for St. Augustine has a problem with that.

Do you know what is going on over there? The Member for Couva South is the problem because the Members for St. Augustine and Oropouche and St. Augustine are senior to the Member for Couva South. How did he reach up there? One hears about it. I have friends in the UNC. One hears about the bacchanal inside there. The Member for St. Augustine wants to resign because he was not made Chief Whip. Do you think it is easy? The Member for Couva South (Ramesh) is controlling the party. Not a dog bark inside there.

I do not know how the Member for Tabaquite reached inside there, you know. I do not know how a decent, honest, honourable medical practitioner reached inside there.

Dr. Rowley: Mistakes happen.

Hon. C. Imbert: I can understand why on almost every Friday the Member for Tabaquite, on occasions when we walk down the corridor together, says, "Boy, I do not know how I got myself into this, you know." I understand.

Hon. Member: Hong Kong.

Hon. C. Imbert: I will not talk about the Member for Caroni East; that is advantage.

Let me go back to the statements of the Member for Oropouche. He got up here and said that there is no energy policy. Well, if there is no energy policy, who is the Government in the final stages of a US \$1 billion—TT \$6 billion—liquefied natural gas project in Brighton, La Brea? The Member for Oropouche had the audacity to ask the Member for La Brea if any jobs would be created in the constituency of La Brea.

Because of this Government, TT \$6 billion will be spent on one project in the constituency of La Brea. Construction of that LNG plant is expected to commence either towards the end of this year or the beginning of next year. Front end engineering has already been done. Preliminary land development is already under way. The foreign investors have already shown sufficient confidence that they are financing preliminary engineering and infrastructural development on that project. At peak of construction, it is estimated that over 3,000 jobs will be created on that LNG project—3,000 jobs on one project.

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Look at the Farmland petrochemical plant. US \$300 million—nearly TT \$2 billion—in expenditure on one of the largest ammonia plants in the Western Hemisphere. Where? In the constituency of La Brea. I read a letter in a newspaper this week—it is amazing some of the articles we see in the newspapers and one wonders who is writing these letters. Somebody said that La Brea is a forgotten place since the PNM Government came in. Nothing has happened. Nothing is being done. There is no work on anything.

Mr. Sudama: That is what the constituents of La Brea are saying.

Hon. C. Imbert: I have just spoken about two projects initiated by the PNM Government under the astute leadership of the Prime Minister. The sum of TT \$8 billion in one constituency. I estimate as many as 5,000 jobs in the construction phase. The Member for Oropouche knows not of what he speaks.

Members heard the Member for St. Ann's East talk about increased exploration and drilling. If there was no energy policy what would Unocal be doing here? Why is Exxon here? Has the Member ever heard about Exxon? Exxon is an energy company. It is one of the largest oil companies in the world, if not the largest. I think Shell is bigger than they. I ask the hon. Member for Oropouche if he knows what Enron is. I understand that he has lapses of memory. He must know that Exxon is one of the largest oil companies in the world. Enron, Unocal, British Gas, he must know about these companies. He must know what is going on.

It is because of the bold and courageous initiatives of this Governemnt led by the Prime Minister, as the Member for St. Ann's East said. I remember when I joined the PNM in 1988, we sat down in Chepstow House on Frederick Street and we burnt the midnight oil and developed the policies that eventually came out in that beautiful document, the PNM 1991 General Election Manifesto. I remember the chairmanship and leadership of the Member for San Fernando East. It was his team.

The Prime Minister chose the members of this team. He brought them together. He inspired and motivated them, he rebuilt the fortunes of the People's National Movement and brought it from a crushing defeat of 33/3 to victory in the following general election just five years after that crushing defeat.

8.05 p.m.

I want the Member for Oropouche to show me a country in the world where someone has taken an opposition party at its lowest ebb in 30 years, rebuilt it and

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led it to recapture the seat of government in five years. Call one country and one prime minister in the world who has ever done that. He cannot. That is why [Interruption] Madam Speaker, the Member for Couva North is ignorant of Caribbean affairs. It is not just because of the problem with immigration that the Member for Tobago East had to get rid of him, it was also woeful ignorance of Caribbean and foreign affairs.

Do you see how they have to lower the level of their contributions? That is why the *Express* 1991 Individual of the Year Award—where the head of the *Express* was a former Minister in a party opposed to the PNM—went to Prime Minister Patrick Manning. Why? It states:

“An independent panel of judges me yesterday...”

This is January 1, 1992. That would be December 31, I guess. It goes on:

“...and decided to bestow the award on the Prime Minister for the leadership he displayed in rebuilding the People’s National Movement (PNM) and for its success in this year’s general election.

Manning, 45 is the youngest Prime Minister Trinidad and Tobago has ever had. In 1971 he entered Politics...”

making him today the longest serving Member for the House of Representatives elected to this Parliament.

So the *Express* newspaper had confidence in our Prime Minister, the Hon. Patrick Manning. They could not help. This is a newspaper whose owners were previously opposed to the People’s National Movement.

Let me go back. The Member for Oropouche would like the country to miss the fact that in Trinidad and Tobago the first iron carbide plant in the world, developed for commercial production of iron carbide, was built because of this Prime Minister and this PNM Government. Even though the Nucor company has not done as well as it expected, do you know what the head of Nucor said?

“Despite the fact that our Trinidad and Tobago plant has not been as productive as we anticipated, we are committed to developing that plant and to expanding our iron carbide production in Trinidad and Tobago.”

What does that tell you? Here is a foreign company which chose Trinidad and Tobago as the first place in the world to set up commercial production of iron carbide. Why did they do that? Obviously because they had confidence in the Prime Minister and the Government. If they did not have such confidence they

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were not coming here. They come here; their plant does not do as well as they anticipated, and what do they do? They are not leaving. They are building more plants.

The Member for Oropouche is clearly not aware that the Clico/Methanol company [*Interruption*] Madam Speaker, the Member for Tobago West could say what she wants, but when it comes to measuring Prime Ministers she has no yardstick. I do not want to start that, because a Motion of no confidence was brought to this Parliament a few years ago by three Members of the PNM, and when that was finished, that was the end of the NAR Government. It was all downhill after that for the NAR Government. I do not want to go back into that debate and repeat some of the issues about that Prime Minister, so I suggest the Member for Tobago West just cool it.

Let me go back. The Clico/Methanol company made \$400 million profit in fiscal year 1994. The actual share to the parent company, I think was \$200 million, or something like that, and the energy investment by that company helped to support the overall performance of that conglomerate. That company is now so confident in this Government, in this Prime Minister, because, I mean, he is our leader, and without the Prime Minister, there would be no Cabinet. Even the Constitution tells you that.

The Cabinet comprises the Prime Minister and such other ministers as he may wish to appoint. Am I correct? The Prime Minister can also be the Attorney General, I understand, if he is a lawyer. That is my understanding. There was an interpretation the other day that if the Prime Minister is a lawyer, he can also be the Attorney General and form the Cabinet by himself. [*Laughter*]

Madam Speaker: I think you had better leave the Constitution.

Hon. C. Imbert: The Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago is comprised of the Prime Minister, the Attorney General and such other Ministers as the Prime Minister deems appropriate. Therefore without our Prime Minister there is no Cabinet. You have to understand that. That is why we on this side view this attack on our Prime Minister as not just an attack on our leader, but an attack on us also. That is why the team is responding to them. They have threatened the team and the team is going to take them on.

Under the astute leadership of the Prime Minister, the Clico/Methanol Company is now going into an understanding with Ferrostaal and the Government for another US 200 million methanol plant. Why is that? Because they have confidence in the Prime Minister. Do you think people would go and raise US

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\$200 million if they did not have confidence in the Prime Minister? I seriously doubt it.

Why have energy sector companies been coming to Trinidad on a daily basis? You heard what the Member for St. Ann's East said about the last blocks that were put out for bid for oil exploration. Under the leadership of the Member for Tobago East when they put them out for bid they could only get two bids. I have to assume when he says 'dozens, that is at least 24 bids under the leadership of this Government—two under the leadership of the previous one. Why? Because we have an energy policy; because we have pragmatic approach to energy development.

We took some bold and courageous steps with our supplemental petroleum taxation; reformed our whole system of petroleum taxation to give incentives to investors. That did not come out of the sky. That came from our energy policy. And it is because the foreign oil companies have recognized that this country, once again, after a hiatus of five years when there was no policy on anything, now has an energy policy again. That is why dozens of investors are bidding for exploration off the coast of Trinidad. So the statements made by the Member for Oropouche, as usual, have no substance.

8.15 p.m.

He derided the Member for San Fernando East for speaking about the construction boom. The University of the West Indies Civil Engineering Department cannot generate a sufficient quantity of civil engineers to deal with the construction boom that is taking place in 1995. If one looks at all the indicators for construction: the demand for cement; the demand for steel reinforcing wire bars; the demand for skills; the demand for heavy duty transportation; the demand for aggregate; the demand for blocks, one sees significant growth in 1994 continuing exponentially in 1995. The construction sector has been stimulated to this point by the proactive policies of this Government.

If one were to read the plan that the PNM developed for unemployment while in Opposition one would see that one of our major thrusts was stimulation of the construction sector to provide short-term employment opportunities while the other sectors in the economy—the energy sector, the tourism sector, the manufacturing sector, the industrial and agricultural sectors caught up with the construction sector. These other sectors take several years to gestate and fully develop.

What is the situation today in the construction sector? We have already heard the Member for St. Ann's East talk about 10 per cent growth in the construction sector. I already see it. I was speaking to the University of the West Indies this week. Under the Tobago East group, the number graduates coming out of the University of the West Indies Civil Engineering Department dwindled to zero. There was not a single Trinidadian or Tobagoian going into civil engineering at the University of the West Indies because nothing was happening in construction. Since this Government has come in we have seen a progressive growth in the number of persons applying to do civil engineering.

I understand there are over 10 Trinidad and Tobago citizens who will graduate from the University of the West Indies in Civil engineering this year; next year there will be 16 and for the class of 1997, I understand it is over 20. These are Trinidad and Tobago citizens; I am not talking about the total engineering class. And why?

Students react to indicators in the society. They talk to their parents, to their peers, to people already in the job market and they ask them: Where are the avenues for employment opportunity? If construction was not booming, one would not see this exponential growth in the number of persons seeking to do civil engineering at the University of the West India. That is one of the indicators. But let us forget the indicators.

Let us deal with the actual projects that the Member for Oropouche likes to gloss over, does not like us to speak about. I shall now go through briefly the elements within the construction industry, the various subsectors so that the Member for Oropouche would understand. He has a problem with understanding.

Let me deal with the road sector. They love that one. What happened in 1994? We repaired over 250 kilometre of roads in the country. Hundreds of persons were employed. What is going to happen in 1995 and 1996?

For the last two years, Ministry of Works and Transport personnel have been negotiating with the Inter-American Development Bank for a comprehensive highway rehabilitation programme. Members opposite know it is coming because they have spies all over the place. They know what is happening. They know that the World Bank officials were here last month and they are coming next month. They know the Inter-American Development Bank people were here last month and they know why. It is to sign the final documents for all these programmes.

The road programme which this Government, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, is about to embark upon is a \$700 million programme: \$500

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million on road reconstruction throughout the country; \$200 million on trunk road expansion which, for the uninitiated on the other side, means improvement of intersections, construction of over-passes and grade separated interchanges, expansion of existing highways from two lanes to three lanes.

New roads: We have in the pipeline a new highway. We have planned the development of a new road—it is in our 10-year development programme—from San Fernando to Princes Town, to open up that area of the country. We have planned the development of the road to Chaguaramas, the completion of the dualling of the Churchill-Roosevelt Highway to Arima, Sangre Grande and beyond.

We have the complete reconstruction of the Sir Soloman Hochoy Highway—it is a two-phased programme. We are getting \$100 million from the European Economic Community. That is going to start in December. And they cannot take that. Tenders are already going out, drawing as completed. They have spies in the ministries so they know that the drawings are completed. They know it is going out to tender. They know the timetable for commencement is December, 1995. As the Member for Arouca North said, they know this is their last desperate bite at the cherry. When the \$100 million EEC programmes start rolling and \$700 million IDB programme starts rolling, it is devil take the hindmost. Later for them.

One the other side, they talk so much of what they do not know. These are international programmes, all the tender awards will be scrutinized by persons in Trinidad and Tobago and outside Trinidad and Tobago.

Because of representation from Members on the other side and Members on this side, we have not confined our activities in the ministry to road development. We are looking at drainage infrastructure development and improvement, because for the last 10 years or so and particularly, in the 1986 to 1991 period, very little meaningful work was done on the drainage systems in this country.

The member for St. Augustine awarded a few tenders violating the Central Tenders Board Ordinance—we know about that—and they had to rush into this Parliament to backdate an amendment to the Central Tenders Board Ordinance. They like to talk all kinds of things on the other side. This Minister of Works and Transport never awards contracts to contractors to clean drains in violation of the Central Tenders Board Ordinance. Not this Minister; that former Minister of Works over there! He did that. And he is not denying it.

The Member had to rush into this Parliament to get a hurried amendment to the Central Tenders Board Ordinance. The most amazing amendment I have ever

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seen—retroactive—to cover up his wrongful unlawful actions. What was that amendment?

Madam Speaker if as Minister of Works and Transport—I am lying in my bed and I get the feeling that a flood will come, not that it has reached—I am dreaming, and I say it will flood in July, I could then go and violate all standard procedures and award contracts just like that, without tenders. That was the amendment that was made to the Central Tenders Board Ordinance by that Member for St. Augustine, to cover up his unlawful actions when they came into power in 1987. But they like to talk about Members on this side committing unlawful acts.

The only Minister of Works and Transport, as far as I know, who has ever committed an unlawful act and awarded tenders without proper procedures is the hon. Member for St. Augustine. That is on the record.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member's speaking time has expired.

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

Question put and agreed to.

8.27 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

9.19 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Hon. C. Imbert: Madam Speaker, before I took my seat, I was talking about the infrastructure development under this Government done by the hon. Prime Minister, the Member for San Fernando East. I was talking about drainage development and I was giving some examples of how things used to be done.

As I was saying, the Members on the other side, especially the Member for Oropouche, are aware that within the Ministry of Works and Transport, particularly, a number of major infrastructure programmes are nearing final stages of completion. With regard to drainage, one of the areas on coming into office we decided to tackle in a very systematic way was the reconstruction and development of our drainage systems. Over the last 10 to 15 years, particularly, as I said, during the period 1986 to 1991, very little focus was put on drainage improvement in a systematic way.

World Bank representatives will be back in Trinidad very shortly. We are starting the first phase of the programme again in December of this year, January for the latest, to catch the dry season. Our first phase will cost \$50 million and it

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will be all over the country: in Central Trinidad, in the Caparo area; in North Trinidad, in the Diego Martin River, the St. Ann's River, the Maraval River and the Malick River; in South Trinidad, the Vistabella and Marabella Rivers.

Significant, serious action plans are being developed. Designs are under way. Consultants have been hired. The consultants are due to complete their designs to allow tenders to be invited very shortly. This is the first phase of a much larger programme of \$300 to \$400 million repairing drainage systems throughout the East/West Corridor, Central and South Trinidad.

There is a tendency in Trinidad and Tobago for Members on the other side to give the impression that the only area in Trinidad and Tobago which requires attention when it comes to drainage is Central Trinidad. Of course Central Trinidad needs attention, but what they do when they cry wolf and scream discrimination, ignoring the fact that 60 per cent of my ministry's expenditure is in Central Trinidad, when it comes to drainage work, is that they try to get us to ignore our own constituencies. It is a ploy of the Opposition. Everything they do is a ploy.

Tobago is verse in crying wolf. We heard the Member for St. Ann's East speak about massive hotel development in Tobago initiated by this Government and this Prime Minister when the hon. Member for Tobago East could not do it. *[Interruption]* I am speaking about your former Prime Minister. The Member for Tobago West can complain and cry all she wants, but under their administration, they could not get any significant hotel development going in Tobago. We have heard the Member for St. Ann's East read out a list of massive hotel development—hundreds of hotel rooms all over Tobago initiated by this Government. All they did was talk and this is why this Motion is so ridiculous.

We have heard the Member for Arouca North talk about how they managed to use public relations to convince the population that they were a better alternative in 1986. They came in on a platform of unity but they started to mash up within months. They cut COLA, wages and they took away things from poor people. That is why they lost the election. The people have no confidence in them. I will not amend the Motion, but I should like to amend it in so many ways. I should like to amend it to say that this House declares no confidence in the Member for Couva North; no confidence in the Members for Tobago East and West, but I shall not bother, I shall leave that for others.

All this is because of the leadership of the Prime Minister, together with the person who acts in the office of the Prime Minister when he is not here, the

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Minister of Planning and Development, Dr. Lenny Saith, who is largely responsible for all the major development programmes taking place with international funding. The deputy political leader and the chairman of the People's National Movement have managed, together with the various line ministries, to use an inspired form of leadership to get this country on a growth path.

9.25 p.m.

Our drainage development programme, the first of its kind for the last 15 years, will get going at the end of this year. Over the next five years we intend to systematically upgrade and improve the vast majority of drainage systems throughout the country [*Interruption*] Madam Speaker, do you know that the Member for Caroni Central still has not gotten over his displacement in the seating lineup in the front bench on that side? He keeps saying "where." I have just spoken about the Caparo River area where we plan to start significant construction work at the end of this year in the constituency of Caron Central.

Mr. Palackdharrysingh: We still have flooding there.

Hon. C. Imbert: Madam Speaker, I should like to tell the Member for Caroni Central that if there were another Prime Minister and another Government, it would flood every week.

I have tried my best to go through the contribution of the Member for Couva North, the man who had the audacity to complain about the Prime Minister's car. The hon. Member for Arouca North adverted to a black Royal Saloon driven by the Member for Couva North.

The Member is driving this car because of some curious arrangement between himself and the sugar union, where he bought the car and the union bought it back. He sold it, made a profit, all sorts of things, and he is still driving the car. This car has changed hands, the Member for Couva North has done some good business with this car and he is now driving it—sale and lease back—and he now comes to this House and wants to talk about car transactions.

Mr. Maharaj: Madam Speaker, we have sat here and listened. A Member is not supposed to impute improper motives in this debate. For the whole day they have breached this Standing Order and I would like to take that objection again; I have taken it before. I do not think it is proper—and this Member knows that, from matters arising on the last occasion we were here. I am saying that it is not proper, because we can then go into many things. If it is that that Member could

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get up and say anything about this Member without any evidence, we can get up and say many things about him.

Madam Speaker: The Member is alleging that the hon. Minister is imputing improper motives to the Member for Couva North in the transactions with the car.

Hon. C. Imbert: Madam Speaker, with the greatest respect to the Member for Couva South, the Member for Couva North is not denying anything. Madam Speaker, they want to play mas but they cannot take powder.

Mr. Maharaj: If the hon. Minister continues like that and Madam Speaker does not stop him, we would be entitled to call names. It is either we respect the Standing Orders or we do not.

Madam Speaker: With respect to the allegation of the implication of the car, the Member for Couva South is saying that you are imputing an improper transaction with the car. Is that what you are saying?

Hon. C. Imbert: Madam Speaker, that is not what I am saying.

Madam Speaker: Well then, why mention it at all? I do not know what is the purpose of mentioning the car.

Hon. C. Imbert: Madam Speaker, the point I am making is that the Member for Couva North was engaged in many different transactions involving one motor vehicle, where this vehicle changed hands—

Madam Speaker: You are not saying that those transactions were improper.

Hon. C. Imbert: No, Madam Speaker. The Member for Couva South had made allegations. In this very debate the Member for Oropouche accused the Prime Minister of selling his car and house to drug dealers. That is recorded in *Hansard* today.

Mr. Maharaj: Madam Speaker, that was a specific Motion. If the hon. Minister brings a specific Motion, we can deal with that. But when this Member gets up and makes these statements in breach of the Standing Order, he is using parliamentary privilege for what it is not intended. If we make statements which we cannot support he can object and we can deal with it then. He cannot say that he is mentioning the car but there is no improper motive. Then why mention it? It is irrelevant.

Madam Speaker: That is my point.

Hon. C. Imbert: Madam Speaker, I should like to develop my point. It appears that the Opposition is up to its familiar ploy, trying to break my stride by introducing red herrings into the debate. Well, the Opposition is not going to get away with it. *[Interruption]*

The Members on the other side love to come into this Parliament—

Madam Speaker: I am trying to follow the point the hon. Member is making.

Hon. C. Imbert: I keep getting interrupted, Madam Speaker. The Member on the other side love to come into this Parliament and make allegations about Members on this side. We are here debating a Motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister. During the debate, the Member for Oropouche said that the Member for San Fernando East is not fit to be Prime Minister because he was involved in transactions involving the sale of his motor car and his house to drug dealers—which is not correct.

I am simply developing the point that the Members opposite take perfectly innocent transactions and turn them into something which appears to be irregular. I am giving an example of a perfectly innocent transaction which can be interpreted in a certain way. I will ask you for injury time, Madam Speaker, because they keep interrupting me.

I made the point that the Member for Couva North used to be the owner of a black Toyota Royal Saloon. This Royal Saloon was sold or traded into a particular motor car company in Trinidad and Tobago—that is a matter of public record at the Licensing Office—and the Member got another car. The car has been sold to someone else but the Member is still driving it. Why is the Member for Couva North driving a vehicle that he has sold to somebody else?

The Members on the other side say that Members on this side are engaged in all sorts of practices where we accept gifts, that we succumb to temptation and we engage in improper practices and so on. The Member is driving a car which he does not own. I am saying that it could be interpreted that he has received a gift from somebody, for a consideration or some sort of deal that he has made.

I am saying that the records of Members on the other side are littered with examples like this, with all sorts of transactions which we could interpret in the worst possible way. They ignore these transactions, they pretend that they do not exist and nothing is going on in their lives and they try to prevent perfectly innocent transactions of Members on this side. Madam Speaker, I hope you now understand my point.

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I would give another example. The Member for Oropouche made an allegation that the Prime Minister was engaged in transactions with drug dealers and therefore was not fit to be Prime Minister. The Member for Couva South has received money from persons who have criminal records. *[Interruption]* I am developing a point, Madam Speaker, I am not imputing improper motives.

The Member for Couva South has rendered services to these people, who have criminal records. Some of these persons have been incarcerated, some for the most heinous crimes. If at some time the Member for Couva South formed part of the Government, it could be said that in a previous life he received money from criminals and, therefore, he is not fit to be part of a government. I am not saying that; I am merely developing a point. What I am referring to is a perfectly innocent transaction. I am not imputing any improper motives, none whatsoever.

9.35 p.m.

I am not saying that the Member has done anything wrong. All I am saying is that uncharitable people can interpret his actions in a particular way and accused him of taking money from criminals for a consideration. I do not believe he has done that. He is an honourable Member of this Parliament, and he will never do a thing like that. I would never believe that he would do a thing like that. I would never believe that the Member for Couva North would engage in a transaction with a car where he benefits from that transaction. Never! The Member for Couva North is an honourable man.

I am simply giving examples here. I hope the Members for Couva North and South will not have to revert to the sort of mud slinging that they do from time to time. I think they are both honourable men and that they have not done anything that could be regarded as improper.

Madam Speaker, let me go on. The Members on the other side like to talk about investigations. There have been investigations and actions have been taken against Members on the other side. Let me not get into details because they want to play mas but 'fraid' powder.

Hon Member: Bring your powder. We are ready for you.

Hon. C. Imert: If one looks at the reasons given by the Member for Oropouche for the motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister—what did the Member for Oropouche say? That in other countries there are vibrant media. So we do not have vibrant media here. Is it only when the media praise the Opposition that they are vibrant? When it is dropping 'calpet' on them it is not vibrant. When it is

dropping 'calpet' on us it is vibrant. That is how those Members are: "Do as I say but not as I do." That is why I have used various terms to define the Members on the other side. The Member for Oropouche knows better.

The Member for Couva North read an article from the *Trinidad Guardian* and held that out as the fountain of wisdom. He agrees with the editorial. The same Member for Couva North has come into this House and said the parasitic oligarchy controls the *Guardian*, that the Editor of the *Guardian*, is a drug dealer and the drug dealers influence the editorials in the *guardian*. When he gets an editorial in the same *Guardian* that is favourable to him, the *Guardian* newspaper is the most wonderful thing in the world. I fear for this country if the Members on the other side ever got into power.

I remember the Member for Couva South, the human rights champion, so vexed with the media that he said: "When we come into power they would have to get a licence and we would scrutinize them very carefully and we would deal with them." This goes against sections 4 and 5 of the Constitution. Freedom of the press is enshrined in the Constitution. He wants to licence the press and scrutinize them and all this kind of thing. He wants to interfere with the freedom of the press. Do you know why? Because he got two hard editorials. They lashed him twice.

What else did the Member for Oropouche say? That government is in league with big business. I saw a most obscene ostentatious display of *nouveau riche* expenditure recently: champagne was flowing, people were talking about how they were worth \$200 million. Talk about parasitic oligarchy! The Member for Couva North was surrounded by wealthy businessmen drinking champagne in golden goblets, probably wearing diamond shoes, offering them president of the country.

One of the fellows said that he was worth \$200 million and that he was backing Bas; Bas was his boy. The Member wants to talk about having the backing of a parasitic oligarchy! I mean I do not have anybody with \$200 million in a restaurant slaking me with champagne in a golden and saying, "I am backing you, boy; and when you make Prime Minister make me President." Those Members are good! I do not think there is another man in Trinidad and Tobago who has \$200 million to give the Member. I do not think so.

Let us go on with the comments of the Member for Oropouche—no jobs created in the energy sector. I made the point on another occasion. I called one of the major energy petrochemical companies at Point Lisas and asked for a

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breakdown of how much money it spent on goods and services in Trinidad and Tobago annually.

Members opposite like to talk. They say that a methanol plant is 100 jobs; that an ammonia plant is 150 jobs, but they completely overlook the fact that these companies spend money. That particular company—I think it is the Trinidad and Tobago Methanol Company—in 1994, spent \$225 million in Trinidad and Tobago's economy procuring goods and services from Trinidad and Tobago's nationals. The expenditure of \$225 million creates several hundred jobs. That is just one company.

They say these companies are coming here and are not creating any jobs. For every methanol company that comes here, hundreds of millions of dollars are brought in foreign exchange and converted to local currency and spent in employing nationals of Trinidad and Tobago, in the procurement of goods and services, in the supplies to the company, in the purchase of electricity and consumables for the company, maintenance and so forth. The Clico Methanol plant—\$200 million; the TTMF—\$200 million. There is also Fertrin, now the Arcadian plant—\$200 million. Billions of dollars are spent by these companies employing Trinidad and Tobago nationals.

Hundreds—perhaps thousands—of jobs have been created in the energy sector since the accession to office of the hon. Prime Minister and this Government. They cannot bring any evidence to refute the claim that since this Government came to office with its energy policy, thousands of jobs have been created in the service sector of Trinidad and Tobago.

When one looks at the information in Table 13 of the *Central Bank Quarterly Economic Bulletin* of March 1995 one would see that in 1991 when they demitted office, in the service sector, 219,000 persons were employed. In 1994, 246,000 persons were employed, an increase of 37,000 new jobs in the service sector. These new jobs are in the energy sector, the heavy oil sector, the petroleum sector. They like to fool the people of this country. All those well service companies that are now expanding their operations and employing people; all of the petroleum service companies employing 27,000 people since this Government came in to office. But Members opposite like to fool the people of this country.

9.45 p.m.

Madam Speaker: You have five minutes more.

Hon. C. Imbert: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Member for St. Ann's East made the point that more and more people are coming back to Trinidad and Tobago because they have confidence in the Government. In the Ministry of Works and Transport we continuously have to deal with returning nationals to this country in droves. Do you know how we know that in the Ministry of Works and Transport?

Because this Government allows returning nationals to import motor cars free of taxes, and so forth, and we have to certify the importation of these cars, and the volume of paper work that we have had to do over the last year or so has increase exponentially. Returning nationals have called the Ministry, have written the ministry informing that they are bringing containers of personal effects; they are bringing motor cars; they are coming back to Trinidad and Tobago because they have confidence in the Government and the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago—the Manning Government.

If they did not have confidence in Prime Minister Patrick Manning, they would not be returning to Trinidad and Tobago. Some of these people have been abroad for 20 years. They left this country in the mid-'70s and had not seen it fit to return until this PNM administration came back into power. We reformed the economy; set it on a growth path and started to create the kind of environment that they want for themselves and their families.

I simply wish to say that as far as I am concerned, the Member for San Fernando East is eminently qualified to be the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. As far as I am concerned, he is one of the best Prime Minister this country has ever had. He is miles away from the last one we had. Under the stewardship of the Prime Minister when in Opposition, under his stewardship in Government this country has returned to confidence. We had five per cent economic growth in 1994, we should have five per cent economic growth in 1995, and we are out of the woods. It is a return to sustainable economic growth under Prime Minister Patrick Manning.

I simply wish to say that there is no one on the other side who could stand in the shoes of the Prime Minister. They are not even fit to tie his boot laces. To use a quotation of the Member for Tobago East as he came into this Parliament full of sound and fury in 1987, throwing insults across at the three PNM Members and telling the former Attorney General in the 1981—1986 PNM administration—casting insults at him—that “you are not fit to tie the boot laces of the present Attorney General”. I am saying, nobody over there is fit to tie the boot laces of Patrick Manning and I totally reject this Motion of no confidence.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Hedwige Bereaux (*La Brea*): Madam Speaker, I rise to make my contribution on this Motion, ill-conceived as it is, against the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, the Hon. Patrick Manning. Before coming into this Parliament years ago, I had great admiration for the oratorical skills of the Member for Couva North, but something seemed to have happened to him today. If I were not charitable I would say he was inebriated, but I do not think so. I am certain he is very sober. So obviously, it has to do with the fact that he himself does not appear to be convinced of the rectitude of his Motion.

You see, there were a number of errors. He stumbled and moved around giddily in his speech. But you see, that did not—

Hon. Member: Giggley?

Mr. H. Bereaux: Giddily. If he does not understand what “giddily” means I would read from the *TNT Mirror*.

Madam Speaker: He thought you said “igily”.

Mr. H. Bereaux: I am not an actor, but I hope he remembers one of Shakespeare’s quotations, which I would tell him about later.

He sought to limit the Motion to an attack on the Prime Minister, very cleverly saying that he was only dealing with the Prime Minister and he was going to deal only with the actions of the Prime Minister over a specific period. I will tell you why. It is an old trick they tried in 1986, where they sought to attack the then Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, George Chambers. They tried to discredit him because they believed in the Bible—not that they practise it—you swipe the shepherd and you scatter the sheep. No. We have read that ball already and we are not going to permit them to bring any scurrilous attack on the Prime Minister and get away with it.

That is what they seek to do, to attack the Prime Minister and then expect that we would move away as they are accustomed to do; like his own Members right now are so ashamed of his performance in this debate that none of them would speak after him. But you see, the People’s National Movement is a disciplined party. We have a party; we have a constitution; we have a procedure by which leaders are elected; leaders are removed and we vote for them.

We do not have a system or party where a Member has to be running up and down throughout the length of this country trying to get you to hold an assembly, and you do not hold it until you are able to pack it with your minions. That is the kind of thing he has.

The PNM is a disciplined party. It is well organized. It makes no sense for them to come here and try to say they want to move the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, because we put him there, not they, and they would never be able to elect a Prime Minister of their choice in this country if they continue to behave the way they do. What is happening is this, he fools himself because some people tell him he is going to be the next Prime Minister.

9.55 p.m.

The Member started by reading from the newspapers—he had no contribution. I do not make it a habit of reading from the newspapers, but as he and those on that side—excluding the Members for Tobago, of course; they do not think he would ever be Prime Minister—seem to be touting him as the next Prime Minister, I thought that I would read from the TNT Mirror.

I read all the newspapers. I have nothing against any newspaper but before that—as he made so much noise about my not being able to speak—he is an actor—I am certain that some time in the history of his acting he would have done the play, ‘Hamlet.’ I want to remind him of advice to Hamlet—a father’s advice to a son—“Be thou familiar but by no means vulgar”.

Now any Member of Parliament can bring a motion, but when the Member for Couva North comes here trying to attack the character of the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, the Hon. Patrick Manning—I always say, let us look at him. This Member for Couva North is the leader of the trade union movement and one of the things that this country—and all the world—is attacking today, is the harassment of women on the job.

Mr. B. Panday: Are you involved, too?

Mr. H. Breaux: No, I am just reading from the TNT *Mirror*. I read it. It speaks of the harassment of women on the job. I am not in it. I am not in anything. I want to read from the TNT *Mirror* of June 9, 1995. The article is headed:

“Bas, time to deal with your problems.”

It goes on to say:

“Bas you are either brave or stupid to be calling on House Speaker Occah Seapaul to resign because of her court troubles when you are also embroiled in similar legal controversies.”

Miss Nicholson: You do not know which one to choose.

Mr. H. Bereaux: You leave me to deal with it.

Miss Nicholson: I am trying to help you, but I will leave you.

Mr. H. Bereaux: No, no. Do not try to help me—I am reading it from the newspapers. The member has similar legal controversies. The point about it is all of us—

Mr. B. Panday: The only difference is you all engineered that one against me. Your Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources.

Mr. H. Bereaux: No, it is not a question of engineering. I am the first person to support the presumption of innocence, but the preponderance of the evidence suggests otherwise. The big point that they keep making *[Interruption]* Yes, I know. The center of harassment, that is where Dymally came from. They said this is so, I am going to read again since *[Interruption]* You keep interfering with me.

By the way, I am convinced that if former US Congressman, Mervyn Dymally, had returned home and expressed support for the PNM you would have branded him a racist. Has Dymally dealt with the problem of his poor niece, Allison Smith? That is the same man who helped you to deal with this matter—the center of harassment. Nobody could harass you, Bas. You are the man who harasses people. Look at what you have done to the Member for Chaguanas; I would always congratulate her. She is a young lady for whom I have great respect because you really treated her badly. You should not talk about harassment. *[Interruption]*

Mr. H. Bereaux: Madam Speaker, I am really pleased that this Motion was brought. Do you know why? This Motion gives the Government an opportunity to explain its position, to explain its procedures *[Interruption]* I do not have to pay any attention to you. You are too coward to even get up and speak in the House on this Motion. Why do you not shut up and go and *[Interruption]* Do you have the white horse outside, which you used to ride and kick black people?

No, it is not that. If I am saying anything, I am saying it after the Member for St. Augustine. *[Interruption]* that is all right. That is okay.

Madam Speaker: Where are we really going? We are trying to concentrate on a no confidence Motion in the Prime Minister.

Mr. H. Bereaux: Madam Speaker, that statement I made I heard it from the mouth of the Member for St. Augustine right here in this Parliament so I am only repeating what he himself said.

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As I was saying, this Motion gives the Government an opportunity to reiterate, clarify and amplify all the things it has been doing for the past 43 months.

Whenever the Government comes forward and tries to explain what it is doing, you always hear the question about public relations, political gimmickry and so forth.

The Minister of Finance was at pains to show the position in which this Government met the country and where we are today. For instance, for the first time in 13 years this country has seen a positive growth of 4.7 per cent. Unemployment is down to 17.4 per cent. It was 22 per cent when we took over.

I remember going throughout the length and breadth of this country pointing out the unemployment rate. It has gone down and that is something of which this government could be proud. Then the uniformed Member for Oropouche comes here and has the audacity to ask me how many jobs were created in La Brea.

10.05 p.m.

Madam Speaker, when I heard the Member for Princes Town open his mouth—I remembered him well. When I came into this Parliament and was making my first or second contribution, he told me that my people in L Brea were so poor and ‘scrunting’ that they were selling the mango flowers. Does he remember that? Today, I am proud to say that because of the policies of this Government, there is now under construction in La Brea an industrial estate scheduled to cover 1,600 acres of land running from Brighton to Vance River.

At present the infrastructure work is under construction, there are 400 persons working at present and I am not counting the persons who are receiving residual employment by the sale of food and the provision of other services to them. That is just the beginning. The contracts have been given out for the infrastructure work. Farmland is due to start its ammonia plant in October of this year to the extent that visits have been made. There is a big thrust now, within another month or so to open a vocational school in the old Van Leer building for the purpose of training people. *[Interruption]* I am not too old to learn, but you are prejudiced, and once your mind is like that, you cannot learn. You will never learn.

A vocational school is being put there to train people in skills like welding, fabricating and construction skills. The Member for Oropouche said that nothing was happening. He does not even know that the tee-off of the gas line will be in his own constituency in Picton—that is where the gas line will start. It will cost \$200 million. People have to put that down. People will be employed.

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Additionally, lands have already been identified at Point Fortin to put down the sub-station to ensure that there would be a proper supply of electricity. The water system is being upgraded. They laugh at me about the roads, but even the roads are being repaired.

If anyone of them or any Government they may have supported could have boasted of such a record, then I would have voted for them. But they cannot have it because the first step in moving forward is discipline. Every student knows it. Everyone knows that one must have discipline. An undisciplined crew like them cannot go anywhere. We will not follow them in their indiscipline and move against our political leader. Never! Because this is the kind of person the PNM attracts.

The Member for Couva North made a big hullabaloo about arrogance. Arrogance could be his nickname. I have heard him tell constituents: "I do not need you; you need me." I have seen the way he has treated his subordinates—members of his party.

A big hullabaloo was made about the fact that the Prime Minister said he was the father of the nation. From time to time we have all called Dr. Eric Williams Father of the Nation. If the Prime Minister wants to follow in the foot steps of Dr. Eric Williams and seeks to be the father of this nation, he could choose no better footsteps in which to follow. *[Interruption]*

But when the hon. Prime Minister was alive, the Member for St. Augustine was a thorn in his side. He attacked him from time to time and now he comes here and says hypocritically that I should follow the principles of Dr. Eric Williams. We are following the principles of Dr. Eric Williams and I will tell you why. Because the PNM has always been a party that is pragmatic in its approach. If Dr. Williams were around today, having regard to the circumstances that exist in the country, he would definitely have taken the same steps.

The Member for St. Augustine was once a member of the PNM and his only claim to fame was that he was a semi-body guard to Dr. Williams' son. That is his only claim to fame.

We are talking about employment for all. The Prime Minister went to Cedros and having regard to how the economy is moving, having regard to the things that have been put in place in Trinidad and Tobago, and having regard to his vision for the future, spoke about his vision of employment for all.

No more laudable vision could any political leader or Prime Minister have of any country. The worst that could happen is that he could fall short and if he just

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falls short, he will do very well. *[Interruption]* The difference is that the Member for Tobago West is a lady I like to treat with kid gloves, but we recognize that she has a little political tabanca. We are treating Tobago well. That is the way this Government is. We are a Government of all land for all.

10.15 p.m.

Energy is a very specialized field and one either understands it and is in it or one is not. The Member for Oropouche gets these correspondence courses on energy and comes into this House to talk about it. First, the Member started by asking how many jobs were created in the energy industry. In Pointe-a-Pierre, more than 1,000 persons were working during the upgrade and working for salaries which are much higher than anywhere else in the country. There are still about 600 persons working on that project who would continue working until 1997. Jobs have been created in the energy sector to operatorships. I will tell the Member what that means if he does not understand.

The land companies in Trinidad and Tobago have a number of wells which produce between two and five barrels per day. Petroleum engineers and geologists are economists in the way they look at things. If the price of oil is at a certain level and the cost of producing the well is too high, they shut it in. That does not mean that the oil is not there. The oil is there but the cost to get it out of the ground is forbidding to the particular petroleum company.

What Petrotrin, Trintoc and Trintopec did before, was that they batched these wells in fifties and they tendered them out by advertisement, and many well-servicing companies with lower overheads were able to come in and work over those wells. There are now about 15 such operatorships that each employs about 40 to 50 persons. That employment would continue for a long time, because they are producing more oil via this method.

Of course, the Member for Oropouche does not know that. They got rid of the only person who knew about the oil in that party: that was Mr. Kelvin Ramnath. Now the Member for Oropouche poses as an oil imposter and comes to tell us about the energy sector. *[Interruption]* I am sorry, Sir, you are just a person who does not know about the oil industry. Thank you very much, Member for Couva South.

Since this Government came into power, it formed a committee called the Energy Committee of the Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, the Member for San Fernando East. The committee reseals applications and makes all the serious decisions in the energy industry.

Miss Nicholson: Be careful you do not reveal your business.

Mr. H. Breaux: Madam Speaker, that is a public committee; we mentioned it in our manifesto. That committee, with all its players sitting around the table enables quick decisions to be made in the energy sector. As a result, a number of companies which normally move away from countries like ours, because of the long lead time to make investments, are moving into Trinidad and Tobago because they are aware that the people who sit around that table can, and do make those decisions in the shortest possible time. *[Interruption]* Definitely, a vision of the Prime Minister.

Do you know what upsets me, Madam Speaker? The Government came into power in 1991 early 1992 and was faced with several problems. We had the public servants issue, the 2 per cent salary award that was not paid to the public servants and teachers. There was the Caroni (1975) Limited backpay issue. The Member for Couva North is the head of the All Trinidad Sugar Estates and Factory Workers Trade Union and when he was in Government he was unable to address its problems. When the PNM came into power, we recognized that the desire of the Member for Couva North was not to get the backpay settled, but to keep the problems going so that he would be able to ride their backs continuously. We got a tripartite committee together, including his union.

Hon. Member: He is now sorry he did that.

Mr. H. Breaux: He is sorry, yes, but he did it already. His better judgment was on his side. The Government, the company and the union sat together and arranged how they would pay the backpay. We settled the issue. *[Interruption]* We are not about penetrating. We all sat together and in a very short time came up with a report which was singular in several areas. I was able to raise some of those points from that report in another place. Good points. They all signed the report.

When the Member for Couva North realized for once he had behaved responsibly, he sought to get some mileage by requesting the union to walk to Port of Spain saying that they must get the backpay, when it was already agreed that they would get it. And, they got it. The only thing the Member did in the march to Port of Spain was purport to adopt a young man. Later he said the boy was a scamp and that is why he did not adopt him. *[Interruption]*

With respect to the public service debt, a previous Government took the people's COLA, 10 per cent, and so on. *[Interruption]* Madam Speaker, they were in charge then. If they felt that was the proper thing to do—as much as I may

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disagree with them—I am prepared to defend their right to do it, but legally! They did not do it legally and then they had to come *ex post facto* into Parliament to pass a law to justify the illegal act. More importantly, they left that load for the PNM Government to carry.

The first thing we did was to pay the public servants their correct salary to stop the debt from accumulating. We kept talking with them and suddenly the same persons who participated actively and passively in the removal of the people's salary illegally—I look particularly at the trade union leader who was in that Cabinet at the time and I ask: How could you do that? At that time they forgot all the trade union principles they had. I keep saying that if that is what the Government had to do to deal with the economy—that is, if they honestly felt so—I am prepared to say okay, but do it properly. The same public servants know that if we did not pay them—and God forbid, they got back in power—they would never pay them. If they took it away from them in the first instance, how would they expect them to give it back?

10.25 p.m.

It does not matter that they walk around the Red House. We keep saying that is an exercise in democracy. Even if we disagree with what they are chanting, we would defend their right to do it.

I always tell them that we could do it, too, and we have the numbers. If I did not believe that we had the numbers, the outpouring of sympathy and activity that came forward to this Government today, would have convinced me.

I was abroad attending the graduation of my second daughter and I got two calls from constituents while in the United States; one caller whom I could not recognize by name said, “We hear you are abroad; get yourself back here.” When I came in today the crowd was so large that I had to park my car by the old fire brigade station. A lady came up to me and said, “I am the one who called you. I called home and I heard where you were and I said, you need to come back.” I said, “Ma’am, I am at your service because you are my constituent.”

I am the only voice of the La Brea constituency. That is what they told me. I saw about 300 of them. They had to pay to come from La Brea. I came in only last night. *[Interruption]* the Member was never good in maths so he cannot count. They had a big banner marked, “Mr. Prime Minister we are behind you one hundred per cent.” I echo their statement here today to say that not only is the constituency of La Brea behind you one hundred per cent Mr. Prime Minister, but its humble representative is also.

Mr. Jurai: The Member is begging.

Mr. H. Bereaux: Mr. Jurai knows me. I do not have to take pictures with anybody or to run around to get ahead. I am a humble man desiring no upward mobility at all. So, it is not a question of begging at all.

Miss Nicholson: The Member's ambitions.

Mr. H. Bereaux: My ambition is different. Did Members hear when I spoke about my daughter? That is my ambition. And to serve my constituency.

What did we do with the debt? We are dealing with it. The teachers and a number of other people have made arrangements to accept bonds. We are dealing with it as a responsible and honest Government. We would have our upsets with the unions, but we are going to treat them with respect and we would talk with them until we settle.

Hon. Member: Government for the people and of the people.

Mr. H. Bereaux: Madam Speaker, when I look at this Motion, the whole pattern of behaviours of the Members opposite, over the 43 months I have been in the Parliament, comes forward. Any time the Government appear to want to do anything to deal with a situation as it exists in the country and it appears as though we would move forward, they would find a way to stultify it.

The most maligned programme in the country is the Unemployment Relief Programme. The reason for that is we are touching the people directly. We are not only meeting a need, we are providing much infrastructure work. People are coming out. The Member told me to state how many URP projects there are in my constituency. I shall tell him why I get many things done in my constituency. It is because I am a leader like my leader—we move forward. I work with my people. If the Member wants to see an example of it, tomorrow is Corpus Christi and he can come to Palo Seco beach to see what we are doing there—the people and I.

Mr. Humphrey: Politics of patronage.

Mr. H. Bereaux: That is not patronage. We will be working on a holiday. We are not the kind of people who sit down when we do not have a truck and collect government money. We work. Do not start that. *[Interruption]* I do not know about him. I am just telling you what kind of people we are not. I am not charging anybody with doing that. We do a number of things and we work with the people. We have a number of programmes like that.

When the Member for Couva North was presenting the Motion, he said something about the Chinese Baptist who prayed with the Prime Minister. Early

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this morning, I was listening to Rev. Elcock on the television, and he was saying there is need to look at Prime Ministers. They are leaders, and if they do not appear to recognize the omnipotence of God, one cannot go with them. At least, we are sure that our Prime Minister is a praying one.

In addition to that, I hope the Baptists recognize when the Member for Couva North tries to say that he has their interest at heart, that he does not and he is just trying to use them; as he used and insulted his candidate for Laventille in the by-election. He insulted him here. He asked him about his pot. He encouraged him to go with the empty pot to try to fool the people of Laventille, and when they refused to be fooled, he came here to insult him.

Mr. B. Panday: The pot is still empty. There is not soup in the pot. That is the problem.

Mr. H. Breaux: Madam Speaker, they do not have any confidence in their own Motion. What they were trying to do was to embarrass the Prime Minister and hope that in his embarrassment they would bring us all down. But, you see, they are faced with men and women who are confident of the direction in which we are going and we are certain about the efficacy of the programmes which this Government is putting forward.

If I had the opportunity, I would amend it to read: "A Motion of confidence in the Prime Minister." But since the Opposition is so weak today, I do not think it is necessary for us to do that.

I close by saying that I have full confidence in the Prime Minister and political leader of the PNM, the Member for San Fernando East. I say that with the full confidence and backing of the constituency of La Brea.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Minister of Health (Dr. The Hon. Linda Baboolal): Madam Speaker, I take this opportunity to join with my colleagues on this side in expressing our confidence in and support for the Prime Minister. Today I have listened to the Members on this side speak about the achievements of this Government. They have done so in measured tones with a factual contribution from each Member and, in the end, it all pointed to one thing—achievement by a government that is run by a person of great leadership qualities and someone whom we all respect.

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[HON. DR. L. BABOOLAL]

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10.35 p.m.

Today I felt proud to be part of this team which takes collective responsibility seriously; proud to be part of a team which has a leader who is fair, who is approachable, and I should add, charming.

I was part of the Prime Minister's team on Monday when we went to Cedros. The Prime Minister, on his approach to the people of Cedros, charmed everyone there, not by glibness, but by honesty, by his willingness to listen and to learn from even the humblest person there; by his humility and his tirelessness.

My colleagues here spoke today about unity in the Cabinet, more so the sense of democracy which exists in that Cabinet under the leadership of the Prime Minister, where everyone is treated equally and where everyone has an equal opportunity to state opinions and to disagree if he or she so wishes. If at any time the general opinion is contrary to what the Prime Minister thinks, he accepts it with no fuss and no recrimination.

No one is infallible and no one in this House is infallible. As we go along, we may make our mistakes but we are prepared to learn from them. What is important is that we have been elected to do a job and we have to continue doing that job.

The Government have, today, through presentations, shown that each Member of Government has been doing his or her job. In fact, every ministry has been restructured in some way, has been re-organized and updated. From 1992 we started taking policy decisions which will update ministries and take this country into the 21st century. It was done in education, in agriculture, in health, in energy, in social development. These are just a few. It was done in the other ministries also.

We heard from the Member for St. Ann's East where this country has gone in the last three and a half years, the kind of growth that we have had; the fact that unemployment fell from 22 per cent to 17.4 per cent, I think it is; the fact that a stagnant energy sector is now vibrant, expanding and exporting, earning foreign exchange; the fact that this energy sector is now leading globally in methanol, ammonia and iron carbide. All this points to a Government which is performing, and doing so under the leadership of the Prime Minister, the hon. Patrick Manning.

In fact, if I were an outsider listening to the contributions here today, I would come to the conclusion that it is good teamwork and good leadership, plus sound economic strategies, undertaken in this Government, which have led to success.

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There were many difficult decisions that we had to take—you have heard of some of them here today—but we did not baulk. We took our decisions. We knew that we had a duty and we did our best. If in doing so we made mistakes, we were always prepared to go back and take another look. Many people did not think that we could move the "drag brothers" for instance. There were all kinds of comments. But we did it and we did it effectively, so that today even they are better off and the people of Trinidad and Tobago have been able to reclaim Independence Square.

All kinds of doomsday predictions were made when we liberalized trade. Today we have a manufacturing sector that is improving and exporting. I was speaking to my daughter in Toronto recently and she told me that when you go into the shops in Toronto you see many products from Trinidad and Tobago which were never there before.

In the process, we had to ask people to make sacrifices, and they did so willingly. Today the whole country is reaping the benefit of the success which we are now experiencing.

It was Mahatma Ghandi who said, and I am quoting from his words, selected by Richard Attenborough:

"A nation that is capable of limitless sacrifice is capable of rising to limitless heights. The purer the sacrifice the quicker the progress."

This is what this country has done. Today we are rising to limitless heights.

One policy decision that was taken by this Government was to look at human development wherever possible, to look at the development of the individual. We looked at it in education, where, recognizing that there were deficiencies in the necessary skills which were needed to take this country forward, we made certain decisions to ensure that training of people took place and that these skills became available to the country. I am sure that my good colleague the Minister of Education, will expand on that.

We looked at human development in relation to small business, where we have been encouraging people to get into their own businesses, to become entrepreneurs. We looked at human development in the area of social development, because we felt that it was necessary to encourage people to take control of their own lives. It was necessary to encourage people to become independent, to become self-earning in order to break the cycle of poverty. It was necessary that we encourage people to develop their self-esteem and their self-

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worth. I read from this United Nations document, taken from the World Summit for Social Development, on "Investing in Poor People" which says:

10.45 p.m.

"Efforts to reduce poverty are unlikely to succeed in the long run unless there is greater investment in (the human resources of) the poor themselves. Improvements in education...

And that is what this Government has been doing: improving the skills and vocational training of our people.

"health and nutrition..."

And we know the whole health sector is being improved.

"directly address the worst consequences of being poor. And investing in people. Especially in their education, also attacks some of the most important cause of poverty. Improving social services is an integral part of any long-term strategy for reducing poverty."

What we are attempting to do through social development is to help people put a value on themselves, to help them to instill some discipline, to restore their pride in work once more, to remove their passivity which seems to exist so often among the poor, and to teach them how to earn a living.

Again, I will quote from Mahatma Gandhi:

"Man often becomes what he believes himself to be. If I keep on saying to myself that I cannot do a certain thing, it is possible that I may end by really becoming incapable to doing it.

On the contrary, if I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning."

This is the message we have been trying to get through to our people, to the poor, to those who are in difficult circumstances: that they can do it, that they must believe in themselves, and if they believe in themselves, this Government will ensure that we put in place the framework by which they can develop themselves.

Change is something that is always difficult to accept and the other side has much difficulty in accepting change. It does not occur overnight. Change is something that has to come gradually; it is something that has to be accepted; it is something which must come with change in attitudes. The fact remains that change is necessary, and this Government understand the importance of being

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able to manage change, because, that is what is important if the people of the country are to benefit from that change.

I want to take the opportunity to discuss a few matters in social development which is the ministry of which I was Minister before coming to Health. I want to do this because the Member for Oropouche quoted the Prime Minister when he spoke about the restructuring of the social delivery system and spoke about it in a way which led me to believe that he did not understand anything about what was happening in social development. Unfortunately, he is not here so he would continue not understanding anything about it.

The social delivery system is being structured for a number of reasons. There is much duplication that occurs from ministry to ministry in many services, and we all know that the bureaucracy that very often exists can interfere with services reaching the people whom they should reach. Sometimes there is isolation of services; you get NGO's doing one thing; you get the Government doing another thing; you get two ministries doing the same thing and very often the right group of people is not targeted.

What we are doing by restructuring the social services delivery system, is to ensure that this bureaucracy and this duplication is removed, that the system becomes cost-effective and more important, that it targets those who need the service. How do we see the system? The Prime Minister explained. Unfortunately, my Friend the Member for Oropouche did not understand.

In the new system which is now being worked out by consultants—both international and local—we see the country being divided into grids, catchment areas, whatever you want to call them. Each of these areas will be serviced by a social worker. We are not saying that that social worker is going to go into each person's house to enquire about the person's business. We are saying that that social worker will be in that community, will become familiar with everybody within that community.

If a problem arises, then the people in that community would know there is someone to whom they can go with the problem. And when such persons go to the social worker, that social worker would be able to identify what the problems are, and most probably refer those to persons to counselors or to the relevant authority as the case might be. Let me give you an example.

If you have a home in which there is an alcoholic—that is just one problem in that family. You may have an alcoholic; you may have children who are not going to school; you may have a home in which there is no money, most probably no

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food; you may have a spouse who is ill or who is being beaten up—it is the wife who might go to that social worker with her problem, but in the process of talking to that person the social worker may identify other problems.

That social worker would attempt to get the children into school, get whatever kind of assistance is necessary, counseling maybe, for the spouse and for the person who is the alcoholic. In doing that we are treating the entire family as is necessary. If you do not have a problem, if you are a perfectly happy person of the community, everything is going fine, the social worker is not going to interfere in your life.

What we see happening is that the services provided by a number of ministries in the social sector would be integrated in such a way that they would be more accessible to those who need the services. We see non-government organizations, in many cases, as the bodies that will be delivering these services.

Non-governmental organizations have a reputation for good accountability. They have a reputation for being able to deliver services quickly and efficiently. Already the ministry has started the training of NGO's so that when the programme comes in place there would be NGO's which are trained and have their business in order so that they could take over some of these services.

Another area that the ministry looked at in the line of the development of the human being, development of the person, is in the area of juvenile delinquency and youth crime. In fact a report was done on juvenile delinquency and youth crime in Trinidad and Tobago. That committee has reported; an implementation committee has now been put in place and this committee is looking towards implementing some of the recommendations made in this report. This report includes the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs; Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs; the Ministry of Social Development; the Ministry of Finance, and others. It is an inter-ministerial team that is now looking at implementation.

10.55 p.m.

Because youth are really our resource for the future, and especially where our young people get themselves into problems, we cannot be satisfied with just dragging them to court or having them put in jail. We must look at means of helping them to develop themselves to re-enter the community and become useful citizens. That is another decision that this Government has taken firmly under the leadership of our Prime Minister.

We are looking at the question of probationers. For years nothing has been done for the probationers except to give them a probation officer to follow their action, and if anything happened, they were dragged before the courts. This Government decided that that was not sufficient and that that was the reason there was so much recidivism recurring in the young people who go on to become hardened criminals. We have put in place certain programmes, one of which is the remedial therapy programme involving probationers and their parents, in which probationers are given the opportunity of talking in the same forum with their parents.

It was the first time that something like that had ever been done and the probationers were saying that it was the first time they got their parents to listen to them. It certainly helped to heal wounds between parent and child and to create a greater sense of understanding between them so that these children found themselves in a more amenable type situation and were less likely to return to any kind of petty crime.

We started a literacy programme for probationers and many of them were referred to the skills training programme, which falls under the Ministry of Education, so, they were being trained to get jobs and to make a useful contribution to society.

Added to that, we looked at getting them into micro enterprises to become entrepreneurs, to learn how to run a business—all this in the policy of the Government, which is the development of the individual. In the meantime, we are also looking at setting up probation hostels. I mentioned that here before. The a reason is that many of these probationers, unfortunately, have to go back to the very rough environments and are not able to overcome their problems.

We feel that by removing those youths from this environment for at least a short period, giving them the necessary counselling and training, developing them as individuals, teaching them self-esteem and developing their self-worth, they would then be able to take their place as rightful citizens of this country.

When this Government came into power, St. Michael's was a shack to which children were sent and we decided that that should not be allowed to happen. We therefore started phase one of the redevelopment of St. Michael's which is now almost completed and ready to be handed over. Not only did we improve the buildings, but there has been a development programme at St. Michael's for the staff and for the boys, which is something that has never taken place before.

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The Ministry of Social Development undertook a number of initiatives which seek to address the needs of family and children. In 1994, International Year of the Family, we dealt with a number of problems and the strengths of the family. Throughout the country, National Family Services and other divisions of the Ministry lectured on these matters. We looked at parenting which, today, is one of the main issues relating to our social problems. We looked at support systems for the family. We discussed domestic violence, which is a big problem in our society today, child abuse and neglect—all of these matters were looked at by the Ministry of Social Development in an effort to restore the family to its proper place.

One of the biggest problems that we found in social development, for instance, is domestic violence. We are talking mainly about women who very often had children to look after, who very often had no kind of training and were unable to earn a living. They had to either stay in a violent situation simply to be able to support their children, or if they left, found themselves with no money.

So, we started a programme and I shall read this article from the *Trinidad Guardian* dated December 21, 1994, which states:

“The Ministry of Social Development recently handed over a cheque to the Rape Crisis Society to assist in a programme of training in agro-processing for survivors of domestic violence. According to the Ministry, the cheque represented the first instalment under a grant.

The project, which emanated from Government’s 1992 National Symposium on Employment and Job Creation is intended to equip the participants with skills in food production to enable them to gain a measure of self-reliance and independence.

Participants will be trained in the production of exotic fruit juices, sauces, meat preparation, pastilles... all of that in an effort to develop women so that they can take their rightful place as breadwinners for their children, where in the absence of a father they can earn a living to look after their children.”

As far as children are concerned, we are at the moment completing Trinidad and Tobago’s evaluation report regarding compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. A workshop was conducted in 1995 and this is now being done. An assessment of all the legislative amendments necessary to ensure compliance with the Convention was completed.

We have also commissioned a survey on family life because we want to know what is happening with the families of this country. The Prime Minister felt very

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strongly that we should do a survey so that we could come up with some statistics, and with those statistics we could develop further programmes for the benefit of the family and children of this nation.

As I mentioned earlier, micro-enterprise and training and development programmes have been a large part of the thrust of the Government. The ministry has been encouraging the poor, needy, abused and the probationer to develop themselves to be come involved in a micro-enterprise by receiving the necessary training. They are usually given a small grant of about \$2,500 to start a small business.

We had a number of applicants who have taken up this grant and who are now making a success of their little businesses, no longer dependent on the Government for public assistance; no longer dependent on abusive spouses; young people no longer having to steal, because they have been able to start a little business. This is what this government has been doing under the leadership of this Prime Minister—looking at the needs of the smallest man in the country and trying to meet those needs.

11.05 p.m.

I would not go into details on what we have done on behalf of the elderly. I have spoken many times in this House when I was the Minister of Social Development, about the number of things that we have been doing for the elderly. One of the first things we did for the handicapped was to formulate a policy. There are other countries which have asked us for a copy of our policy because many countries have never developed a policy on the handicapped. We were one of the first within the Caribbean.

I remember meeting representatives of other countries—I do not think it was at the Convention on Social Development; it may have been at the Convention in Cairo—who asked us to send them copies because they are looking at doing this. As simple as it might seem, we are ahead in some of those things.

The disabled were ignored people. In the past nobody took them on. They were hidden in their houses. We have brought their problems into the open. We are making houses available under the Ministry of Housing and Settlement. We are ensuring that they are being trained so that they could take up jobs.

This whole action plan and policy will be put in place—things like making the environment more accessible; things like asking employers to make a certain percentage of jobs available to handicapped persons who have been trained. This

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action plan is now being worked out. The Ministry of Social Development has been about development, developing the individuals to meet the needs of the modern world and to take them into the 21st century.

In the short time I have been in the Ministry of Health, I would still like to touch on a few issues. I think more has happened in the Ministry of Health in the last three and a half years than has happened in the 20 years prior to that. We have seen a complete transformation of the St. Ann's Hospital. I do not know if anybody here has visited that hospital recently, not as patients but may as visitors.

A few months ago I had to take a patient to the Accident and Emergency Ward at the Port of Spain General Hospital. I had not been there since that unit was renovated. I could not believe what I was seeing because I worked there as a doctor in the most horrendous conditions but when I walked in there recently, I walked into a modernized Accident and Emergency Unit—efficiently run, doctors and nurses working, sectionized, all the things that doctors and nurses dream of to work with in such a department.

The former Minister of Health, whom I do not see here at the moment, has been the architect of the new decentralization thrust of the ministry. In 1992, when the Cabinet directed him to work on a decentralization programme, he went about it with a will, that in less than four months' time, he was able to come to the Cabinet with a system. He has spoken in this House on many occasions. In fact, he has spoken so eloquently and so comprehensively on the whole regionalization thrust that it leaves very little for me to say where that is concerned, except that regionalization of the Ministry of Health is an imperative.

I remember regionalization was talked about when I worked at the Port of Spain General Hospital in the early 1970s but nothing was done about it at that time and later. I think the last administration spoke about it but they did nothing. Regionalization is a must because as the former Minister said, it is a system by which we will be giving people responsibility, but we will also be giving them authority. Authority and responsibility to ensure that the patients who would access that service will get better care, that there will be less bureaucracy, shorter waiting periods; that there will be a commitment by the staff to ensure that their patients are well looked after. This is what we hope regionalization will achieve.

At the moment we are looking at the implementation of this process in the Ministry of Health, and it is moving on. We have had problems and we try to iron out and deal with those problems as they arise. As I said earlier, change is never easy. Change is sometimes very difficult to accept and many people who have to

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undergo change, especially where it affects their jobs or their livelihood, can feel a sense of insecurity, can feel a sense of—maybe I should use my Friend the Member for Couva North's famous word—alienation.

We are dealing with this by communication. We are communicating to the people inside and outside the ministry. I thought that communication was a little slow and only today I have asked the ministry to speed it up; to put in place systems by which we could get the information coming from the top and quickly down to the bottom. So that everybody knows within a short space of time what is happening and, therefore, there would be no problems or feeling that they were being left out, that they were in danger of losing their jobs, or pensions, or whatever it may be.

As we know, the legal framework had been put in place by Parliament. We discussed it here with the last Minister of Health and we voted and have accepted his recommendations.

If fact, I want to refer again to a few lines I have here from a United Nations leaflet, under the heading 'Investing in Health.' It deals with, among many other things, primary health care.

“Providing more support public health programmes, essential clinical services and more cost-effective programmes that do more to help the poor.”

That is looking at what countries should be doing, that is part of the three-part approach:

“Currently, government spending accounts for half of the \$168 billion annual expenditure on health in developing countries. Too much of this goes to specialized care in hospitals while too little goes to low-cost, highly effective programmes, such as control and treatment of infectious disease and of malnutrition.”

This is what this country is now doing. This country is looking at primary health care.

Before I talk about that, I want to mention that the World Health Organization specified three targets for its strategy for health for all by the year 2000. Those targets were: Life expectancy at birth—above 60 years; infant mortality should be less than 50 per thousand live births; and under five year of age, mortality should be less than 70 per thousand.

Trinidad and Tobago is way ahead of those three targets. In fact, in Trinidad and Tobago the life expectancy at birth is 71 instead of 60. The infant mortality is

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20 per thousand instead of 50 and the under five-year age group is 22 per thousand instead of 70. This was not achieved by guess. This was achieved by good policy, good decision, good leadership, good actions taken by a Cabinet which is decisive in the direction it wants to take this country.

11.15 p.m.

As I said, the thrust now is primary health care. If my Friend—my poor colleague whom I sympathize with when he has to sit on that side—the Member for Tabaquite, was here he would agree with me. In primary health care we are looking mainly at the prevention of diseases through healthy lifestyles, through vaccinations which, as we know, in this country are of a very high standard. Polio has practically been eliminated in this country. Children are receiving 95 per cent vaccination for measles rubella, and so forth. Most of the childhood infectious diseases have been eliminated.

Mr. B. Panday: Patrick Manning is responsible for that.

Hon. Dr. L. Baboolal: Yes, indeed. Under the primary health care we are looking at reducing chronic diseases. We are looking at a healthy nation. A healthy nation starts from childhood. If childhood diseases are not eliminated then there cannot be a healthy adult population. Unfortunately, I do not expect the Members on the other side to understand this. The only person who would understand this is my colleague the Member for Tabaquite and, unfortunately, he is not here.

One of this Government's faults is that we have been doing our work quietly without blowing our own trumpet. We go about doing our duties in our ministries without making any fuss. Therefore, we give the impression to people on the other side that nothing is happening.

Today, thanks to the Motion brought by the Leader of the Opposition, we have had an opportunity to say what this Government has accomplished under the leadership of the Prime Minister Patrick Manning to show the direction in which this Government has been taking this nation.

We have a job to build this nation. We have brought this nation from scratch economically. We came in at a time when the country was at its lowest ebb. We fought an election at a time when the PNM was at its lowest, and we won. The people put us here to do a job and we have been doing that job under the leadership of the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. We have been doing that job, as I said, quietly without any fuss or fanfare. We have been getting the

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job done. In doing so, we have maintained our integrity and the nationhood of this country.

I want to end by just reading a little quotation from Dr. Sharma, President of the Republic of India, who was here a few weeks ago. He was comparing India with Trinidad and Tobago, and this is what he said:

“The democratic process, part of our ancient heritage, has consolidated our integrity and nationhood. It has provided a framework of stability in which the society has progress.”

He went on to talk about some of the achievements of Indian, and I will skip that.

“Achievements generate their own demands and expectations and today an ambitious restructuring process is underway. It will make our presence felt in the world’s economy.”

He was talking about Indian.

“India is resurgent. Part of the new forces which will reshape the globe in the twenty-first century. In a world which is coming ever closer, our concerns are similar and our endeavours shared.”

“Our” meaning Trinidad and Tobago.

“Our destinies are common and so, too, must be our successes and our joys. To the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago I wish prosperity and happiness. We in India will proudly...”

Listen to the words, Madam Speaker.

“...watch your march of progress to even greater heights.”

These are words of a man who was embraced by every citizen of Trinidad and Tobago, words which summarize what we are talking about. We are talking about taking this country into the 21st century through the democratic process which provides stability and growth in a peaceful environment. We can do that only under good leadership and if we work as a team. And this is what this Government has been doing under the leadership of the hon. Prime Minister.

I agree with the Member for La Brea that we should change that Motion to a motion of confidence in our Prime Minister.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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Miss Pamela Nicholson (*Tobago West*): Madam Speaker, I am very disappointed person here this evening. I am on my feet now because I want to see some basketball.

When I look at the Motion which says:

“*Whereas* recent events have revealed the Prime Minister’s woeful incompetence in dealing with the nation’s affairs:

Be It Resolved that this honourable House express its lack of confidence in Prime Minister Patrick Manning,”

I am alarmed at the tone of the discourse here this evening. The first thing I should like to deal with is what I met outside the Red House when I came here this evening. I must make sure that I express my view.

I was confronted earlier with political intimidation here today. If the Prime Minister, the leader of party, was competent, the Members of the House would never have been confronted earlier in this way today. I am not afraid of anything but immediately I saw what I saw, I asked, what if the other side came down here with their thousands today? What would have been the situation around this Parliament building? It is a very important point for us in this House here this evening.

After today, what could happen is that when parliamentarians go into various areas they could be confronted. A particular tone has been set here today that could be very disastrous. I thought that I must make my views felt on that particular approach. It is not an approach that we, the people of Trinidad and Tobago, should entertain.

11.25 p.m.

I got the impression that what the Motion is dealing with is the foreign affairs and this is the area we came here to discuss today; because it was the handling of foreign affairs by the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago that brought about this Motion. That is where my discourse mainly would lie. And if we are talking about the Westminster system, after what surrounds the Member for San Fernando East, we would not be seeing him in this House. If it was the American system—immediately when I saw the Motion, it reminded me of Nixon and the Watergate scenario—again, he would not have been sitting here today.

I shall read the motion again:

“*Whereas* recent events have revealed the prime Minister’s woeful incompetence in dealing with the nation’s affairs;

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Be it Resolved that this honourable House express its lack of confidence in Prime Minister Patrick Manning.”

It touches squarely on Tobago and that is why I am on my feet as representative of the people of Tobago. Because the Hon. Patrick Manning, besides being the Prime Minister, has also boasted that he is the only one who is the Central Government's political representative responsible for Tobago.

This Motion is also crucial to the role the media have played in lionizing the Prime Minister and his Government. Had the media, both print and electronic, been doing their work, as the *Washington Post* did in the Watergate matter, this Motion might not have been necessary today.

When we look at the issue of the hiring and firing of the Minister and public servant, we should have seen in Trinidad and Tobago deep investigation into the role of the Prime Minister in this scenario. What we saw was a total lambasting of Gift as Permanent Secretary; Gift as Minister of Foreign Affairs. The press should have been addressing Prime Minister Patrick Manning, because it is he who created the crisis that left Trinidad and Tobago, as the saying goes “too-tool-bay” o the whole world scene.

It was only when Nixon was investigated that the whole Watergate exploded, and when he recognized that he would have been dealt with seriously, he resigned. That is the role of our media. That is the kind of role we want them to play.

Did Prime Minister Patrick Manning know the qualities of Permanent Secretary Gift? If you are going to employ someone as a Foreign Affairs Minister, do you not investigate? He has the control of national security. This is the second time.

You had a situation where another Minister, the man who is the chairman of their party, the man who is the Minister of Planning and Development in this country. There was no solid investigation to have that person step down. You should not have such individuals holding posts of those kinds in any country. You would not see it condoned in the British Westminster system or in the American system, and we copy from both sides. That is the major side of my discourse this evening.

It should not have been the Member for San Fernando West absent this evening; it should have been Prime Minister Patrick Manning, Member for San Fernando East who should have been absent.

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[MISS NICHOLSON]

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Trinidad and Tobago is today suffering under the weight of every kind of pestilence, especially economic, social and medical. I listened this evening to the Member for St. Ann's East, a good piece of discourse, but one of the major points he left out was that the NAR Government cut the track for the PNM's "gouti" to run. All the foundation work was done, all the cleaning up of the mess that was left there by the Chambers government, but the Minister took all the credit here this evening.

But I have to blame myself, too. We on this side have to blame ourselves, because they should not be sitting there and speaking this evening. I do not know about the whole of Trinidad and Tobago, but I know one place they are not penetrating is the area I am from, the place called Tobago.

I listened to him but I did not hear him accept and make a statement about the cleaning up job that was done. All the Ministers on that side always do it, and I think it is unfair. They must speak the truth; they must know what was done and they must speak about it. Their own friend, Selwyn Ryan from the University said "NAR cut track for PNM 'gouti' to run".

I just wanted to make that short statement this evening. But what is most alarming about this whole unhappy affair is the fact that every day the print and electronic media—

Hon. Member: What do you have with the media?

Miss P. Nicholson: I have to deal with them. I told you that under the American system in the Watergate scandal it was the *Washington Post* that really led the attack. I am saying to keep our society clean and to keep us on the right track, the media must be doing their job properly.

The print and electronic media are being used and are diverting the people's attention from the daily crimes and higher food prices. This evening I should have been reading out the prices of basic foods but I forgot my list. I went to every grocery in Scarborough yesterday to take the prices and when I got into Port of Spain I realized that I left the list in Tobago.

11.35 p.m.

In a document dated 1989, I was reading a discourse of the Prime Minister the Hon. Patrick Manning, to the People's National Movement at the 29th Annual Convention of the PNM. He criticized the Government of the day on prices and when I saw the prices of food in Scarborough yesterday, I wanted to walk with my list to deal with him comprehensively but somebody is protecting him.

Dr. Rowley: Who?

Miss P. Nicholson: The same person who is protecting me. The question of higher food prices, poverty, social development, vagrants and street children—they are not answering those questions. Why so much crime that people cannot walk out of their homes? They are living in jail. Members opposite used to criticize. No improvement! It is getting worse and worse.

There was a couple—I believe I saw them on television yesterday and read about it in the newspapers this evening—who were in their home and a gang of youths broke down their windows, doors, cut their telephone lines, stormed into the home, and the lady was telling us on television that she was wondering, what next? When would she die? Then they left that home with the neighbours screaming and shouting and calling for the police and went to another home, broke it down and took about twenty-something thousand in electronics. That happened at Valsayn.

We read every day. The same ones that were dancing and prancing here this evening. I feel so sorry for them. I said probably we have to do some serious political consciousness discourse in those area. If the people are clear no what should be happening in their areas, in their communities, you would not have Laventille and Morvant coming down here to dance and prance to give support to this Government. When I say this “Government” I am talking about PNM governments from 1956. The PNM were denied power for really only five years. They are back again. Those people, in Morvant and Caledonia cannot come out of their homes. Every day one or two of their children are murdered on the streets. What are you doing? What is creating this situation?

The Member for Baratavia/San Juan has not answered that question here. What are the Government doing to save those children? To save the youth? What is creating the problem and what are they doing to correct the problem? The vagrants—thousand more. When I was in Trinidad, I do not remember seeing street children. PNM bring them on the streets—thousands of street children on the streets. That is what we want to hear about, what are they doing? How are they going to address it?

Let the press investigate. Pipeline drought—but the press, instead of dealing with those areas, are concentrating on the new imaging of Prime Minister Manning in an attempt to save his old face flushed into darkness from the fallout of foreign Ministers—firing, hiring, and firing again; flushed into darkness from the resurgence of another Minister of Planning and Development holding a debt

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worth millions of dollars in a bank calling itself first; a face flushed into darkness by the Prime Minister himself seeking to worm his way into Eric Willimas grave as he called upon his followers to see him as the “Father of the Nation.”

This Motion then is both timely and necessary. Its main objective is to bring the Member for San Fernando East down from an illusory “cloud nine” and send him down the road alone, to reflect on his arrogance, the autocratic pride and the deception that have driven his ship way off course.

As the representative for Tobago West I should like to concentrate on Tobago for a while. When the Prime Minister made his first visit to Tobago after gaining office, he proclaimed at the Crown Point Airport that he had arrived like the biblical dove with an olive branch. How then as Minister with responsibility for Tobago has he not released a penny to this sister island from almost TT \$100 million given to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in grants by the European Community, the IDB, the UNDP and so forth? *[Interruption]*

Look, it is here. I got it from the *Estimates of Development Programme* for the year 1995. Funds that the Government does not have to repay. That is the scandalous situation and that is why I am supporting this Motion—not a cent of this has been given to Tobago, the island of his responsibility, with which Trinidad makes up the democratic State of Trinidad and Tobago.

A sum of \$18.5 million to the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Women’s Affairs. I am pleased to see the Minister here this evening. She should be bowing her head in shame. She has been called several times. One could never get her on the telephone. Always hiding. Came one time and up to now not a cent. I am not blaming her because the business is the business of the Prime Minister, who represents San Fernando East. He is the one who has the responsibility for Tobago

The scenario: Outside of the \$1.6 million to the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Women’s Affairs in Tobago. I am going to repeat it a million times.

A sum of \$25 million to the Ministry of Works and Transport for roads and that \$25 million is for the rehabilitation of roads, so we do not have any roads in Tobago to rehabilitate. *[Interruption]*

I am talking about grants, I want it to be made very clear. I am not talking about the tax funds and that kind of thing. I am talking about grants given to a country called Trinidad and Tobago and Tobago is one island of that twin-island state. Not a cent to the Tobago House of Assembly.

11.45 p.m.

This scenario comes on the heels of the taking away of the \$113 million, a grant agreed upon between the previous Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the EEC for the link road from L'Anse Fourmi to Charlotteville. Besides those roads, the rest of the funds should have been spent on other projects in Tobago.

These funds were from Lomé II, III and IV and no funds from Lomé were ever accessed by the Trinidad and Tobago Government under the PNM. Never! The first time any funds were accessed from the Lomé Convention was when the NAR Government came into being. It was not done ever under the Father of the Nation, Dr. Eric Williams. They got the funds, and they said that Tobago must not get any. *[Interruption]* It is he. When I heard the voice I thought it was my friend from Tobago whom I flogged in the election. *[Interruption]* So I cannot chose my side? I am not dividing and surviving.

Mr. Maharaj: He cannot stand the Member talking against them.

Miss P. Nicholson: And you know they cannot do me anything.

The Tobago House of Assembly is a constitutional body, which is given legitimacy by the people and by the Parliament of this land, yet its Central Government representative, the Prime Minister Patrick Manning, ignores the Tobago House of Assembly completely with its requests for funds in the grant areas. So far not one cent has been forthcoming to justify the Prime Minister's boast that he alone is the Central Government representative with responsibility for Tobago.

I have to raise this because one cannot have \$18.5 million for community centers in Trinidad and Tobago and there is none for Tobago. Let me quote from page 73 of the Estimates for Development Programme for the year 1995. "Construction of community Centres—EEC Grant \$18.5 million. When one looks under the Tobago House of Assembly, there is not one penny for it under any grant, and this is the document that guides Trinidad and Tobago's projects. So I will not entertain anybody getting up here to call me mischievous.

We from Tobago are sure that these international financial institutions, through their local representatives, must be uneasy about the grossly unfair, undemocratic and backward practice of this olive branch bearer—another revelation of the Prime Minister's woeful incompetence in dealing with the nation's affairs, a situation which cries out for the resignation of the Prime Minister. Besides that, there should be immediate protocol intervention by the Tobago House of Assembly to get justice for Tobago.

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Two islands make up the State of Trinidad and Tobago and one cannot get funding for Trinidad and Tobago and all the funding go to Trinidad and none to Tobago. Tobago must cry out for its share. I am one of the representatives and I will cry out here week after week and leave the mischievous representative, the Member for Diego Martin West, to do all that he wants to do. *[Interruption]* The people whom I represent know and they love us.

Madam Speaker, I feel so happy that a certain person has to run to find a place and could never win an seat in Tobago. I am asking him to come in 1996 to face the polls with Pamela Nicholson, Tobago West. *[Interruption]* Let us not be led off track by these people. Madam Speaker, protection please!

Madam Speaker: It is getting late.

Miss P. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, on another related matter of representation, what confidence can Tobago have in its olive branch representative when its majority voice is never heard in a place called the Senate, nor on most of the statutory boards representing the interests of the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

The people of Tobago are not represented anywhere by the PNM. They have their own representatives and because the majority voice in Tobago is not the PNM, our olive branch bearer should know that if he went at representation for anything from Tobago, he must call on us to give that representation.

This Central Government representative also promised to give effect to constitutional administration of the secretaries that are in the Tobago House Assembly Act. It is almost four years and we are waiting on him. It is not then surprising to see that this Prime Minister upholds and supports Ministers of Government, and the Minister of National Security who, not in a rush of blood, but with vehement deliberateness stated:

“Whoever drafted the Trinidad and Tobago Constitution knows absolutely nothing about management.”

Clearly here is a Prime Minister how is leading a team of autocrats bent on the ruthless dismantling of the Constitution once declared sacrosanct by one of their main advisers.

11.55 p.m.

After listening to the Member for Oropouche, I remembered very clearly that he made the statement at the San Juan and Sangre Grande Secondary Schools that the service commissions must go. That is the trend that we are seeing. I am sure

that the man who stated that the Constitution is sacrosanct could never be supportive of the statement made by Minister John Eckstein, the present Minister of National Security. It was the Minister of National Security who got up and made that ruthless statement in this House.

Madam Speaker, the Minister of National Security of the PNM Government, led by Prime Minister Manning, who is also saying the same thing, must be aware that this trend that they are on is nothing other than dictatorial. The Constitution is certainly threatened by these political ‘Rambos’ *[Interruption]* Therefore, I am supporting the Motion.

I am expressing my lack of confidence here this evening. Why did they go to Hong Kong? Have they told us what they went for? That is a question that we must have answered in this House. They have not told us. We are dissatisfied with our parliamentary representative who claims that he has responsibility for Tobago. We are saying that this debate is relevant. *[Interruption]* Whosever he is, but I am not going any higher than that, no honourable—*[Interruption]* All right, the hon. Prime Minister, the Member for San Fernando East.

Mr. Manning: Thank you very much.

Miss P. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, when I get warmed up things escape sometimes. If they behave themselves we would not have that.

Madam Speaker: I know that the Member knows better than that and she would have corrected herself, I was waiting until she did so.

Miss P. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, I also want you to tell them to behave themselves.

There is another area I want to raise here this evening as a Tobagonian who has to travel regularly between Trinidad and Tobago. I could not come here today and not support the Motion when the Central Government representative with responsibility for Tobago has been recently making statements about the sanctity of state lands, that is with regard to Pier I at Chaguaramas, Trinidad. However, the Prime Minister refuses to make one single statement about a similar land situation in Tobago.

Whereas the lease for Pier I was effected sometime ago, and whereas there were letters bombarding the press also—endless letter on that same issue—we were not hearing a thing from the Government. Those pointed out the fact that the resort clubs built on state lands at Chaguaramas were functioning on an exclusive discriminatory basis with the aim of leaving out some members of the society;

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those people came out and said that no clause of the lease prevented them from doing so.

Furthermore, no PNM voice was heard in the vehement protest at the time the issue surfaced. Yet, now that the Prime Minister is under pressure, he and his high-profiled, expensive public relations team are suing Pier I's scenario to divert public attention, and to improve his own flagging, waning image. Why did the Prime Minister not speak out before? Are the Pier I leaseholders the same owners of the Condor 9 franchise which should have been running the, not so fast, inter-island ferry between Trinidad and Tobago? I shall come back to speak on this vexing question.

Mr. Manning: Vexed.

Miss P. Nicholson: This vexing—my language is correct. Either word be used vexing or vexed. I am correct, go and learn your English. That is why I am speaking about the woeful incompetence of the Prime Minister and why I am supporting this Motion.

The Prime Minister has a voice—distinct, clear and ringing. I do not know if it is the public relations people[*Interruption*] It used to be like that before but I do not know if they gave him some heavy training at home and so on, but sometimes one could even read the next word he is going to say. He has a clear and ringing voice on Chaguaramas. Clear is his voice to advise his Minister of Finance and Tourism, his Minister of Planning and Development or the Minister of Agriculture, whoever, to address section 6 of the Foreign Investment Act. [*Interruption*]

That nonsensical statement is always made, but they do not remember that when they are talking about the foreign investors in energy and all about, it is the Act. [*Interruption*] They forget the Act and the people who are responsible for the successes in those areas in the economy of Trinidad and Tobago.

Why is his voice only heard in an attempt to blame the NAR, which, in fact, opened the window to foreign investment through this Act? How could his voice be heard boasting about his success which this Act has brought to Trinidad, with the great number of foreign investment portfolios? The Prime Minister has nothing good to say on behalf of the same Act with respect to Tobago, the same Tobago that he has Central Government responsibility for. It is because of this inconsistency that I, as representative for Tobago West, have no confidence in the Prime Minister.

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I am sure that if this Parliament were truly functioning under the British Westminster system, our Prime Minister, the Member for San Fernando East, would have gracefully resigned, packed his bags and walked down the road into the twilight. *[Interruption]* Why should he expose himself and his colleagues to this trauma?

I hinted, as a true Tobago representative, that they would hear my voice on a vexing question, that is the question of the inter-island fast ferry service. Madam Speaker, you would remember that I had asked several questions in this honourable House relating to the Condor 9, after several breakdowns, innumerable rough rides. Where has the Condor 9, also called the “vomit” gone? *[Interruption]*

To whom is the Prime Minister addressing this question? He says that he is the person responsible for Tobago affairs. When will he divert his attention to the Condor 9? Actually, this should be easy because when he is talking about Pier I, should he not remember a matter of equal magnitude which concerns the critical matter of transport between Trinidad and Tobago?

12.05 a.m.

How can he countenance, with silence, this untenable situation from these people who boasted publicly before tenders were granted, that they would have been given that tender? Now he has nothing to say to them in public about the total inefficiency. These people were supposed to serve Tobago with fast ferry Condor 9. It should have been coming to Tobago in two-and-a-half hours. The last time it was seen in Tobago was Easter weekend.

That is the service that we were told even in this very House would be taking over from the Panorama in Tobago, and they would have thought about coming with another boat to deal with the cargo aspect. This is privatization. The same privatization—which they call divestment—they have copied and sold us from the NAR. We were told that they were going to privatize the sea transport service. It is the same Pier 1 people who own the *Condor 9*.

What I am saying is that the same way the Prime Minister could now raise the Pier I issue with the club, let us hear what is happening with *Condor 9* and Pier 1. *[Interruption]* The Member has no shame. They should be calling on him to answer it now. He is a disgrace to his Prime Minister. He is one of the reasons why these recent events have revealed the Prime Minister's woeful incompetence in dealing with the nation's affairs.

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The strategy of Prime Minister Manning and the PNM in bringing in the *Condor 9* Associates was to privatize, as I said, and we want the question answered. The mf Panorama, which they were bent on selling off now stands as a saving grace for the beleaguered travellers, traffickers and merchants from Tobago. I am calling on the "Olive Brancher" for action.

When you are in the public gallery you should behave yourself and keep quiet. I am being disturbed by someone in the public gallery Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The Member knows that if she is being disturbed she should appeal to the Speaker. Whoever is in the public gallery—I have been warning you all evening—please try to maintain yourself. If any Member is aggrieved by the behaviour of persons in the public, he or she should appeal to the Speaker. Proceed, please.

Miss P. Nicholson: Thanks, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member's speaking time has expired.

Motion made, That the hon. Member's speaking time be extended by 30 minutes.

Question put and agreed to.

Miss P. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, continuing on privatization, I must add that the NAR government saw wisdom and prudence in privatization. The enemies of privatization are in front of us. They should be bowing their heads in shame. I am not against a well thought out and selective programme. Its implementation was very successful under the NAR. Privatized were Trinidad Cement Company Limited; Telco to TSTT; Iscott to Ispat and we were bombarded left, right and centre by those people there sitting in front of me.

Let me look at the 1989 Convention. I want to quote the last paragraph on page 12.

Mr. Manning: Whose convention was that?

Miss P. Nicholson: PNM.

Mr. Manning: Whose address was that?

Dr. Rowley: What does it say?

Miss P. Nicholson: I think it was Prime Minister Manning, that time in Opposition. Listen to him:

"The newly privatized cement company was allowed to wipe out over \$90 million in debt to its original taxpaying shareholders—you and I. The benefit

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goes on to a narrow clique at the Stock Exchange. Privatization has meant an increase in the price of cement from \$12.45 to \$17.95 per bag in the cement company deal. The Government accounts and public relations experts refine their talents in plundering the State's patrimony."

This is the piece I want you to listen to, Madam Speaker:

"They will now march on confidently to deal similarly with Telco ..."

We dealt with that. He went on:

"NEC ... "

We dealt with that. They said that we would have plundered it. Who is plundering it now?

"Crown Reef Hotel, Trinidad and Tobago Printing and Packaging and MTS with similar consequences for you and me and the employees of these companies."

They are saying that we are on the road to privatization and that when we privatize we would be plundering the country with similar consequences for you and me and the employees of these companies. Today they are privatizing them. Are they plundering them?

Madam Speaker, these people were against privatization. They even said that they were talking about divestment. They are privatizing; doing exactly the same thing. In nearly every speech Prime Minister, Patrick Manning, made when he was in the Opposition, he said that we had taken away the patrimony of this country. Where is the patrimony today?

Madam Speaker, if you remember, as soon as they got into power, it was the methanol plant, urea, all of those companies. When the methanol company was sold, the prices rose immediately from \$122 per tonne to US \$500 per tonne. The 21 per cent held by the Government is in escrow in the hands of the German principals. Trinidad and Tobago has derived not a penny profit from either taxes or dividends.

12.15 a.m.

You also have—

Hon. Member: When you do not know, shut your mouth!

Miss P. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, protect this House please. I do not want to do anything to get into trouble.

Madam Speaker: This is just cross-talk. This Member is too experienced not to entertain a little cross-talk.

Miss P. Nicholson: It is not just cross-talk; it is what they are doing. They can reply. Madam Speaker, I always do my homework before I speak.

Mr. Valley: Madam Speaker, for the record, the Member is totally incorrect with respect to the Government's interest in methanol.

Miss P. Nicholson: Madam Speaker, he did not ask permission to do anything; let him sit!

Mr. Valley: You were sitting so I took the opportunity to correct you.

Miss P. Nicholson: You sit down! Shut up your mouth. When you have your opportunity, rise and speak and I would deal with you on another day.

Nucor, a company which has benefitted from a giveaway of natural gas, carded to come on stream in August 1994 with steel for export, has run into a number of teething problems, which are still being experienced, and to date no steel for export has been produced. Also, the share prices of Nucor on the New York Stock Exchange have fallen by more than 50 per cent—heavy losses.

We have the generating section of T&TEC that was sold out by the people who said that they were against privatization. That is the argument. They have sold out the generating section of T&TEC because they said that they could not spend \$1 billion on buying new generation plants. The same foreigners who have taken it over, what are they doing? They are only refurbishing it.

We are dealing with the distribution aspect of T&TEC. The generation aspect has been sold off. When we were dealing with privatization, everybody took us on. There were cannon of vitriolic vituperation fired. They incited the unions through their PNM trade union leadership. Today they should be ashamed. Thousands of people have been sent home from those same unions and the leadership is still hugging them, and they said we, the NAR, came to close down the unions.

There were marches up and down the streets; rumblings up and down; civil disobedience; cannon of union leadership; Selwyn Ryan and his cannon; Mungroo and his cannon; Selwyn John and his cannon; Aberdeen and his cannon; McLeod, Weatherhead; even the church had a cannon firing at us. The end result, we have Prime Minister Patrick Manning, representative for San Fernando East today and the Port is silenced. Mungroo has no cannon.

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In PTSC they sent home nearly 3,000 workers. Aberdeen—no cannons. He is now struggling to hug another grouping. NUGFW, over 10,000 sent home—no cannon from Selwyn John; and the youths are not even organized and trained to get rid of them and take over the leadership of the unions.

Who is silencing the unions? They said that Robinson was wicked, vindictive, malicious, callous and had come to destroy the unions, and he came to give away the patrimony of Trinidad and Tobago. It is the same direction in which we went—well they are even more vicious and callous, because of the speed with which they are moving, and not a sound is heard, not a funeral note, no cannon at all, everything is silent. Everybody's mouth is tightly closed.

This is the whole situation. The direction in which we were going was the correct one. They were against everything that we did. NATUC's and the others' mouths are tightly shut. You have poor Weatherhead alone—divide and rule in the unions. Before you say, "Jack Robinson" Garcia bowed; his knees bent. From the time they got Garcia to bow, everybody knows they would get all the others to do the same. The only person standing is Weatherhead, and he has no support. He won the union's election, but no support.

I am calling upon the Member for Couva North to stimulate the unions and let us get action. We have high unemployment in the country as the Member for St. Ann's East has admitted, and he has said it on the electronic media. If you look at the overview, the National Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago—this is the working draft that I have here—you would see on page 1, the third paragraph states:

"Issues of critical concern include the high rate of unemployment among young persons in the 15 to 24 age group which accounts for almost 75 per cent of all the unemployed. The rate of unemployment for women is higher than that for men and which is also higher for women heads of households."

So they are accepting that there is an unemployment problem in the country that is problematic, particularly among the 15 to 24 age group.

How are we going to address it? As I said earlier, I listened to the Minister, but he is not answering the question. The crime question is here. Every day people are being shot all over the streets; there are rapes; they are breaking down the homes of the middle class. The middle class is the backbone of any democracy and it is being destroyed right now in Trinidad and Tobago. Even people in the middle class are afraid to open their mouths. *[Interruption]* Shut up your mouth!

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You know you have no base in Trinidad; they are only keeping you here for a little while; you have to run home.

So one is not seeing any real change. If you look at education, Government has not really implemented anything as yet. It might have done a draft, but in terms of implementation, the only change one has had in education over the last ten-year period is the YTEPP that was implemented by the NAR.

12.25 a.m.

And as we go along, one expects that as a programme as that develops, new changes will come along, and there is where they came in with the partnership with the Germans that they are doing at present. There is even the situation in Tobago where the best electronic person has been taken away and sent to do the programme—and they have not employed an electronic teacher so the children at the Signal Hill Comprehensive School are left unattended.

I think I must use this time to raise it with the Prime Minister—Madam Speaker, do you see how they are eating in the House—they have no respect for you. The front liners. The school is left unattended and some of the children who had to sit exams—

Mr. Valley: You are crazy.

Miss P. Nicholson: I am not crazy. I am sure that the Speaker is seeing what you are doing. All of them. The whole front line was doing that bravely with the paper bags on the table, watching her. This is the deterioration we are having in the House.

Madam Speaker: May I announce that coffee and tea are available. Members are free to go into the kitchen and ask the maid. We have made that arrangement, so you can have your nuts and tea there.

Miss P. Nicholson: I am not against them but they must know to at least go outside.

The only change that has occurred in education to make a fundamental change in employment in the country so far is YTEPP, which includes the apprenticeship programme. That was done under the NAR, not under the PNM!

We heard that the PNM, under Prime Minister Manning, is touting its joint-venture arrangement for—

Madam Speaker: There are coffee and in the lounge so Members may feel free to refresh themselves from time to time, if they wish.

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Miss P. Nicholson: The point that I was making is that the only change that has been brought into the YTEPP is the partnership programme with the Germans. I believe as the programme evolves and develops other branches and other improvements will come in. Besides that, there is certainly need for other programmes to handle the 20,000/25,000 young people who will be coming out every year from the secondary schools.

Every time I remember YTEPP I remember that when the present Government came into power they halted the programme—"no good, I am going to come up with my own," but it has not appeared. Where are the export centres that they also boasted about—that Prime Minister Manning boasted about—to set up at the industrial cottages built by the NAR government? They shut down those and the export centres that should have gone there, we are not seeing them.

This Motion clearly has weight given it by the incompetence of the Member for San Fernando East. To me, the Member for Tobago West, it is even more weighty because he has taken it upon himself to boast that he is the sole representative of the Central Government with responsibility for Tobago, and on the important areas that are affecting Tobago there has been no action from him. Tobago has felt and is feeling the pangs of his non-performance, the said incompetence which the Motion proclaims.

The subject of this Motion has a battery—I learnt that they were to speak here this evening but I did not feel the battery, only the half battery so far spoke. I was told all of them were to speak. I warn that *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* has a meaning for the word "confidence", it is a secondary meaning, it is an adjective and it goes like this:

"Confidence—at or relating to swindling by false promises."

Let the Motion be carried.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

The Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (Dr. The Hon. Keith Rowley): Madam Speaker, I rise this morning to make a short contribution to this debate. I want to take the opportunity to refocus this amazing debate for the benefit of Members on the other side. Clearly, the mover of this Motion has a problem with myth and is misguided or misled. We have witnessed a very interesting development here earlier in the debate.

In the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago, the Leader of the Opposition moves a Motion of no-confidence in the Prime Minister. My colleague, the

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Attorney General impressed upon this House how important such an action is. This Parliament is not a playground; a Motion of no confidence is not a plaything, because the changing of a Government in a country could result in significant change in policy and change in policy could result in changes in lives. These are not matters to be taken lightly.

The Motion having been moved, we have witnessed a situation where, those on the other side, in whom apparently the Leader of the Opposition has confidence, because the Motion says he has no confidence in the Prime Minister—all have pip. Nobody has got up for the last seven hours to support the Leader of the Opposition's moving a Motion of no-confidence in the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. Madam Speaker, if anything should indicate that this Motion is a misfiring, a "boof", that signifies it.

If the Opposition has any plausible basis on which to raise a Motion of No-Confidence in the Prime Minister, then they should prosecute that in a way to signify that they had some useful purpose in mind. Of course, having made a thorough mess of themselves we are being told that the Motion is against the Prime Minister only of the recent days, not all the time, of recent action. We are also told that they are not debating because the Government has not answered the Motion, so they are on strike.

12.35 a.m.

They are interpreting for us, the country and the Parliament, how we should respond to a Motion raised by them. So they want to raise a question and answer it for us. As a result of not telling them what they want to hear, all of them have gone dumb. They are ill informed and misguided and I have warned my Friend the Member for Couva North that if he keeps taking advice from the Member for Couva South he would always end up in this position.

We have seen the intervention by the Member from Couva South who tried to shut up the Minister of Finance saying that he does not want to hear anything about the economy nor about the Government's performance because they have come to talk about Mr. Manning. They would have us believe that the Motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister has nothing to do with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Let me quote for you, Madam Speaker, because every Friday our Friend the Member for Couva South comes here and regales us with the sanctity and the purity of the Westminster system. I take it to mean that he subscribes to the fact that our model is based on the Westminster system.

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Barry Winetrobe and Janet Seaton of the House of Commons library have this to say about confidence Motions:

"The testing of parliamentary confidence is, at a political level, a measure of the role and power of the Prime Minister, as well as of the Government as a whole."

But my misguided Friend the Member for Couva North takes "basket" from the Member for Couva South, files a Motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister and expects that all we will talk about is the Prime Minister, what he had for lunch and what is the colour of his jacket. He does not want to hear anything about the Government. Since we are talking about the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, they are not debating because we are not answering the Motion.

Madam Speaker, it is not just that. Let me quote for you an eminent British Prime Minister, a Commonwealth Prime Minister, the home of our system.

"We have before us a Motion of confidence in the Government..."

By confidence there, I mean no confidence.

"... with all the implications that flow from that. At the conclusion of that debate either the Government will have won the vote of confidence and we shall proceed with our policy or we shall have lost and there follows a dissolution of Parliament. This House must decide today whether it is prepared to sustain the government in office or encourage them to seek a dissolution."

Those are the words of Prime Minister John Major responding to a vote of no confidence in his government. If the Government does not have the Motion carried in its favour, then it falls. The Prime Minister does not fall, the government falls. But they want to tell us they are not debating. They have nothing to say because we are not answering the Motion.

Only last week we received in this House copies of the *Parliamentarian* LXXVI No. 2 of April 1995. Even that they do not read. I would draw their attention to page 110 of the most recent issue. Listen to this. This again is another eminent Commonwealth person, Dr. The Hon. Howard Fergus, CBE, MLC, who is writing in this journal. He states:

"In keeping with the principle of the collective responsibility of 'cabinet', a motion of no confidence has to be proposed against the government rather than against the CM or indeed against any individual Minister. As is the norm

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in the Commonwealth, if such a motion is carried the Government is expected to resign making way for fresh elections."

[Interruption] What colony. It happened in Barbados just next door. If by any lightening tonight this Motion is carried, what do they expect to happen? The reason why for the last few hours we had the peculiar situation of a Motion of no confidence being filed by the Leader of the Opposition and all the Opposition Members sitting there not saying a word is that they have done their normal thing—come to Parliament ill-prepared. You see, they like to believe that they can walk in the PNM's footsteps, but they do not have the basics.

When we the PNM, were in Opposition, we filed a Motion of no confidence in the then government.

Mr. B. Panday: No. It was in the Prime Minister.

Dr. The Hon. K. Rowley: It is one and the same thing. That is what I am telling you. A Motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister is tantamount to a Motion of no confidence in the Government. I have just read that for you.

For the benefit of my Friends on the other side, I have just read authorities that, in effect, state that a motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister—*[Interruption]* relates to the Government as a whole. Members opposite do not even know what they have done. They have filed a Motion of no confidence in the Government and did not even know it.

The bottom line is whatever he has filed it in, however he saw it, he comes to Parliament with a few scribbles on the back of a page and wants to bring down a Government with that. He has a few random thoughts about things in general and he expects to bring down the PNM Government with that. There was no preparation, and that is why he has succeeded in embarrassing all his colleagues here today.

Now he is at pains to point out that all this Motion seeks to deal with are recent developments and we should therefore not incorporate anything other than the recent past. Of course the level of ill-preparedness manifests itself so openly that the ragamuffin group on the other side did not even have a caucus because he did not even talk with the Member for Oropouche.

While he is telling this House that the Motion applies only to the narrowest Parliament of the recent past, our Friend the Member for Oropouche gets up and starts talking about the Prime Minister from 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994, as if he had never heard a word from his Leader. Of course, the Member for Oropouche

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understands that the Motion is a motion of no confidence in the Government so he spoke about it at large.

Having said that, the Member for Couva North made two presentations: one was about matters relating to the removal of the Honorary Consul in Hong Kong, which my colleague dealt with comprehensively and finally, and the other matter was about the treatment of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, which I will deal with in a moment. He raised a third matter about the Prime Minister going to Hong Kong without an invitation.

I have great regard for my Friend the Member for Couva North as an entertainer, but sometimes he astounds me with his logic. The Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago goes to Hong Kong to attract investment to Trinidad and Tobago, but my Friend would have us believe that one goes to Hong Kong to attract investment on the invitation of the Prime Minister of Hong Kong.

So people would invite us to their country to attract investment from their country to ours. Do you understand, Madam Speaker? That is his logic. If the Prime Minister did not get any invitation from Hong Kong, we should not go there. That is their logic.

12.45 a.m.

The Member for Tobago West spoke about crisis in foreign affairs and that this Motion is rooted in the crisis that the Prime Minister created in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In their little minds, they saw a crisis, but in the Government we saw no crisis. In the perception that there was a crisis, the Member for Couva North filed a no confidence Motion and he comes here now and has nothing to say.

Let me enlighten my Friend the Member for Couva North and all the Members on the other side who saw a crisis in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the Government or in Trinidad and Tobago. I wish to draw their attention to the "Bible" of Keith—*[Interruption]* Not really me, I have a good name, but it was Arthur Keith, it is the "Bible" of the British Cabinet System. We heard my Friend the Member for Tobago West in her parting shot say that had it been in Britian under the British system, the Prime Minister would not be here and so on.

She acknowledges that we are following the British system, but as CLR James said, "What they know of cricket who only cricket know". This somehow follows an ill-informed point of view about prime ministerial actions. Persons write stories, opinions, analyses—sometimes misinformed sometimes under-informed and so on.

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It is strange that parliamentarians who ought to know better are taking their cue from persons whom we expect the parliamentarians would educate. Parliamentarians come to Parliament to quote reporters who write for newspapers. The reporters who write are not exposed, and have not taken the time to find out the facts of these matters. Instead of the parliamentarians debating at a level and treating issues in a way that would reflect some knowledge and understanding of these things, they come here with a whole portfolio and portmanteau of clippings, taking timing from reporters. Madam Speaker, you talk about "cart before horse"?

The Member for Tobago West is telling us that the whole issue is precipitated by prime-ministerial action. Crisis in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I want to draw the attention of my colleagues on the other side and whomever they speak to, to what page 66 of Keith's *British Cabinet System* says. This system is the same as that of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Maharaj: What is the year.

Dr. The Hon. K. Rowley: Do you want to know the year? This is the "Bible," they do not print bibles every day. This is the version of the "Bible" written by Authur Keith in 1952. The second edition was written by N. H. Gibbs in 1978, the *British Cabinet System*. [Interruption] The "Bible" of *British Cabinet System*. Madam Speaker, I will quote. [Interruption] This is an authority on the Cabinet system, one that we subscribe to in this country.

"The Prime Minister...forms the Cabinet, and...can secure the removal of ministers in order to maintain Cabinet harmony."

The Prime Minister. [Interruption] I am not talking about any individual; I am talking about the action of a Prime Minister, which somehow seems to be represented by those on the other side as improper action. That is the point I am making. I want to draw your attention also to page 81 of Keith's *British Parliamentary System*. I will quote the sayings of Mr. Hore-Belisha who was once Secretary of State for War. These are his words acknowledging the *British Parliamentary System* when he was moving out of office:

"A Prime Minister is free, in the exercise of his impartial judgment, to make what appointments may seem good to him."

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These are the words of an eminent British Cabinet Minister on being removed by his Prime Minister. I also want to quote the words of Mr. Neville Chamberlain well-known British Prime Minister. He had this to say:

"Every Prime Minister must from time to time review the allocation of offices among his various colleagues and consider whether that allocation still remains the best that can be effected."

That is the point of view of Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister. I also want to quote for Members on the other side, who have been misleading the public with their points of view; the words of another Prime Minister the great Robert Peel. He had this to say on prime-ministerial action:

"On the subject of dismissal, therefore, the conclusion would seem to be that the Prime Minister is entitled to ask a colleague to resign or to accept another office, and that only so can the Prime Minister's control of his Cabinet be maintained."

These are the words of Robert Vincent Peel. He goes on to say:

"... 'Under all ordinary circumstances,...' if there were a serious difference of opinion between the Prime Minister and one of his colleagues, and that difference could not be reconciled by an amicable understanding, the result would be the retirement of the colleague, not of the Prime Minister."

Of course, you will know that. [*Interruption*] No he had a discussion before he was fired.

I want to also give you the opinion as recorded in this document, the *British Cabinet System*, the position of Lord Palmerston who served in the time of the great Prime Minister, Gladstone. I am quoting this in the context of a lot of what has been put out there by persons who ought to know better.

12.55 a.m.

Listen to what Lord Palmerston had to say:

" 'A member of the Government,...' when he takes office necessarily divests himself of that perfect freedom of individual action which belongs to a private and independent member of Parliament, and the reason is this, that what a member of the Government does and says upon public matters must to a certain degree commit his colleagues, and the body to which he belongs if they by their silence appear to acquiesce; and if any of them follow his example and express as publicly opposite opinions, which in particular cases

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they might feel obliged to do, differences of opinion between members of the same Government are necessarily brought out into prominence and the strength of the Government is thereby impaired."

Those were the views of Lord Palmerston. Those are the principles that guide the British Cabinet system and prime-ministerial control of a Cabinet. It is only in Trinidad and Tobago that a Prime Minister would take action with respect to the management of his Cabinet and the Leader of the Opposition and the rest of his ragamuffin group would appoint themselves defenders of persons in the Cabinet, who have no problem.

I want to make something very clear. On this side of the House, we do not have anybody who is prime-minister-struck, you know. Nobody here raises a campaign to be Prime Minister. We offered ourselves to be elected and our constituents elected us to serve as Members of Parliament. Service in the Cabinet is at the pleasure of the Prime Minister. It is quite mischievous for Members of Parliament to seek to represent anything else to the country.

I hear from time to time from the other side defence of my own position or an issue raised on my own position about the appointment of Cabinet in 1991. I took part in the election campaign, which was pretty hectic. We demolished one batch, wounded the other one severely, and won the election. I was very tired after that campaign so I went home to sleep and I slept very soundly for two days.

I had so much confidence in my leader, whom I had the pleasure to work with, to bring the PNM from 33/3 to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, that when we won the election I went home, closed my door and went to sleep. I did not have to worry about where I would go in the Cabinet, when, how, in front of whom. I recognized that appointment of Cabinet is the prerogative of the Prime Minister. There are those on the other side who have a problem with the fact that I was not appointed in the first batch or in the second batch or in the third batch.

I want to go on record as saying that I have absolutely no problem with the timing of my appointment. Had I not been appointed, I would simply have said, that is the prerogative of the Prime Minister; he obviously feels that I have nothing to contribute to the Cabinet. That is how we see it on this side.

How is it done on the other side? On the other side they have not even gone near the possibility of winning an election, but what do we hear? We hear the Member for St. Augustine demanding that he wants the Ministry of Works and Transport. Another one from another place, with substance on his nose, wants the Ministry of Planning and Development. Another one has taken the portfolio of

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Attorney General. Even the position of President has already been claimed. Given that scenario, can one imagine where the country will end up if, God forbid, something happens and those fellows end up in Government?

Just imagine that you are having a nightmare and in that bad dream the Member for Couva North is the Prime Minister and he is called upon to appoint a Cabinet. He would be redundant because everybody has already appointed himself or herself. Of course, having subscribed to the principles that, if I do not get what I want I would mash up the whole show, they would mash up Trinidad and Tobago. They subscribe to a point of view that some persons can demand their portfolios from a Prime Minister. Let me advise those on the other side or, as the Jamaicans would say, let me tell them how it goes.

I want to quote Keith again on the *British Cabinet System* for the edification of those on the other side. Keith had this to say:

"It must, of course, be remembered that, while the Prime Minister has the advantage of being able to offer posts at his discretion, politicians of standing can safely decline what is given, if they command so much support in the party as to make it unwise to dispense with their services.

An example is given as follows:

"Lord Palmerston used to demand the Foreign Office until his dismissal in 1851; thereafter he was content with other offices,..."

As my Friend the Member for Tobago West pointed out, in her interpretation, it is crisis in Foreign Affairs that has brought us to this Motion here this morning. I seem to recall that in the previous government, my Friend the Member for Couva North, was in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when the crisis began.

On page 67, under the caption: "The Functions of the Prime Minister", Keith states:

"In the execution of these duties, difficulties have most frequently arisen in the sphere of foreign affairs,..."

Is that not interesting? Very interesting!

Madam Speaker, prime-ministerial action properly carried out under the Constitution in the traditions of the British Cabinet System can in no way, by any stretch of the imagination, lead to the proper prosecution of a motion of no confidence, and that is what we have witnessed here this morning—the misfiring of a Motion based on that false premise that the Prime Minister has somehow acted improperly in managing his Cabinet.

Mr. B. Panday: The Member thinks he acted properly.

Dr. The Hon. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, our Friend the Member for Couva North would like to appoint the Cabinet over here. They are confused.

Having been at pains to point out to this House that we should be talking about the narrow parameters of the private life or otherwise of the recent past, insofar as it applies to the Prime Minister—up jumps the Member for Oropouche, the seconder of the Motion, and disagrees violently with the Leader of the Opposition, that this Motion is not confined to the recent past and solely the actions of the Prime Minister.

The Member goes into a tirade about the system of Government, having no substance after the Attorney General dealt comprehensively with the so-called Lau issue. Being wise enough not to compound the public errors and utterances of his leader, he stayed away from the Foreign Affairs issue but he launched into an issue of the system.

1.05 a.m.

Here is a man who is elected to Parliament under the Westminster system to serve under the Trinidad and Tobago Constitution, but is being guided by principles and practices of the United States presidential system. Listen to what he has to say. He is saying that the problem we have here is that we do not have the same kind of checks and balances as we have in the United States, where a Prime Minister cannot appoint a Minister without the sanction of the legislative.

But in the US system there is an executive President who is elected by public franchise. He then appoints members to his Cabinet, none of whom are elected, and that is why their appointments have to go to the House for sanction, which is quite different from our system, where, in this House, every Minister sitting here is elected by the people. If they sit in the other place, that is as a result of a provision in our Constitution which permits appointment to the Cabinet of persons appointed to that place by the elected Prime Minister.

So how could the Member for Oropouche confuse these two systems in a debate where he is the seconder, where his Leader has moved a Motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago? But having nothing to say, he goes on into his flight of fancy. Because you see, when he finishes with that aspect of misrepresentation, having nothing to say and having 15 minutes in which to say it, he proceeds to make a contribution on the Prime Minister's attitude. What exactly does that mean?

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He has a problem with the Prime Minister's attitude so that warrants a Motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister, and on that basis the Government should be changed. That is where this debate was rooted this evening; totally adrift of the moorings set by the mover himself. That was not the end of it.

Our Friend the Member for Tobago West takes a cue from those who are confused in front of her and she goes on to say that she draws a parallel between the so-called foreign affairs crisis and the present Motion they are pushing here, and the Watergate crisis of the Nixon era, and says that if we were of that kind of nature, the Prime Minister would not be in this House, because, like Nixon, he would have had to leave.

One o'clock Thursday morning, I am here having to respond to that. What are the facts about the Nixon crisis? Watergate was the Democratic headquarters. A Republican President authorizes a criminal act against that headquarters; authorizes burglars to burgle the headquarters of the opposite party. They are caught. The President is on record, as taped in his own office, as organizing a cover up of this criminal act. When it was exposed by the journalists, Woodward and Bernstein, the American community decided that, "we do not want any President who has authorized a criminal act and who had conspired to cover up a criminal act." So Nixon was facing impeachment and he resigned—that was the Watergate crisis.

Would you believe that the Member for Tobago West sees a parallel between that and whatever we are facing here today? I refuse to believe that she does not understand. I am saying, that is the level of misrepresentation and mischief that Members of Parliament on the other side, all of that ilk, engage in all the time, day in, day out week in, week out.

Imagine the MP for Tobago West could get up here, after all the public debate and ventilation with respect to the divestment of 49 per cent of the generating capacity of T&TEC—49 per cent of T&TEC's generating capacity has been sold to an American company. The state retains ownership of 51 per cent. There was a debate in this House; there was public debate; there was union debate, but the MP for Tobago West comes here and says that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has sold out 100 per cent of T&TEC to Power Gen, and all T&TEC has left is the distribution system.

I refuse to believe that a Member of Parliament who took part in that debate to divest 49 per cent of that generating capacity could so suffer a memory lapse as to make a statement like that. But that is how they believe they will impress the

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electorate and somehow win their support. The electorate in this country is not that ill-informed that a Member of Parliament can get away with that.

So she gets up here, and for the record and for Tobagonians, tells them that this Government has got \$100 million in grants and all spent in Trinidad, none in Tobago. That is to inflame Tobagonians against this Government and secure her position in Tobago West. That Member knows for a fact; she was specific, for she pointed out the presence of the Minister of Community Development here, and made specific reference to the \$18 million programme with respect to community centres, and she went to state that this Government has spent all that \$18 million in Trinidad and has not spent a cent in Tobago.

The Member knows that the Black Rock Community Centre is being built under that programme as one of the major components of that project. The Member of the Tobago House of Assembly elected for that area, time and time again, has made reference to the fact that the Black Rock Community Centre is being built under that EC programme as directed by the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs, yet the Member for Tobago West who knows that—because it is a matter of public record—comes here and puts on record to mislead Tobagonians, that the Government have got moneys in the form of grants and are spending all in Trinidad and none in Tobago. On that basis, she is supporting a Motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister.

The Member goes on, in the same vein, to give reasons why she is supporting this Motion, because this Government, in discriminating against Tobago, has appointed boards and not a single Tobagonian has been appointed to boards by this Government.

Madam Speaker: The speaking time of the hon. Member has expired.

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

Question put and agreed to.

1.15 a.m.

Dr. The Hon. K. Rowley: Madam Speaker, I thank hon. Members for the extension. I was saying, that in seeking to justify her support for this frivolous Motion, the Member of Parliament for Tobago West had to resort to blatant falsehoods like saying that this Government in discriminating against Tobago, has appointed state boards and has appointed no Tobagonians.

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What are the facts? I have a portfolio with oversight for a few boards in the sector of agriculture. On numerous occasions I have had to delay my Cabinet Notes waiting for, cajoling, telephoning, writing, faxing the Tobago House of Assembly to submit their nominations to these boards. We want them to participate in the running of the country and when they are tardy we do not walk away from them. We wait for them to come up with the names.

The Agricultural Development Bank, within my portfolio, is chaired by a Tobagonian; the Cocoa and Coffee Industry Board which was appointed under my stewardship has on it a Tobagonian representative. The National Agricultural Marketing and Development Company (NAMDEVCO) has a Tobagonian on it. The Environmental Management Agency has a Tobagonian; BWIA, WASA and TTEC, Mt. Hope—all have Tobagonians on them.

How in the face of all of this can a Member of Parliament of such long standing, a former Member of the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago, come and make such a patently untrue statement, seeking to justify why she should support a Motion of no-confidence in the Prime Minister?

The Member for Tobago West went on to say that this crisis in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that she has identified has disgraced us in the whole wide world. That is not a fitting subject for my Friend the Member for Tobago West to address. She seems to have forgotten that the crisis in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which disgraced us to the wider world was not this one; it was the one in 1987.

That year the leader of a political party, which is rooted in ethnic politics and sees itself only in the complexion of racial consideration, making a major contribution in terms of numbers to a coalition Government, was unceremoniously expelled from a Government in which she was a prime mover, that is what disgraced us in the country. And not only disgraced us, but set the tone for serious political, economic and racial instability.

Had it not been for the resilient foundation laid by a PNM Government in previous years, heavens knows what might have happened in Trinidad and Tobago as a result of that action of her Government of which she was a part. She talks about a crisis in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Member for San Fernando East should resign because we have been disgraced before the world. She seems to forget.

If the movement of a Minister from a portfolio should constitute a disgrace to the world, I wonder how disgraced we were in the heady days of the NAR

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Government, when like a bolt from the blue, we heard one night that the entire Cabinet had been asked to resign. When it was reformulated one man was fired, and up to now the man is going around—he is my constituent. I try to help him but I know my limit—the man is telling me he does not know why he was fired, poor fellow.

Mr. Humphrey: What you did for me?

Dr. The Hon. K. Rowley: Console you.

Madam Speaker, that was the first episode. The next episode, my Friend the Member for Caroni Central, a man of great belly and heart, who was prepared to stand up in front of nine yards of concrete in a URP Project in a drain, a man of that calibre along with six others unceremoniously in one fell swoop, dismissed from a Government of "One Love." But they come here to seek to take up issue for and on behalf of Members on this side. They seem to forget what this country had to choose between. This country always has a choice.

As long as the PNM is around—and Great is the PNM and it shall prevail and this country will always have a choice, and the choice will be between the PNM and the 'ragga muffin malarky' on the other side. It will always be that and the choice will be in the hands of the electorate of Trinidad and Tobago.

My Friend the Member for Couva North has no confidence in the Prime Minister and he tells us, let us confine the Motion to the Prime Minister. That begs the question: Is it that the corollary of that Motion as interpreted by him, is that he has confidence in the rest of the Government? In which case I say to him, welcome to the light. He has seen the light, he is in the right church but is sitting in the wrong pew.

The only time the Member of Parliament for Couva North, in his political career has ever made a positive contribution to Trinidad and Tobago was under the leadership of Patrick Augustine Mervyn Manning, Member of Parliament for San Fernando East, Prime Minister of the PNM of today. Understand that.

I mentioned to you earlier that changes in Government can bring about change in policy. It can be better or for worse. The change in Government in 1991 brought about a fundamental change with respect to the sugar industry because the policy being pursued by the previous Government of which my Friend the Member for Couva North was a part, was a policy which said that the Trinidad and Tobago Sugar Industry should be sized to 75,000 tonnes requiring the use of only one factory.

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Madam Speaker, I heard my Friend the Member for Arouca North saying that the reason why the Member for Couva North was put out of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was that there was of some problem of immigration. That might have been so, but without telling tales out of school, I want to tell you the real reason why my Friend left the Cabinet.

When the Cabinet took the decision of going in the direction of down-sizing the sugar industry to 75,000 tonnes the immediate implications of that fell on the consciousness of the Member of Parliament for Couva North who, at that time was Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The Member for Couva North took a decision either to stay in the Cabinet or to get out because of down-sizing of the sugar industry to 75,000 tonnes, the closure of the Brechin Castle factory affecting the Couva and Chaguanas areas, the loss of 4,000 jobs. They have a habit of coming and asking where are the jobs? Our policies are working, taking root and have brought about a reversal of the trend of increasing unemployment. We are now seeking a trend to decreasing unemployment.

1.25 a.m.

Member opposite were pursuing a policy where in one fell swoop in Central Trinidad, in his constituency of Couva North, they were going to close down the Brechin Castle factory at a loss of 4,000 jobs directly at Caroni Limited and an additional 11,000 jobs in support services to Caroni Limited.

It was that perception and its earthquake action which caused him to decide that he wanted no part of that Government; that he was safer in his union with his perks, salary and one day a week work, rather than staying in the Cabinet and discharging a Cabinet responsibility. Do you know what he did Madam Speaker?

He provoked the Prime Minister into action. He provoked the Prime Minister to fire him because he did not want to walk away and leave questions as to why he walked out of the Cabinet. He wanted to be the martyr. The plan was that he should provoke the Prime Minister to fire him, go out there and play the martyr, reconvene his ragamuffin group and get others to follow him. On that basis he has gone out there and reformulated his political existence. Had that action been completed, we would have been in a far worse position today with respect to economic performance and, of course, unemployment.

Prime Minister Patrick Manning, as early as April, 1992, led his Cabinet into taking decisive action with respect to establishing viability, bankability and

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ultimately profitability in the sugar industry. It was under that leadership that we invited the Leader of the Opposition, in his capacity as head of the union of sugar workers, to work with the Government to lay down the groundwork for Caroni Limited. To his credit, he agreed to participate and we had a consensus position, the blueprint of which we are now pursuing. That is the role of leadership in influencing policy to impact on the lives of people. So, Madam Speaker, when I told you that his only positive contribution to the lives of the people of Trinidad and Tobago has been under the Manning leadership, that is what I was talking about.

Today, in 1995, we have set ourselves a target at Caroni (1975) Limited to produce 112,000 tonnes of sugar. We produced 117,000 tonnes. Last year, with better weather conditions, we produced 127,000 tonnes. Compare that to their policy of 75,000 tonnes.

Having expanded the industry to the size of 127,000 tonnes, what is the position now? This year, as a result of the shortfall of quota elsewhere in the region, we have been able to sell an additional 9,000 tonnes abroad, earning foreign exchange and improving the viability of Caroni (1975) Limited. But the good news does not end there. As a result of Portugal's entry into the EEC, an increased sugar quota is now available to ACP countries, of which Trinidad and Tobago is a part. We are likely to have access to another 10,000 tonnes of sugar for profitable export. That means that we are now in a position to put another 5,000 acres of land under sugar cane.

They come here and ask, where are the jobs? We are creating no jobs, they say. To put land under cane requires people; to produce additional tonnes of sugar requires people. That is employment creation. We have moved our target now from 120,000 tonnes, which was the tripartite target of 1992, to one of 140,000 tonnes which will be the size of our industry, meaning increased employment, increased foreign exchange earnings and increased economic activity. That is the kind of action that is taken under the hand of a Government that is properly led. That is the leadership in which they have no confidence. I am not surprised.

I move to an area in which the Member for Couva North will find great favour, the rum department of Caroni (1975) Limited. When we came into office, equal to the downsizing of the overall production, the distillery was in disarray. As a result of decisive action that we have taken at Caroni (1975) Limited, we are now in a position where we have improved our production both for local and

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export service to the extent where, instead of the distillery operating only six months of the year, we are now headed towards operating for 10 months of the year.

This will result in greater employment, increased productivity, economic earnings in foreign exchange and, at the end of that—profitability. We are now talking about a profit of \$2 million in 1995 as against \$1.8 million last year and before that, for as far back as we can recall, periods of losses.

The distillery at Caroni (1975) Limited was an area of permanent loss-making. I am now telling you that we are talking about profit-making; success in agricultural policy resulting in viability, bankability and profitability. Caroni (1975) Limited no longer looks to the national treasury for large sums of money to sustain its annual operations. Subventions from the State are down to a trickle as a result of action taken by this Government.

Under the Manning leadership, we have moved Caroni (1975) Limited from a position where no bank would talk to it, to a position where international banks are breaking our door and Caroni (1975) Limited now, on a regular basis would borrow £10 million or £12 million, that is approximately TT \$100 million, without a Government guarantee. It borrows the money, performs and pays back, rather than borrow money from the Treasury. Moneys which otherwise would have gone to Caroni (1975) Limited are now being used in other areas of national development. So, we are getting improvement on both sides. Caroni (1975) Limited is improving its performance and the resources are available for other areas of development.

That is the kind of action that this Government has been engaged in. That is the kind of action which comes about under proper, enlightened, astute and courageous leadership, matters which are quite alien to those on the other side. We have only to listen to their expressed expectations.

My good Friend the Member for Couva North was telling someone from the media that he expects that persons on the other side would vote for the Motion because he heard that some of us are disgruntled. To that, I tell him: "Not on your nelly!"

Mr. B. Panday: That is why they sent him away.

Dr. The Hon. K. Rowley: I will tell you why he went away. Our Government is about the country's business. We have business to attend to—urgent business with respect to the Water and Sewerage Authority, and it would

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have been quite irresponsible to delay that business to allow the Minister to stay here and listen to this nonsensical Motion—this quite misguided, frivolous and vexatious Motion from the other side, seeking to find out if there is anyone on this side who would want to support a Motion from their side. He has no confidence in the Prime Minister. What is new?

1.35 a.m.

The Member for Couva North was in a Cabinet and had no confidence in his own Prime Minister. *[Interruption]* He accused his own Prime Minister of vomiting in the state room. Do you remember that? They say charity begins at home and ends abroad. With a record like that of no confidence in his own Prime Minister, how could anybody expect the Member to have confidence in the PNM. That is a non-starter. He could have saved us all this time because we already knew he had no confidence in the Prime Minister. Had he confidence in the Prime Minister he would have taken the opportunity to apply for membership of the PNM in 1987.

Mr. Manning: And then we would not have accepted him.

Dr. The Hon. K. Rowley: But it was an option available to him. He chose not to exercise that option but to form his own party. As far back as then he had signalled that he had no confidence in the Prime Minister. That is not surprising because this Prime Minister had the political savvy, the stick-to-itiveness, the quality to take a routed PNM from 33/3 and to tell this country and the Parliament that he was not an Opposition Leader, I am Prime Minister in waiting. When those on the other side made their move to occupy their rightful places in the opposition, he said to them, I am not arguing for Opposition Leader; I am about winning the Government. That is the mettle of the man.

The Member for Couva North clearly did not understand what confidence is about. I had the pleasure of working with this Prime Minister in the Opposition and when some faint-hearted ones asked, “Could we make it?” “Of course”, he said. “Of course we will make it.” We made it as PNM in the Government, we were PNM in Opposition and we are PNM back in Government, and it is the PNM today which provides this country with the positive outlook that was demonstrated this evening in the record as outlined by the Minister of Finance.

Of course, the Member for Couva North will have none of that. He does not know what it means to stay the course. He was WFP, then he was ULF with broken chain, then he was NAR, Alliance, Club 88, UNC and heaven knows what it is

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going to be next, because the Member does not appreciate what it takes to stay the course anywhere to deliver the services to the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

The Leader of the Opposition believes that all he has to do is go to large gatherings of members of our national community who are of East Indian origin and try to insult them and shame them into voting for him. He went to Skinner Park and he saw a large crowd of our nationals come to celebrate and he insulted them by telling them that they are their own worst enemy.

I want to express my total confidence in the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, a person with whom I have had the pleasure and honour to work very closely for the last 8 1/2 years. That confidence is not misplaced nor is it cast in stone. I could lose that confidence. That confidence could be assailed and shaken. You see, Madam Speaker, he is only human, conducting the human business of the people of Trinidad and Tobago and I am sure from time to time he would make mistakes.

From time to time we disagree, but there is a stimulation. One can feel stimulated if one engages in encounter where one has different points of view with someone else and seeks to find out where the middle ground is, or whether one can be convinced to accept the position of the other side, or one can convince that person to accept one's position. That is how the PNM does business.

My confidence in the leader of this party and the Leader of this Government is not cast in stone, so it can wane. I would begin to lose that confidence if I go to Balisier House and the staff tells me that they cannot climb a ladder anywhere there without being interfered with. *[Laughter]*

If I hear my leader refer to anyone of my female colleagues as a Trojan mare, I will begin to lose that confidence I had in him. If my leader finds himself at a function where Trinidad and Tobago is on show in front of the international community and he disgraces his position by seeking to humiliate any person, I would lose that confidence. If my leader takes the position in my party that he is not happy with the idea of an elected general secretary because he wants the power to appoint a general secretary so he could control the party's business, I would begin to lose confidence in my leader. Because that would demonstrate a certain kind of tendency which I would not want to support.

If my leader finds himself in a position where he is called upon to move a motion of no confidence and he does anything near like what my Friend from Couva North did this evening, I would lose all confidence in my leader.

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As I said, it is understandable that he and his grouping would have no confidence in this Government. In fact, I am surprised the Motion did not say that they have no confidence in the country, because from time to time they say so and they demonstrate it. That is the only recital missing from the Motion. He said the Motion did not have many recital; that whereas was missing from the Motion. They have no confidence in Trinidad and Tobago.

When we came here and said that we would take action which would not be without some pain—

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member that he has three minutes more.

Dr. The Hon. K. Rowley: That is plenty, Madam Speaker. Thank you. When we came here and said that we would take action on the energy sector to bring about a reversal in what was happening in that sector, they had no confidence. When we said that we would take action on economic restructuring, they had no confidence. When we said we will float the currency, they had no confidence. When we said we would change the financial year to allow us to make maximum use of the dry season, they had no confidence. When we said that we were moving to get the headquarters of the ACS located here in Trinidad and Tobago, they had no confidence. *[Interruption]*

Madam Speaker, it is not their point of view that matters; it is the point of view of those who see the wood for the trees, people like John Jardim, an eminent person in the business community, head of one of our major banks and he had this to say about Trinidad and Tobago. Of course, Madam Speaker, the Member would disparage the comments of John Jardim, because as far as he is concerned Jardim represents the parasitic oligarchy. But I would tell Mr. Jardim, if he wants to lose that label, buy him some Chinese food, and ply him with some liquor.

1.45 a.m.

I quote from a report in the *Newsday* of May 30, 1995. It says:

"The Managing Director of Republic Bank, John Jardim, told a conference in London, England that Trinidad and Tobago is very attractive to investors. Jardim made this point as he addressed a conference on Trade and Investment Opportunities in Trinidad and Tobago organized by the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry and held in London recently."

He said, and I quote:

"Without a doubt, the business environment in Trinidad and Tobago has become much more inviting to foreign investors as it has for domestic

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investors. Indeed, the fact that the country grew by 4.7 per cent in 1994 and seems on a growth path for several more years, attests to the confidence of investors in the economy."

That was the expression of an economist, a person leading a major bank in Trinidad and Tobago. It is that kind of understanding that we are concerned about. Insofar as there are local and foreign investments, there will be increased economic activity. That means jobs, improvement in the quality of life for our people and opportunities.

Madam Speaker, I would have liked to take the opportunity this morning to say much more to those on the other side, but I want to close by saying to them that there are opportunities for impressing the electorate. They would impress them with their kinds of policies and alternatives; they would not impress them when they fire "caps".

The Minister of Trade and Industry and Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Kenneth Valley): Madam Speaker, I rise for a few minutes to put on the record some information because in the Leader of the Opposition's opening yesterday afternoon, he made complaints with respect to the Hong Kong visit, that I thought I should correct. My Ministry—the Ministry of Trade and Industry—is the ministry responsible for making the submissions to the Cabinet and organizing the visit to Hong Kong.

The Motion of no confidence was filed on May 29, 1995. On June 02, 1995, some questions were filed by the Member for Couva South with respect to the Hong Kong visit seeking information. One would have thought that the Member for Couva North would have waited for that information before coming here yesterday and making certain claims on matters of which he knows very little.

He claimed that there was no advance team and no information is being provided on the Hong Kong trip. He wanted to know whether there was any approval from the authorities. He also wanted to know the role of the Belgroves in all of this.

I would start, first of all, with the issue of the invitation. As you know, Hong Kong is still a colony and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office controls matters relating to Hong Kong. On March 21, 1995, the information that came through from our High Commissioner's Office in the United Kingdom was that the

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office received information from the Hong Kong Government indicating that:

"... a visit from the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago in mid April is most welcome and the Hong Kong authorities would be most happy to assist in drawing up a programme for the visit.

All visits to Hong Kong are categorized as private or unofficial. However a visit by a VIP such as the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago would still be quite formal."

May I inform the House that on our arrival we were met by the Chief of Protocol of the Government of Hong Kong and transportation was made available to us for our entire visit. On leaving, we were met again by the Chief of Protocol. Members would know that we had audience with the Governor of Hong Kong while on our visit. I hope that takes care of that issue.

Further, Madam Speaker, the information came out via the article that Rev. Choi Tai Lai—let me spend two minutes on Rev. Choi Tai Lai. This is a Hong Kong citizen who has been residing in Trinidad and Tobago for quite some time. Therefore, in planning the visit to Hong Kong, given that we were made aware that this person could have assisted us in making arrangements for the visit, we sought his assistance.

Bearing in mind the information concerning our then Honorary Consul and his operations in Hong Kong, obviously, one saw we could not rely on that Honorary Consul to assist us. In any case, we could not even find him, as he had informed us he would have been away for quite some time.

More than that, the Honorary Consul has been there for some eight years and, of course, other than his wine cellar—I am off alcohol and the Prime Minister is on a diet; we were not interested in wine when we were in Hong Kong. We went there on serious business, and that is what we were about.

On March 28, 1995, my Permanent Secretary received the following communication from Rev. Choi Tai Lai:

"Prime Minister's proposed working visit to Hong Kong

As you are aware, I have been requested to assist in contacting business associates and making appropriate arrangements to facilitate the proposed working visit of the Honourable Prime Minister to Hong Kong in mid-April.

To that end, I have already organized a number of activities with various companies and interest groups including banks, insurance companies, petro-

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chemical industries, agriculture and agri-business, among others. The conclusion of these initiatives will be greatly facilitated upon my arrival in Hong Kong, if I were assisted by Mr. Sterling Belgrove and his spouse. Mr. Belgrove has had considerable exposure to the Orient having been invited as a Guest of the Government of the Republic of China recently. The Belgroves are currently engaged in a Special Project with the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs.

I look forward to approval of this request, subject to appropriate clearance with the Office of the Prime Minister, if that is necessary."

I put this on the record to indicate that it was Rev. Choi who indicated an interest in having the Belgroves work with him in organizing the affairs in Hong Kong. I just want to jump ahead and inform this House that, as a fact, the team did an excellent job.

I come next to the Note to Cabinet requesting approval for travel. I just want to read one section concerning the advance party. Yesterday we heard the Leader of the Opposition make the claim that if one were going away one should send an advance party of senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; as though the Government is created not to do that. Let me read paragraph 7 of this Note. It says:

"7. In order to make appropriate arrangements for the visit, it is proposed that the delegation should be preceded by an advance party comprising the Chief of Protocol, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Patrick Edwards, the Chief of Security in the Ministry of National Security, Mr. Mervyn Guiseppi and Ms. Patricia Rochford, Executive Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs."

The team left on April 11, or thereabouts, so that the advance party went some six days prior, bearing in mind that there was Rev. Choi there already, contracted through TIDCO, to make those arrangements with persons he knew, having lived there for some time.

1.55 a.m.

So that here you had these private sector people, acting as consultants going there, but you had your Chief of Protocol who would liaise with the Government of Hong Kong, with the Chief of Security, with an executive secretary, to make arrangements. We needed nothing better in Hong Kong. The arrangements were

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superb. We had two weeks of hard work and the results of the visit have been seen—we have already had two delegations to Trinidad and Tobago.

We returned from Hong Kong, I think it was around the 28th or something like that. We reported—the notes to Cabinet are dated May 2. So that you knew that the team returned and it submitted its report to the Cabinet, informing Cabinet of results of the visit. Of course, the Prime Minister reported to the nation the Sunday subsequent to that.

In that report, the Prime Minister enumerated certain accomplishments of the mission. I would just want to put that in the record also. The mission to Hong Kong—a report which was attached to the Cabinet Note—was successful from a number of viewpoints.

- "(i) *Several firm commitments* by both representatives of the private sector and the public sector have been made to visit Trinidad and Tobago to concretise the discussions which took place;
- (ii) *a co-operative agreement* was initialled while *draft agreements* were exchanged."

We initialled an agreement with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and we initialled it because the final agreement is to be entered between TIDCO and the Trade Development Council for the purposes of co-operation and exchanges between the two countries. It goes on:

- "(iii) the difficulty of processing *applications for visas* emanating from the non-commonwealth Asian countries will be largely resolved."

It goes on at 18(a):

- "(a) A Co-operation Agreement between the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to be represented by the Tourism and Industrial Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago was initialled by the honourable Prime Minister and the Minister of Trade and Industry. The Agreement seeks to improve and expand trade and investment and other economic relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Hong Kong...
- (b) *A draft Co-operation Agreement* between the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and the University of the West Indies and NIHERST on international exchange programmes was exchanged.
- (c) Confirmation of visits by:-

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(i) the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce...."

We are expecting this mission here some time before September. This is in addition to the two missions which were here already. It goes on:

"(ii) the Faculty of Medicine, Chinese University of Hong Kong, which, subject to the approval of the Council of the University, for the purpose of exploring opportunities for co-operation with the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex as the Government seeks to make the complex a centre of medical excellence in the region."

An agreement signed with this university, trying to get some help for Mount Hope, to position Mount Hope to be the centre of medical excellence, given that we are going to have the ACS headquarters here. Our position is quite clear. We want to position Trinidad and Tobago as the centre of this part of the world. Whatever is required to do that, that is what we want to do, because we know that there are certain advantages that would flow directly from that position. It goes on:

"(iv) *the Hong Kong Tourist Association* to examine investment opportunities and to advise on the structuring of a tourism promotion plan for Trinidad and Tobago that will facilitate tourism as an aid to industrial development."

Also, people from the Tourism Development Corporation are supposed to visit us. We also have the performing arts—and there is another investor who is supposed to visit with us very shortly also.

We reported to the Cabinet informing of some of the successes of the visit. So it is quite incorrect to say, firstly, that there is no information; secondly, that there was no advance party; thirdly, that there was no invitation, that we just stormed into Hong Kong as the Member attempted to suggest.

The approach taken in the planning of the Hong Kong visit was in keeping with the whole management approach to which we have grown accustomed under our Prime Minister. It is not only in Government. As Members here stated earlier, way back in Opposition, we who had been around the Prime Minister for some time in the early days, in 1987—can attest to the leadership qualities, the forward thinking that goes with Prime Minister Patrick Manning.

In 1987, things such as the restructuring of Balisier House or the writing of policy papers, were done as early as 1988—the Member spoke about being asked to be considered for a seat in 1988—by August of 1988, most of our economic

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policy papers were already completed, because we knew, looking at what was happening with the Opposition, that we had to do our homework while in Opposition so that whenever there was an election we would not be caught napping.

So that one saw the election on December 16 or 17, where immediately a Cabinet can be installed, and immediately a Government can take charge, putting into effect plans made during the days of Opposition. Before any one of us took up a ministry, there were team-building seminars, spending time understanding our colleagues, learning to work with our colleagues, coming from an inspired leader pointing the way.

These were simple things. I am credited, for example, with this concept of financial centre. That is not my idea; that is the Prime Minister's idea. All I have done is articulate the thing, but it is the Prime Minister who told me to submit a note with respect to the financial centre. There are many such examples.

When one talks about recent events—our leader is not a Prime Minister recently; it is now 42 months—but then there were also the days in Opposition. More than that, the most recent event, of course, is the Ryan poll which was conducted in the period when most people would say that the PNM was at its worst—May 5 to 27—and even then, the population was saying that it still preferred the PNM to any of the alternatives.

Even at our leader's very worst, the approval rating was 49 per cent. So that, this Motion of No Confidence, as all my colleagues have said, is ill-considered and simply, a set-up. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition has not realized that as yet, but he is, in fact, being set up.

Mr. B. Panday: I think you are setting up the Prime Minister right now.

Hon K. Valley: I first want to touch on two points raised by the Member for Tobago West, who is not here, on the divestment issue. The Member spoke on the methanol divestment and made the point that the Government has 24 per cent shareholding that is held in trust by Ferrostaal, but that the dividends accruing on those shares would not come to the Government.

Let me inform the House that that is incorrect; the dividends on those shares would accrue to the Government. More than that, in the agreement with respect to the structuring of the transaction, the Government has an excess profits clause. As the Member said at the time of the sale, the price of methanol was \$122 per tonne. For the new company, we were looking at certain fiscal incentives; we

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were able to agree to an excess profits tax that was triggered at a price of \$142 or above. So that as long as the price exceeds \$142 the Government receives a higher amount of tax revenue. At a price of \$550, therefore, the Government enjoyed quite a hefty benefit from that tax structure. We are laughing.

More than that, it is incorrect to say that we sold out anything in methanol. The methanol plant is to be expanded and the Government attempted to get a joint venture partner who would come with the capital for the expansion, so that one now has a larger facility in which the Government would own not 100 per cent, but 45 per cent of a larger complex.

Whereas for example, the original plant has the capacity of roughly 450 metric tonnes the expanded facility would be more like 1,000 metric tonnes. One can see clearly, therefore, that 45 per cent of the expanded facility would be even larger than what the Government has now.

National Flour Mills: The Member spoke about the privatizing of NFM. Our position has always been clear with respect to NFM, that a profitable company such as that—so key to Trinidad and Tobago—must be divested on the stock market under the concept of widest possible participation. It is there in our manifesto. It has always been our position and that is what we did. When we saw the level of oversubscription of the shares we had to come up with an allocation procedure in favour of the small man, that attempted to maximize not only the number of shareholders, but also the number of shares that we could give to the small man.

While the company at first recommended a hurdle rate of 500 with 25 per cent of the excess to individuals, such that an individual who would bid for 600 shares would end up getting about 525, while someone who bid for 100,000 shares would end up getting very close to 25,000 shares, we took it up as much as possible to satisfy the small man. So that eventually, persons who applied for as many as 1,700 shares were able to get the full allocation. Persons who attempted to get much more can always buy shares on the secondary and stock markets.

We have spoken about the divestment of BWIA on a number of occasions. Members would remember the emotional outcry in December and January. I think the country is now comfortable with our national airline. They realize nothing has changed; it is still our national airline. The only thing that has changed is that no longer would the Government have to dip into the Treasury to provide support for BWIA. At present we are working to forge that strategic alliance with LIAT and we continue to travel hopefully.

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Madam Speaker, I do not want to be too long. I simply wanted to put certain things on the record with respect to the Hong Kong issue. My Friend the Member for St. Augustine had been saying that he wanted to hear about Hong Kong; he has now heard about Hong Kong.

Finally, I had to get this clipping: "PM is *Express* individual of the Year. " I think this is a recognition of the leadership that is our Prime Minister Patrick Manning—the leadership that he demonstrated in Opposition reviving the People's National Movement and a leadership that he continues to show today as the leader of the Cabinet, the leader of the People's National Movement and the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. We can have nothing but confidence in such leadership and my loyalty and commitment to the leader and the PNM is well known. And that will continue.

I believe it was demonstrated out there today. The Member for Tobago West complained that we did not have to bring out those people. Those people came out to show their support for the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and, obviously, the Motion of the Leader of the Opposition must fail.

I thank you most sincerely, Madam Speaker.

2.15 a.m.

The Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs (Hon. Jean Pierre, TC): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak in support of the hon. Prime Minister, Patrick Augustus Manning, our captain, our leader and our colleague. The colleague I speak about is not only in the office on official business, but a leader in and out of office. I speak also on behalf of the constituents of Port of Spain South.

Seven months ago, in part of my budget presentation, I indicated the following to this honourable House:

"We on this side of the House are a team. Why? Because we share the same aims and objectives. We have common goals ... We share, we care, we work together and we stick together. I am not saying that we do not have our problems, but we understand that for us to make that team work, all of us must understand and come on board.

This is the essence of team-building, of a team working together under a charismatic leader."

We in sport are fully aware of the strong links between quality leadership and success. Success has been clearly demonstrated in nearly all the programmes of

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this Government since we came into power in 1991 under the leadership of the Hon. Patrick Manning.

I must also add that the moving of this Motion by the Leader of the Opposition has provided us with an excellent opportunity to inform this honourable House of the achievements of this Government and more particularly, about our hon. Prime Minister, our leader. I am sure that I echo the sentiments of my other colleagues. I am also sure that deep in the hearts of the Members on the other side they, too, feel the same way.

Our vision at the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs is proactive and contributes to national development in the affairs of sport, physical recreation and youth development by providing an effective, efficient service to the people of Trinidad and Tobago. We are confident that our vision fits perfectly with the national vision conceptualized and articulated by the hon. Prime Minister, our leader.

Under our leader, there are new sporting facilities under construction which are being built to international standards and which will give a boost not only to the quantity, but also the quality of skilled players and also make a significant impact on our sports and people. *[Interruption]* One is being built at Tacarigua. We have the sod-turning ceremony coming up at Pointe-a-Pierre, Fontain Coronation Park. The Member has just asked when his turn will come. That too will come.

In the English-speaking Caribbean, we are the only country with an international hockey synthetic turf and in the not-too-distant future, we will be the only country which will have more than five in-door sporting facilities.

The inspired leadership which heads our team has impacted not only on our national programmes, but has also moved my ministry to join our national sporting and youth organizations in making inroads at the international, regional and even local levels.

Trinidad and Tobago has just hosted the Second Commonwealth Youth Ministers' Meeting. Our young people were exposed to some of the issues that were discussed. Trinidad and Tobago is bidding for the cricket academy. We are seeking to have many of our cricketers exposed, and we can be the hub of the cricketing fraternity here in the Caribbean. A citizen of Trinidad and Tobago is the chairman of the Committee of Management for Commonwealth Youth. We have a citizen as the co-ordinator for the formation of a physical education and sports committee. We also have a citizen who is the regional representative on

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the International Committee for Women in Sport. These are just a few of the many activities which will help to position our country as the centre for sport and youth development.

Between 1982 and 1995 the image of Trinidad and Tobago has been significantly enhanced internationally through the achievement in sport of our men, women and young people. None of this would have been possible without the stalwart support of our astute leader, whose holistic vision had a direct impact on the Government and our people. Even the media has carried our leader's message of care for the tiny tots and teenagers.

This concern for youth has been addressed in the allocation of responsibility, the access of the social sector ministries to ensure a strategic approach through their programmes and projects which impact upon the pressing problems of our youth in crisis—leadership, poverty, unemployment, literacy and coping skills.

Programmes for our young people are spread throughout our country at community regional levels. Strong links have been developed between non-governmental agencies and the private sector in an attempt to bring relief in the crisis situations of our young people.

Our leader has already articulated his vision for Trinidad and Tobago and we are the implementers and bearers of his vision. We speak here of a leader with almost 25 years' political experience. He is a man who has served at every level of the political hierarchy. He is a man who works comfortably, securely and efficiently at the top. What else do we expect? I am sure the Member for Couva North is having second thoughts.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our political leader, the hon. Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, is a man who has given the country hope. Hope, when combined with his vision, will lead us along a trusted path to a better Trinidad and Tobago. This is not an easy task because, as we take the path together, we will also be carrying a heavy load. That is the weight of new ideas and ideals embodied in our global vision. No doubt at times it will be a daunting task, but as we face it we can draw inspiration from the knowledge that our leader is forward thinking, a motivator, and competent. Our leader is a success and I can define that—success is a journey, not a destination—and our leader has continued on the journey for a better Trinidad and Tobago.

2.25 p.m.

Our leader, our captain, a man for all seasons, is totally committed to the people of Trinidad and Tobago: all races, all creeds and all religions, regardless of ability or disability. Our leader knows about strategy, and what he has orchestrated here is a strategic move for counterattack against the Leader of the Opposition for bringing such a Motion. In sport, immediate counter-attack may sometimes cause the opposing team to falter. Maybe that is what is happening because as we make the count, we can see who is far ahead.

They cannot catch up with us with respect to the support for our leader because so far, we have scored nine to two and when the final count comes, we are going to be clear winners. I noticed the headlines in the newspapers this morning, we are out front.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me assure those on the other side that this has not been an exercise in futility for them. The lessons they have learnt, and the clear message they have received, is that we are a team standing in full support of our captain. I quote from the *Master Catalogue of Ideas Promoting Personal and Team Excellence*. It says:

"The ability to work together towards a common vision, the ability to direct individual accomplishment towards organizational objectives, is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."

That is a team leader, moving from the top right through making things happen for everybody. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know there are other Members to follow and they would score just as the others did.

The Member for Tobago West mentioned that there are no Tobagonians serving on any of the boards in Trinidad. I should like to inform her that we have persons from Tobago serving on the board of the National Stadium and the boxing board.

I should like to retire here—in the cricketing world we would say declare at this time—because I know that there is nothing else for the Members on the other side to come with. We are winners. I should like to say on behalf of the constituents of Port of Spain South and myself, we have full confidence in our leader and we will continue with him. We are faithful to the end.

The Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Education (Mr. Edward Hart): Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I rise to speak on this Motion before the House this morning, I must say that I am a bit disappointed—and to put it bluntly, vexed.

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Why? There was much build-up and talk about this Motion brought by the Member for Couva North and to my mind, he just stumbled his way through in presenting it. Apparently what I am seeing here is that his Colleagues have no confidence in him; they have sat there all these hours and have not decided to enter this debate. Even the seconder of the Motion has gone his merry way.

While my colleagues the Member for Arouca North was making the point that apparently there is a lack of respect for the leader on that side of the House, some Members showed annoyance, but if as a leader one wants to get respect, obviously one has to show respect to others.

When the Member for Couva North spoke about the Hong Kong issue, he fiddled around with the pronunciation of some names of the Chinese people. I felt that he was making a mockery of the Chinese people or trying to inject some humour into the issue. I wish to reiterate what the Member for Ortoire/Mayaro said, that this is a serious Motion and we are treating it as such. The Member spoke of Hong Kong as a rock turned into a prosperous nation and that we have taken a prosperous nation and turned it into a rock. I take strong objection to that and I will demonstrate why later in my contribution.

The seconder of the Motion, the Member for Oropouche, reading from a clipping in the Trinidad *Guardian*, apparently lost his way in the woods and never got out, so he eventually left. Others then decided not to enter into the debate but still sat there and muttered under their breaths.

The Member for St. Augustine, for whom I have great respect has been asking all along—what about Hong Kong? He wanted to hear about Hong Kong. I do not mean to be rude, but permit me to give a little bit of advice. I think the Member for St. Augustine should be wondering about his constituents. His constituency borders mine and his constituents keep coming to me for employment all the time. They also complain that they are not seeing their representative—apparently he is more taken up with Hong Kong.

My Friend the Member for Nariva, after whom I have always been fortunate to speak, spoke about the roads in his constituency, despite the fact that the Member for Diego Martin East has outlined the seven-year plan for road improvement in this country. There is evidence throughout this country that roads are being attended to, but still there is this complaint from my Friend the Member for Nariva.

The Member for Tobago West said she wanted to see basketball. My information is that she had never played even hopscotch; I do not know how

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basketball comes into this. I am sorry that she is not here, I do not like to speak behind someone's back. Apparently the Members on the other side are not really serious about what is happening.

The Member for Tobago West also asked the question, what are we doing to save the children of the nation. As I said, later on I would say some of the things that we are doing. While this past administration was in office—and the Member was part of that administration—it took some violent actions for a Minister to realize that more attention should have been paid to the young people of this nation.

Before I go on, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just saw a beautiful picture of the Prime Minister being mobbed on his way to the Parliamentary Chamber in today's *Guardian*. Next to him is the new Minister of National Security; he, too, makes a beautiful picture there. There is an old saying that a picture tells a thousand words. I think this sums up this whole issue here this morning.

Nevertheless, I feel the need to remind my colleagues on the other side, of the vision of the People's National Movement, the vision of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago for the people of the country. *[Interruption]* There is a saying, "Tell the truth and puzzle and confound your adversaries", and this is exactly what has happened here throughout the whole debate. I now quote from our manifesto, the good book, again adorned on the cover with our leader, the Prime Minister, against whom the Member for Couva North presented this Motion. It says:

"An investment in our people:

We envisage a society characterised by efficiency and high levels of productivity, where the State fosters a climate that facilitates the development of initiative, industry and entrepreneurship."

The activities of our Government have been directed toward the achievement of the vision we set for the nation, a vision arrived at only after much discussion and consultation with those who are interested in carrying the country forward. We are speaking here about the businessman and the street vender, the man in the street, the teacher, the sports person, from the highest to the lowest, the whole spectrum of people.

The new vision was not concocted by some unrepresentative clique as some people would have us believe. It was proudly enunciated by all groups that make up this rainbow nation. We are extremely confident that vision would take us successfully into the 21st Century.

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2.35 a.m.

The Government, with which I am happy to be associated, has been engaged on an ongoing basis, and not just in recent times, in constructive type activities, some of which I chose to mention here. One, the organization of good government and reform of the public sector. Two, translating of election programmes into development plans for taking the country into the next century.

In this context, examples of such undertakings come to mind readily from the Ministry of Education where I proudly serve as the Parliamentary Secretary with responsibility for training. We have seen the restructuring and re-organization of the Youth Training Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP). By employing new management structures, the Government has ensured the cost effectiveness of the programme. It has become most successful and has got the confidence of the nation's youths.

At present, more than 10,000 young persons apply annually for admission to courses which number in excess of 100. Special mention should be made of the thrust taken in agricultural courses and the welding programme. It is really heartwarming to see how the young people have turned to agriculture. There are also some young women who are involved. This is a healthy sign.

There is the National Apprenticeship Programme. In earlier times the term "apprentice" referred to areas of technical/vocational subjects and, as recently as 1991, serviced the needs and interests of the very few. At this time, we are addressing youth training by way of this approach of over 8,500 persons and offerings in areas such as management, law, engineering and teaching.

The apprenticeship in teaching, which may be likened to the proven monitorial system of the past, has been employed as a means of improving the potential of young teachers. I am sure my Friend the Member for Caroni Central, will attest to the fact that he, too, was part of that system and his teachers I believe came through that system.

Mr. Palackdharrysingh: Mr. Deputy Speaker, may I inform the Member that his attestation is wrong.

Hon. Member: What system did the Member come through?

Hon. Member: He did not come through any system.

Mr. E. Hart: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I stand corrected. At the time he was at school, I believe that most of the teachers went through the monitorial system. I

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went through that system. I did Lower Part One and Lower Part Two. Probably, I am wrong, so I am sorry.

Mr. Palackdharrysingh: Mr. Deputy Speaker, probably, the Member is much older than I.

Mr. E. Hart: Mr. Deputy Speaker, okay, but it does not reflect that—the way we look physically.

We are presently in the third cycle, and reports from the classroom are that it is indeed a more desirable approach to teacher recruitment. As a matter of fact, Ministers of Education in at least two regional governments have actually adopted the model. This is quite a feat knowing that we started it right here.

The National Youth Development and Apprenticeship Centres (Youth Camps) where long ago parents thought if their son was giving a little trouble they should send him to the youth camp, we have changed this around. These camps have also been enhanced by way of restructured staffing and programme arrangement, as well as the approach to day-to-day operations. The result is that in the last graduating population, approximately 40 per cent have secured employment in areas of their training and at their levels of achievement. This is a marked increase over previous groups which average 33 per cent.

We have also seen the retraining of displaced workers. This is interesting because we are here this morning debating a Motion of no confidence in the hon. Prime Minister, leader of the Government of the day, brought by the Member for Couva North. The Member, is questioning the leadership capabilities of the hon. Prime Minister. Well, I will bring to the attention of Members of both sides of this House a project implemented by this Government led by our effervescent Prime Minister. The IDB upon getting wind of it readily aligned itself with the Government's effort and undertook to fund it. I should like to know whether this is confidence or not.

There is the hotel school at Chaguaramas. Under the past administration, this was the nation's best kept secret. Nobody knew about what was going on. Now, its status has been promoted to that of the Hospitality Institute of Trinidad and Tobago. The terms of reference are no longer just to train hotel workers, in addition—and Members may be surprised to know this—it prepares personnel like tour guides and taxi cab operators. They are taught communication skills, deportment, cleanliness, and all the things that go with that because they have to interact with foreigners. Then, there are bread and breakfast managers; all geared for the tourism industry.

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There is a programme which came out of the Prime Minister's Office led by Mr. Kenneth Butcher. Members on the other side would remember that name. He served in the past administration, but I do not think his talents were properly recognized at that time. Coming from the noble profession of coaching, I am very glad that this programme has been thought of. It is designed to reach out to the communities and develop the lives of our young people between the ages of six and sixteen years.

The Member for Tobago West asked what we were doing for young people. Well, these are some of the things we are doing. The programme brings together the young persons to be trained, the coaches, private enterprise and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, led by the Prime Minister. It was his vision. He saw the need for the programme to be developed and implemented throughout the country.

To this end, there are five ministries which impact on and lend support to the success of this venture. They are, namely, Ministry of Education; Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs; Ministry of Social Development; Ministry of Local Government; and Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs.

This programme has identified eight disciplines of sport with which to start. It is through this vehicle of sport that we are able to educate the child by lectures and other things and so develop the other aspects of his being, because we are thinking about the holistic development of the child.

2.45 a.m.

There are programmes being conducted in Diego Martin, Port of Spain, Aranguez, Five Rivers, El Dorado, Sangre Grande, Arima, St. Joseph, Toco, Chaguanas, Couva—I do not know if the Member for Couva North would know about these programmes, because apparently they are not interested—Palo Seco, Point Fortin, Siparia, Arouca and Penal. Later on Fyzabad will come in.

Additional centres are coming on stream as we continue to work in the communities. This is being done very quietly on Saturdays, Sundays and on evenings during the course of the week. We are sourcing the dedicated coaches to work with our young people. We are trying to utilize the talents of the ex-national players in the different communities, together with lecturers, thus converting the free time of the children into productive time.

Through this programme we are going to help some of our young people to become better citizens. Firstly, they will be taking pride in themselves, secondly,

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respect for their fellow beings, and then their community, working upwards in being patriotic to Trinidad and Tobago.

[MADAM SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Madam Speaker, I was speaking here about a programme, the vision of the Prime Minister for young people. We believe there will also be a rippling effect that would surely influence those who may not benefit directly from the programme. This is only another one of the ways by which we hope to assist our young people in their development.

I have outlined to this honourable House but a few examples of constructive-type activities which this Government is effectively carrying out as it focuses on delivering on its promises to the people of Trinidad and Tobago. In no way is it going to be sidetracked. It is on focus. It knows exactly where it is going and it is getting the job done. It must be understood that more than preparing young people for the job market, this Government, led by our illustrious Prime Minister, is also preparing job creators, young people who can go out there and become self-employed and even generate employment for another person or two.

Also to be noted are the positive impacts which undertakings such as YTEPP and the National Youth Development Apprenticeship Centres can have on national circumstances, such as youth and crime, youth and poverty and other aspects of youth displacement.

May I remind the Member for Couva North that the accomplishment of national goals depends to a large measure on effective and efficient leadership and on unity, not divisiveness. That is the ability to go forward as one, not being deterred by red herrings, cliques or splinter groups. Our method is that of a process by which we are influenced under good leadership to achieve national goals.

Whilst the Members on the other side may make much ado about the capabilities of the leader of the Government, and no one would deny them pursuit of their rights, misdirected as they may be, the hon. Prime Minister, as a good leader, is committed to the democratic and parliamentary process.

Hon. Member: Move that paper from in front of you and talk.

Mr. E. Hart: You see, the truth really offends. The Member for Couva North has been here for a considerable length of time; he is an experienced person; he is a veteran in politics, but he is still behaving irresponsibly. And this is going to

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eventually lead to his political demise. If the Member for Couva North does not know it is because right now he is feeding in tall grass.

We want to assure the national community that we over here are a solid unit, a team; we believe in consultation; we listen to one another; we gel our ideas together. It speaks volumes for the well-being of the State and the good health of our parliamentary institutions and traditions, that we can come here and debate this Motion, whatever its demerits. Here we are seeing democracy in action. Here there is no evidence of autocratic behaviour.

There are different styles of leadership and we are democratic in all that we do—the evidence is there. I would wish that the Members on the opposite side would invite debate on their leadership style which is so evident to the people of our country. But such are the limitations of our system of Government. But while the Government must endure the inconvenience of Motions such as this one—although we are really enjoying it—as was said earlier on we are given an opportunity to say the things we are doing. You have heard reports from different Ministers about what is happening in their ministries, and all this must be attributed to good leadership.

Your bodies do not operate by guess. There must be co-ordination. The feet would move; the hands would move; all parts of the body would move, but they must get the message from the brain. This is what is happening here. So you have heard from the different ministries. And we are doing fine.

Even among their own ranks, when challenged by the Member for Chaguanas, they became indignant and indifferent to her. I have great respect for the Member for Chaguanas, and the manner in which she was treated is a matter of concern to me. We must respect the women of this country. I am not sure this is what happened in the case of the Member for Couva North. I do not intend to be rude, but they must listen at times; that is the only way to learn. I am simply saying they must have respect for the womenfolk. *[Interruption]*

Madam Speaker, we speak of leadership. What is this leadership from which the country is benefiting? The leadership of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago is not simply person-oriented; it is group-oriented. If you look on this side of the House you will see people here who come from different backgrounds, who have been in club life; who have been in groups and we know about team work. We have the Member for Port of Spain South, the most highly decorated female in the Caribbean who played a major role in taking Trinidad and Tobago to the top of the netball ladder.

2.55 a.m.

The Minister of Finance, spoke so eloquently yesterday afternoon. If we were all listening we would all be very proud to know that we are on course, and we know exactly where we are going. The Member for Couva North should try to get a copy of the Hansard and have a look at what was said by the Minister of Finance. If he is serious about the country he would join and try to get involved in the initiatives and let us move on. There is a saying that one-fifth of the people are against everything all the time. I am sure the Member is a member of that one-fifth.

We are speaking about leadership that is enabling, it provides for getting things done. We have, for example, the National Self-Help Commission Squatter Regularization Programme, which my Friend the Member for Point Fortin would allude to, for people in the poorer income bracket as defined by the programmes and opportunities which were earlier outlined. Our leadership is flexible. I want the Member for Couva North to understand that. No position is seen as being cast in concrete—for example, reshuffles. We must understand this. Our leadership is constant, ever persevering in the interest of all Trinidad and Tobago.

For the 3 1/2 years I have been here there has been much talk coming from the other side about alienation, discrimination, parasitic oligarchy and all that goes with it. We are concerned about the interest of all Trinidad and Tobago; we are seen by foreign governments as being on stable political ground. Our leadership is loyal to the State and to the people of our country. Our leadership is dedicated to the promotion of the national community irrespective of race, religion, colour or class. In the words of our sacred National Anthem, "where every creed and race finds an equal place."

The Government's leadership is one of decisive steps to bring order from chaos, a chaos inherited from the immediate past administration in which, I might add, some of the Members on the other side played no small part. For instance, there are debts to be repaid, both local and foreign and at present at the Ministry of Education we are dealing with the issuing of bonds to teachers.

The Opposition may live by attacking, always condemning the actions of the Government. If we are not careful we could soon become a country of nit-pickers. Every little thing is blown out of proportion, fault finding is the order of the day. People are walking around thinking they have all the solutions to the ills of the country in his back pocket. We will stay on course. The Opposition will never go that way again as was evidenced this evening. The population is not fooled by such approaches. Let the other side know that they will never prevail.

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Our support for our Leader of Government, the hon. Prime Minister remains firm and unyielding. We recognize our duty of bearing the burden of social responsibility and helping those of our more needy citizens; we recognize that in striving for social justice and in helping those who do not deserve their suffering or carrying an unequal burden, we recognize that in championing reciprocity, in our communities—communities work in partnership. We spoke about that sometime ago and this is what is happening—that in helping other members of communities are likely to be helped in return.

We recognize that in caring we are merely serving as instruments of a higher power that power which has decreed "that to whom much is given from whom much will be required."

We know that in the discharge of responsibilities there are those whose needs would not be immediately met. The discharge of those responsibilities call for decisive leadership, and that is what we boast about, that is what we are proud about, that is what we are comfortable with: a leadership that is not afraid to take risks without being reckless; a leadership that is humble enough to recognize its own imperfections; a leadership that is positive and all-embracing; a leadership that inspires confidence. I submit that we are blessed by that leadership.

The average citizen is benefiting from that leadership, for not only is the political leader and Prime Minister answerable in this House for his responsibilities; he is also answerable to the people of Trinidad and Tobago. We on this side have embarked on a series of public forums where we go around speaking to the people. We have gone to Diego Martin, Santa Cruz, Five Rivers. Just recently we were in Claxton Bay—what a beautiful attendance it was, what a beautiful mix! We visited Fyzabad and we intend to keep going.

Today, the Member for Tobago West spoke about intimidation upon her arrival here. I want to assure her, although she is not here, that nobody had any intention of harming anybody this afternoon. Our people came out to show their support for the Prime Minister and this is just what they did.

I am sure that the Member for Couva North, while he was on his way surrounded by our supporters, did not have time to see the lovely banner coming from Central Trinidad. Many people from Central Trinidad were here yesterday afternoon, and this says something. The Member for Couva North is telling us repeatedly what we should do, whom we should put here. He is concerned about the Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's, my good Friend, who is very comfortable but he is telling us what to do.

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I want to give a little word of advice.

Elections are coming up. I should like to humbly suggest to him that he put the chairman of his party to contest one of the seats that they now hold in Central Trinidad. I believe that would be a fine idea. Anyone of the seats. I know I would not live to see that. *[Interruption]* You could come yourself because you gave me confidence earlier this afternoon. When you began your deliberation you put on such a geriatric display here, I was wondering what was happening. You could come to Tunapuna and talk that rubbish and then you would see what is happening.

Though the people may express their anxiety from time to time I am convinced that this Government, under the leadership of the hon. Prime Minister, is the only vehicle by which national objectives can be attained and the people can enjoy the kind of quality life they deserve. We continue to see improvements around the East/West Corridor. As a matter of fact, all over the country, new housing estates have sprung up.

We have seen the expansion of residential areas, in Bon Air, Arima, St. Augustine, Point Fortin and they are all leading to the revival of the construction industry and provision of more jobs for our young people. The unemployment rate is coming down gradually. If we were not working that could not have happened.

The Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs alluded to the fact that we were seeing the development of sporting facilities. We said in our manifesto that we are going to build facilities, and we are doing exactly that, sticking to the manifesto. We have seen the laying down of the synthetic turf that she alluded to and this is in the constituency of St. Augustine, bordering the constituencies of Tunapuna, Arouca North and Arouca South.

This is going to pay handsome dividends because my information is that it is going to serve the entire western hemisphere because of its locality, and easy access by way of air transportation. Soon we are going to fall in line and we shall be prepared to face international competition. Thanks to the Hockey Association and the Government, hockey has finally found a home, and there are other things to come as the good Minister is reminding me.

3.05 a.m.

Post secondary education and opportunities are being brought in line with the demands of the labour market. A night court is soon to be established at Arima to

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deal with the backlog of cases.. I know some of the legal luminaries are probably licking their chops because more salaries will come in.

More citizens are beginning to feel good about themselves, their children and their future. More and more citizens are beginning to feel as if they have a place in the sun of Trinidad and Tobago. More and more people are beginning to see the fruits of their labour and to derive the benefits of their sacrifices. More and more there is an appreciation of the progress being made by this country under the leadership of this Government led by the Prime Minister. Madam Speaker, the people would wish that we in this august House express our confidence in our Government under the fine leadership of the hon. Prime Minister.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Government is on the right track. I said this earlier and I repeat it. No one will sidetrack us or put us off course. We have been planning and doing things in a structured way. Sometimes when decisions are taken there are doubting Thomases. Madam Speaker, do you remember the sod-turning ceremony for the Brian Lara Promenade? There was an outburst of why not put the money elsewhere. What is happening now? If one walks down there any night, one can see that there is life in the city of Port of Spain. We can now invite foreigners to Trinidad and be proud of our city. Work is continuing apace.

Our Prime Minister's management-oriented approach to national transformation must be warmly applauded. In his fostering of democracy and even-handedness, his love of consultation is evidenced by the series of public forums that we have embarked. We have seen a massive turnaround in the fortunes of the PNM under the leadership of the Prime Minister. through of his ability to plan, organize, mobilize and draw on resources so to do. The PNM did not get back into power just like that. The relatively short space of time of five years that it took us to be back in the corridors of power we must attribute to good and proper leadership.

Before I wind up, I should like to remind the Member for Couva North that the Member for San Fernando East, who is now the Prime Minister, has served in this honourable House for roughly 24 years. He has served with distinction. His character is impeccable. So, for the Member for Couva North to bring such a frivolous Motion saying that we have no confidence in the Prime Minister of this country, is to me bordering on madness.

There is so much more to be said, but because of the time factor, I cannot say it. On behalf of the constituents of Tunapuna and the Members on this side, I

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pledge our loyal support and confidence in the hon. Prime Minister, Patrick Augustus Mervyn Manning. To our Prime Minister, I say—I want to close with the words of a song made famous by Roy Hamilton: "You will never walk alone."

I thank you.

Mr. Ramesh L. Maharaj (*Couva South*): Madam Speaker, we have no doubt that the PNM has collapsed and that this Government is on the way out. It is quite clear from today's debate that the PNM does not have the interest of the people at heart and it does not have the support of the population.

We have heard much today from the other side. It is quite clear that they received instructions that unless they came here, praised and supported the Prime Minister, they would no longer be in the ministry. So this is really a public relations job.

I have never heard such contributions before. The Motion before this House states that having regard to recent events which occurred in the Prime Minister's life, he is incompetent to head this Government; the other side gives evidence of what their respective ministries have done, in support of the Prime Minister's actions, misjudgments and errors.

Do you know what that is, Madam Speaker? It is a confession that he is guilty. They have no defence. I do not know, Madam Speaker, if you know that whilst they were saying that they have so many people outside, 79 per cent of the population, in a poll on TV6, was saying that it supported the Opposition in the move to remove the Prime Minister. Twenty-one per cent supported the Government.

They have come here today and brought bus loads from as far as San Fernando and Central Trinidad. When a Government resorts to that means in order to carry on a debate in Parliament, that is a sign of weakness. They have resorted to getting URP workers to come. As a matter of fact, we have told our supporters whom they have approached to come. They have come, but they are not with them. People are starving. They will take money in order to come here.

The Members of the Government have really not answered this Motion. The only Member who attempted to answer it was the last Member who spoke—the Member for Tunapuna. He started to talk about leadership. He had something written, but he did not deal with the principles of leadership as they applied to this Motion.

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What did the hon. Member for Couva North talk about when he gave the facts and the circumstances surrounding the recent events? He was saying that there was lack of leadership. There were serious misjudgments on the part of the Prime Minister. There were serious errors of judgment. His decision-making process was faulted. He demonstrated a misuse and abuse of prime-ministerial power. He was saying that the facts and circumstances showed that the Prime Minister was incapable of imposing discipline. He was saying that this Prime Minister had handled this matter in such an appalling way which showed that he was devious.

He is the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. What facts did the Member for Couva North state about the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago? They have not answered them. How did the hon. Member for Diego Martin West attempt to answer? By reading from a book on the British Cabinet System. Even what he read there did not answer what the hon. Member for Couva North was saying. This debate was not a debate about the Prime Minister being made Man of the Year in 1991. What does that have to do with this?

3.15 a.m.

This is not a debate about the economy of this country, social development or health. This debate is about the fact that information in the editorials—facts, comments and the views of people of the country—is that the Prime Minister has committed serious errors of judgement, and on that basis he is unfit to be in office. That is what this debate is about. This debate is about leadership and management.

This debate is not about the right of the Prime Minister to allocate or reallocate his Ministers. We all know that! This is about the manner in which he did it—which showed he did not think about it. The Prime Minister acted on impulse and he acted arbitrarily. He dealt with a situation which brings into question his ability to manage this Government.

If we have forgotten the facts let us remember that a Minister of Government—*[Interruption]* I know that they do not like to hear it—was at home when he was informed by television that he was fired; he was demoted and placed in a ministry without portfolio. That is what the Prime Minister said from his prepared speech. Who replaced the Minister, Madam Speaker? Mr. Gift, the Permanent Secretary. The previous Minister was now being allotted a ministry without portfolio.

We have to take this against the background of the events which took place in early January 1995, on the eve of the departure of the prime ministerial team to

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Haiti. What happened, Madam Speaker? The Prime Minister was reported in the newspapers as saying that there was a poll and he had to make fundamental changes to his Cabinet. The Prime Minister, therefore, had the Christmas holidays, January, February, March, April and May to think about making his Cabinet changes.

After five months of deep thought, having a poll, having told them that in the previous occasions there were cosmetic changes, now he had to make fundamental changes. In the poll commissioned by the PNM the hon. Member for San Fernando East had come first, he was number one.

There were comments from the Member for Diego Martin East on the poll, indicating that he did not agree with it. Be that as it may, the fact is that the Prime Minister was thinking, since late December 1994—according to him—to make fundamental changes to his Cabinet. How did he effect those changes? He effected them by going off to Hong Kong and on his return making a statement on the television, firing this Minister as Minister of Foreign Affairs and then placing him as Minister without Portfolio.

The Minister stated that he was not prepared to take up the appointment unless he was sure what his duties were. What happened next? The Minister was then promoted to Minister of Public Utilities. If the Minister was not fit to be Minister of Foreign Affairs, how is it that he is fit to be Minister of Public Utilities? That is the intrigue which has surrounded this matter and the matters relating to Hong Kong; and that is what we are talking about. From those facts and circumstances, can the Members on the other side show that the error of judgment by the Prime Minister does not arise? They should show that, if they can.

We have decided, despite the fact that this debate has been reduced to such a low level—there have been so many personal attacks—that we are not going to be engaged in that: we would keep this debate on a high level on this side. We know that the tactic of the PNM has always been that when it cannot attack the message, it attacks the messenger. This country is filled with cases, instances, events in which people have been politically harassed by the PNM. That is a part of the culture of the PNM.

Therefore, today, we have had situations where the Members on the other side were aware that a matter against the political leader of the Opposition is pending in the courts, and they have made statements about it in this Parliament. I do not want to say much about that, but I am making a statement here, that if the hon. Attorney General reads the papers with respect to the matter that is now before the

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courts he would see the political conspiracy which existed in that matter in order to arrest and prosecute the leader, not as a matter of what anybody said, but as a matter of the evidence which came out in the courts.

As a matter of fact, the police officer who laid the charge has said that he did not give any instructions to lay the charges, those instructions came from Port of Spain. I do not want to say much more about that, but the Members on the other side believe in the presumption of innocence. They said they did not have anything to do with the prosecution, but they come here and seem to know more about the prosecution than some of the people involved. This Parliament and the country would hear much more about the prosecution, the people who were involved in it and the motives involved. I want to tell Members on the other side that if they believe character assassination can destroy the UNC, that only makes it stronger. They must understand that. It is like a glass of water, the more one pushes a cork into a glass, the greater the force with which it comes up.

Mr. B. Panday: They do it to their own, Madam Speaker.

Mr. R. L. Maharaj: Madam Speaker, I have seen what happens to my brother, my colleague, the Member for San Fernando West. From the time he stood up for what he considered to be right, all sorts of allegations were leveled against him smearing his name, that he could have been involved in the worst things.

The time has come for us to try to change the politics of this country. If it is that we believe that Members in this House are unfit to be here, then the appropriate Motions should be brought. If they believe that there are prosecutions to be made, let them bring them.

All of a sudden in this country, anything that the Opposition does is an offence. If a Member of the Opposition is a lawyer and he appears to represent a client, it is a great sin, and there are all sorts of comments undermining the concept of the legal profession coming from the Government benches. This goes down in *Hansard* and those records go to many different places. We have Government Ministers making statements which attack the independence of the duties and functions of lawyers. There cannot be rule of law if we, ourselves, are undermining the laws.

Let us go to the Prime Minister's action. One of the first things I should like to get clear is that the other side has contended that the Motion, as framed, automatically means that it is a motion of no confidence in the Government, therefore since it is a motion of no confidence in the Government, the

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Government itself can come to the rescue of the Prime Minister by stating things which the other Government Ministers have done.

3.25 a.m.

In 1988, the Member for San Fernando East filed a Motion of no confidence in the then Prime Minister.

I read from the *Hansard* of April 29, 1988:

"Now therefore be it Resolved that this honourable House do affirm that it has no confidence in the Prime Minister."

In Opposition, the hon. Member for San Fernando East moved a motion of no confidence in the then Prime Minister because of the Prime Minister's handling of the affairs of the country. He could have moved a motion against the Government, but he did not do that, he moved it against the Prime Minister.

Mr. Valley: Madam Speaker, the Member is misleading the House. The wording of the Constitution suggests that a Motion of no confidence must be in the Prime Minister. In the Prime Minister's Motion there were six grounds on which the Motion was based and it had to do with the performance of the Government. The Constitution talks about a no confidence Motion in the Prime Minister. I think it is section 67 of the Constitution.

Hon. Member: Is it illegal to move a no confidence motion in the Government?

Mr. R. L. Maharaj: Madam Speaker, a Motion was moved against the Prime Minister in 1988 because, as leader of the Government, he was doing certain things and was responsible for doing certain things. As captain of the ship, the Motion was moved against him—the very article I read from, which I got a copy of from the Clerk of the House.

Mr. Valley: The Trinidad and Tobago Constitution.

Mr. R. L. Maharaj: There can be a Motion of confidence in the Government or a Motion of no confidence in the Government. What happens is that a government sometimes use a Motion of confidence in order to try to get support or get the Government together if it is facing major criticism. There can also be a Motion of no confidence in any Minister, including the Prime Minister.

Mr. B. Panday: Exactly!

Mr. R. L. Maharaj: The proposition that there cannot be a motion of no confidence in the Government cannot be correct. Section 77(2) of the Constitution

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recognizes that and it places certain constitutional consequences if a Motion against the Prime Minister succeeds. In other words, since the President of the country selects the Prime Minister from the persons who command the most support in the House of Representatives, if there is a Motion of no confidence by the Parliament and it succeeds, then it specifies that the Prime Minister must either resign or advise the President to dissolve the Parliament.

It states that if the Prime Minister does not do that, the President shall revoke the appointment of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister then has the right that if he was elected to the House as the leader of the party with the most votes and they have lost confidence in him, then the population should have a mandate in respect of that matter. If he does not do it, the President can revoke the appointment of the Prime Minister.

Madam Speaker: It does not necessarily mean the Government, because the President also has the power to appoint another person.

Mr. B. Panday: That is exactly the point.

Mr. R. L. Maharaj: Madam Speaker, it is very significant that when the Member for San Fernando East was debating that motion in 1988, he recited section 77(1) in his Motion. So that this Government knows that there can be a motion against the Prime Minister. It is aware what that Motion entails. But they has decided that in order to divert the debate away from the main issue, they would try to use it as a budget debate and bring reports from their ministries. We were not prepared to fall for that.

The Opposition met in special session during the tea break and reviewed its policy, having regard to what was happening. We were not prepared to enter this debate to answer matters for a budget debate. That is why there was a situation where they went through Member after Member without dealing with the salient issue in the matter.

I want to relate those qualities, which he spoke about of what a Prime Minister should possess, to what has happened with him in this matter. The hon. Member for San Fernando East, when he was talking about the qualities of a Prime Minister, said:

"Mr. Speaker, none of the learned authors on politics or constitutions appear willing or able to define the qualities which ought to be required of a Prime Minister. One author would go only so far as to say that beyond possessing a certain vigour of mind, beyond being industrious, beyond an ability to be

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decisive a Prime Minister must require many other rare and imprecise qualities—judgement, patience and courage."

We hear even from the hon. Prime Minister's mouth while he was in Opposition, that he recognized that necessary qualities of a Prime Minister are that he must be decisive, he must have judgment, and he must have courage.

This Prime Minister is very indecisive. Apart from being asleep, this Prime Minister changes a Minister—appoints a Minister one day, and after 10 days he changes that Minister—then he considers and he says he has judgement so he puts the Minister in a post—Minister without Portfolio—and he makes this big speech saying that the Minister would be able to serve better there. Then what happened? When he got pressure, he reacted and then decided to put the Minister in another ministry.

Is that not being indecisive in a material matter affecting the Government? What image has this Government sent to foreign investors? That this Government is indecisive and its human relations—how it deals with its own Ministers; if it treats its own Ministers in that way, would it be able to treat investors in a humane way? Would they be able to have confidence?

When these matters occur, would confidence not be destroyed or be shaken? He went on:

"And may I add, Mr. Speaker, sincerity, humility and integrity..."

3.35 a.m.

Can it be said that this Prime Minister displayed sincerity and integrity in his decision-making process in these manipulations? Because I think that if you had asked an ABC child to do a job, that child would have done a better job than the Prime Minister.

I cannot understand—and nobody has explained it so far; we have heard many things about how many hospitals, how many this and that; how many people came outside, but we have not heard up to now why it is that Minister Ralph Maraj was moved as Minister of Foreign Affairs. We have not heard that. That is what this Motion is about; it is for the Prime Minister to justify it. And do you know what the Prime Minister has decided to do? He does not want to talk before the Leader of the Opposition; he wants to talk after him.

Hon. Member: Cowardice!

Mr. R. L. Maharaj: That, in itself, is reason why this Prime Minister should resign. Very coward! This Prime Minister should be able to say, "Listen, these

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are the reasons; I have it subjected to scrutiny by this Parliament and people could debate it." But they are all part of a game.

If the conduct of the Prime Minister in this matter has to be justified, he can only justify it by showing plausible grounds why he made a decision to remove the former Minister of Foreign Affairs and put him as Minister without Portfolio, and what he intended the Minister to do as a Minister without Portfolio. What considerations did he have in mind? Then he also has to tell us—

Mr. Valley: Madam Speaker, I wonder whether the Opposition would consider justifying why they moved my Friend, the Member for Chaguanas, from the front bench to the back bench and took her away from all caucus privileges, and so on?

Mr. R. L. Maharaj: Madam Speaker, if he files a Motion about that, we would deal with that. It is no defence for a Government Motion to say, "well, could the Opposition tell us why it did so and why it did that?" No! That is not a defence! What they have to answer—I know he does not like this, but this is what this debate is about—this debate is about the Prime Minister, not him, because he does not know; not the Member for Diego Martin West, because he does not know either; it is the Member for San Fernando East and he has to say, before the Leader of the Opposition speaks, if he believes in accountability and scrutiny of his action.

As I was saying, he has to say why it is he decided to put him as Minister without Portfolio, and what motivated him, after he made that decision; what prompted him; what pressures, if any, he had; what considerations were used in putting this Minister as Minister of Public Utilities. Because what we are dealing with here is error of judgment.

One of the recognized reasons for a Minister, including a Prime Minister, to resign under our system is if he makes a serious misjudgment. If the Minister made a serious mis-judgment, there was an obligation on him to resign. If it is that the Prime Minister cannot justify to this House whether his decision to do it was rational and logical, then the only conclusion that this House can draw is that it was a misuse and abuse of Prime Ministerial power. The question is not whether he has the power to do it—we know that he has the power to do it—he has the power to change one Minister and but another—it is whether he misused and abused his prime ministerial power, and how the population, how the people's representative; how anybody who seriously wants to assess whether he misused and abused prime ministerial power would view it, if he does not put into the melting pot why it is he did it.

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It is known that when people cannot give reasons for doing something it is because they have no reason at all. And if that is so, it is considered a capricious exercise of power; arbitrary exercise of power; whimsical exercise of power. Or if he had the reasons, he is hiding the reasons. If he is hiding the reasons, why would he hide the reasons?

When all these matters were happening, Mr. Overand Padmore was writing. Yesterday afternoon or this morning, nobody wanted to hear about editorials or what the newspapers said, but all of a sudden, the Member for Diego Martin West—from what he said, I did not think he wanted us to read the newspapers at all—was just telling us what was in the newspapers.

Mr. Overand Padmore, in the *Trinidad Guardian* of May 28, 1995 had this to say:

"The Perils of Leadership

Prime Minister Manning has at last achieved his long heralded goal, the restructuring of his Cabinet. That the process by which he has achieved it has been so tortuous, and so traumatic for the nation, and has exacted such a high price in terms of public confidence in him as a leader, should serve as an object lesson to him on the perils of leadership..."

Here it is Mr. Overand Padmore is saying that public confidence in the Prime Minister in the way he handled this matter was shaken. That is what we are talking about. We are saying that he has handled this matter in such a way that this House could lose confidence in him.

Hon. Member: I am not interested in what you have to say.

Mr. R. L. Maharaj: Well I am afraid you would just have to listen, or leave, if you want. That is your prerogative. I did that sometimes when you were speaking.

3.45 a.m.

We are talking here about leadership and management and I would like to refocus this debate because it is about whether the hon. Member for San Fernando East can manage.

Mr. Padmore went on:

"It is simply not possible to read Minister Maraj's speech on leadership and not discern the depth of one's Minister's disenchantment. Ominously, Minister Maraj is not alone in this assessment of the leader."

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Here it is reported in the Sunday *Express* of January, 19, 1995, "Minister left quaking as P.M. drops shuffle bomb." That was the article in which it was reported that the Prime Minister said that he had fundamental changes to make to the Cabinet. I have not seen any release disassociating the Government from this. There was this poll. Here it is that refocussing on this matter, we have the *TnT Mirror*, dated May 19, 1995, 'Talking Point' by Rafique Shah.

"Lord Shango strikes Patrick Manning."

Spirit lash turns P.M. beh beh—I want to believe that a mighty spirit lash from Lord Shango has hit the Prime Minister squarely between the eyes unless the PM has gone completely beh beh.

He talked about other people.

"How else can one explain the host of political errors he has committed over the past two weeks."

Here are errors of judgment made by a Prime Minister in handling the nation's affairs. When one considers that the Prime Minister has decided that he was not going to respond to this debate until after the Leader of the Opposition, one must conclude that that also is an admission by the Prime Minister that he has no answer to our points in this debate and what he wants to do is to defeat the spirit of the Standing Orders, because the Standing Orders gives the discretion to the Minister and gives the right that in any private Motion the Minister can have the last word, if he so desires.

One would have thought that since the Prime Minister was at the centre of this Motion—this Motion involves the Prime Minister, brings his conduct under scrutiny—he would have spoken so that Members of this House, even his own Members would have been able to make an assessment.

The Members made up their minds even before they heard the debate and that shows that the whole system of this Parliament is not functioning in the way it ought to. Here it is Members have come into the House prepared with their notes and scripts and are reading from them even without hearing the contributions, without assessing what has been said; without weighing, they have taken a stand in the matter [*Interruption*] We have not heard, the country has not heard the Prime Minister's explanation.

Mr. Valley: Explanation about what?

Mr. R. L. Maharaj: I am not surprised that that is the attitude. This is not an isolated incident and when one considers the recent events with the backdrop of

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what the Prime Minister has done in similar matters, one has to consider whether the Prime Minister's errors of judgment are really not mere errors of judgment but in effect a fault of the quality of leadership.

Without going into great details—because I want to go to Minister Maraj's speech and put it in the context of leadership. We on this side of the House as the Leader of the Opposition and Member for Couva North has stated, are not relying on the conduct of the Prime Minister with respect to the Pride Project.

But when one considers that this Prime Minister in similar circumstances took over a ministry, on that occasion there was no question of firing the Minister by the electronic media.

You would remember that in July 1994 the Prime Minister took over the Ministry of National Security and the reason he gave for doing so was that there are certain things he had to do at that ministry which nobody else could have done except him. Up to today he has not really told the nation what he had to do, but on occasion when he did that, there was no question of the Minister not knowing what the situation was. The book from which my colleague, the Member for Diego Martin West read, one of the paragraphs stated that the practice is for the Minister to be told of it.

When the Prime Minister took over the Ministry of National Security, you would remember that he announced that he was going to have police on the road day and night and that he was going to have 500 SRPs. About a month later he had to say he did not consider the financial arrangement to have those and up to now we do not have the 500 SRPs.

This is the Prime Minister who did that. That is the Prime Minister who sat down in this Parliament when the question was asked, how many reports were there on the Pride Project and Minister Draper said as far as he was concerned there was one. But the Prime Minister knew there were two reports and he knew that he had instructed Mr. Collymore to abridge the report.

Under this Prime Minister we have had the first police demonstration in this country, around the Red House. The police have marched against the management and the administration of this Government and I read in the newspapers that they are going to march again. Against that background how could this Prime Minister say that he has leadership qualities? This Prime Minister created a post of specialist adviser on crime for the Commissioner of Police before the Commissioner agreed to take it. He announced to the country

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that the Commissioner of Police would take that post. And up to now the post is vacant and nothing has happened. Is that leadership?

What has happened on this matter is that the Prime Minister has been misusing and abusing his power.

It has been shown in his treatment of Minister Ralph Maraj and the Hong Kong matters. He has fallen short and, in his own words, should not continue. This House should express its lack of confidence in the Prime Minister.

3.55 a.m.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member's speaking time has expired.

Motion made, That the hon. Member's speaking time be extended by 30 minutes. [Mr. R. Palackdharrysingh]

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. R. L. Maharaj: Madam Speaker, what the Prime Minister has done is that he has violated the spirit of the Constitution which gives him power. He has the power, but that is not the issue here. The issue is the manner in which the power is exercised.

The Prime Minister in his contribution to the debate on his Motion against the previous Prime Minister held on April 29, 1988, in talking about the then Prime Minister, said:

"This Parliament and the country continued to be abused by this Prime Minister in the ensuing months... The Prime Minister displayed then as he had before, and as he has done since, a complete misunderstanding of or total disregard for the letter and spirit of the Constitution."

Here the Prime Minister recognizes, that where a Prime Minister violates the spirit of the Constitution, it is a ground for having no confidence in him.

We have demonstrated, by using his own words, that he has shown lack of judgment, misjudgment, indecisiveness, insincerity, and from what has happened, some elements of deviousness. It shows in this case. Was Mr. Gift consulted before he was appointed? If he was consulted, was he consulted when he was the Permanent Secretary of the Minister? For how long did these discussions take place? Here is a Minister of Foreign Affairs functioning, and the Prime Minister is undermining the Minister with his Permanent Secretary by consulting or talking with him about replacing the Minister.

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That is deviousness; that is insincerity; that is abuse of power; that is manipulation of the spirit of the Constitution. How is it that we have not had answers to these matters? They have sent the poor Minister out of the country. We operate in this country under Cabinet and the poor Minister had to go on instruction. He could not elect to remain here because he would have been violating the spirit of the Cabinet covenant.

Madam Speaker, is it not strange that in a debate like this, which the Government had notice of and which it considers a vote of no confidence against the Government, a Minister who was the centre of these matters should be allowed and/or ordered to go, and be denied the opportunity of speaking on this Motion? I should like to find out whether before he went he was asked if he wanted to speak on this Motion. Was he given the opportunity to do so?

I am sure the Minister was not given the opportunity because the last time we were having a debate in this House and spoke about leadership, the Minister was anxious to debate. He might have ended up supporting the Prime Minister, but I am sure he would have wanted to make a contribution to this debate.

We see here what they call discipline. We see that the party decided that this Motion was against the Prime Minister and come hell or high water they had to support him and teach the Opposition a lesson. As a matter of fact, when they came in yesterday afternoon, they said we would go until 4.00 a.m. I want to tell them it is midday today. The debate has now begun. The Member for Tunapuna is the only Member who dealt with the issue of leadership.

The Member for San Fernando East, talking about the then Prime Minister, said:

"...the Prime Minister displayed...such wanton disregard, such unparalleled irreverence, that astute observers quickly became alarmed at the serious character flaws which were being revealed."

I would like to apply his words to this debate. Here he said that:

"The large mass of the population, however, remained hopeful that this self-proclaimed Moses was merely impatient to be rid of mischievous and bothersome obstacles so that he could embark on the journey of deliverance."

Madam Speaker, he is talking about a self-proclaimed Moses. This is the self-proclaimed Father of the Nation. I was reading an article in page 3 of the *Express*

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newspaper dated May 12, 1995, by Erica Williams. Probably the Prime Minister can take these words and sleep on them later in the morning. Here it is:

"Erica: I am not worried by Manning

Dr. Williams never sought 'father of the nation' title, daughter says."

All praise to Dr. Williams for not seeking that name. That appellation came at the time of his death. Even before his death people considered him Father of the Nation, but at the time of his death it was recognized generally by the population that he was the Father of the Nation. I would like to say it now. There is no way that the Member for San Fernando East could walk in the tracks of Dr. Eric Williams.

My colleague, the hon. Member for St. Augustine will deal with the PNM's philosophy, its manifesto and what it has done. Since they want to debate we will deal with it. We will deal with what they have done and how they have betrayed the nation with their callous, brutal action. Erica Williams said that she would like to leave a few words for people like Mr. Manning who claim titles:

"I find it unseemly when either the individual or family members lobby for recognition. If it is at all deserving, it must be acquired naturally rather than artificially. As you know part of my father's enduring appeal was his essential humility. I should not want in any way to compromise this attribute ..."

Now, this Prime Minister while in opposition was attacking the then Prime Minister for not being humble. He said that humility is an essential quality and characteristic of a Prime Minister. Here it is that this Prime Minister, having got power—we will not talk about how he wishes to remove the Commissioner of Police, abolish service commissions, and everything that is in his way—has allowed that power to go to his head. Now the Prime Minister has decided that he is the Father of the Nation. He wants to take that away from the people. He cannot take that away; that is why there was rebellion against him. On that alone, the Prime Minister should have tendered his resignation to the President. He could have saved us this debate today.

It is unfair of him to lobby his members to come to this House. Look at how they have made fools of themselves. Can you imagine they had to mobilize the whole country to get the few people who were here today? I ask the people to come to Diego Martin tomorrow night, so that we could tell them what the Prime Minister has been able to get these people to do. They would not be proud of their representatives.

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The Member for Tunapuna has talked about all these regional corporations. This Prime Minister does not hold press conferences. He does not subject himself to answering questions posed by the press. He issues press releases. When was the last time that the Prime Minister held a press conference? When was the last time he allowed members of the press to question him? Is that not abuse of power? That shows the arrogance of this Prime Minister.

They had a meeting on Saturday at Claxton Bay. There were three maxi taxis from the Prime Minister's constituency, San Fernando East, taking people to Claxton Bay. That is a regional meeting with three constituencies. They have now reached the stage where they have to take people to meetings to get a crowd. They cannot get a crowd at any meeting. What they did today is a reflection of what is happening in the PNM. They have lost confidence in their leadership, and the only props of that leadership are the props of the people who are here.

4.05 a.m.

I have some international reports on what exists in Trinidad and Tobago. The New Scotland Yard Report, 1993, found that there was corruption in the police service and the Government had done nothing about it. One of the speakers here, I think it was the Member for Ortoire/Mayaro said that our international image is good as a government.

I have been compiling a number of reports, and the United States Department of State Narcotic Report, 1994 stated that corruption is a continuing problem in Trinidad and Tobago. The United States Department of State Narcotic Report, 1995 also stated the same thing.

The United States Department Human Rights Report, 1995 has stated that there is corruption in Trinidad and Tobago. The Congressional Record dated March 3, 1995 has stated there is corruption in Trinidad and Tobago. Recent report of Freedom House of 1994 shows that there is a down-grading of Trinidad and Tobago in respect of the enjoyment of civil liberties and the rule of law.

We know that there is a Caribbean Human Rights Network Report of 1995 and in that report it was found that the Government abused the rule of law and it was in contempt of the court.

Dr. Rowley: What was that for?

Mr. R. L. Maharaj: For wrongfully executing a man.

Dr. Rowley: Oh! Go to hell.

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Mr. R. L. Maharaj: Sorry? For wrongfully executing a man the hon. Member is telling me, "Go to hell." There is a report of a committee which has consultative status in the United Nations and it is saying that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has breached the rule of law, and a Minister of Government, the Member for Diego Martin West has said, "Go to hell."

Madam Speaker, whatever they have said, they have not been able to really answer this Motion. In respect of the matters which they have related, some of them we would not answer because they are not really relevant to this debate. However, the hon. Member for Tunapuna, this morning gave certain qualities of leadership which he was satisfied that his leader has.

I should like to read what a present Minister of Government, and not a Minister without Portfolio, a Minister of Public Utilities, a senior Cabinet Minister said about the issue. Having regard to all the circumstantial evidence it referred to his leader. *[Interruption]* If it was not the Member for San Fernando East must tell us. I wonder if the Member for San Fernando East could find out whether the Member for San Fernando West was talking about him? Did he try to find out whether the Member had any grouse in the PNM? I do not think the Member for San Fernando East would answer me.

Here it is that Minister Maraj—God bless him wherever he is, I feel sorry for him that he had to be a prisoner, in that he had to go away. I should have thought that the Member for San Fernando East would at least stay awake for this debate since he wanted it to go until 4.00 a.m. *[Interruption]* Is the Member for San Fernando East saying that these qualities of leadership that Minister Maraj was talking about were foolishness?

Minister Maraj said, and I quote:

"...I keep remembering a conversation I had with a friend recently who, as we spoke of life generally, remarked that 'leadership is all.'"

So we agree, and I wish to adopt that. Leadership is all.

"I interpreted his statement to mean; that of all responsibilities, there is none greater or more critical than leadership and so I decided to focus on the responsibility of leadership and to share some thoughts on this matter with you.

Leaders do, indeed have a special and burdensome responsibility and when I speak of leaders I refer to individuals who guide and chart the course at all levels of society. The father or mother in the home is a leader, so is the

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boss in the workplace, as is the chairperson of the community organization and so on.

When we think of leaders we immediately see presidents and prime ministers..."

Here it is that he is focussing on presidents, prime ministers and ministers.

"And we are right. These are our leaders of the highest levels. But let us also remember that every day at every layer of society, in each unit of every country, no matter how small, leadership is either taking place or not happening at all. This is important, ladies and gentlemen."

I should like to adopt those words. He went on to say:

4.15 a.m.

"Leadership is critical to the success of each unit of society. Where leadership is deficient, there is confusion and decline."

That is exactly what we are saying here today. Leadership of the Government is deficient and, therefore, there is decline. If there is decline there would be lack of confidence.

"When leadership is responsible in its strength and clear-sightedness, there is joy, security and thriving. If leaders at all levels know and fulfill their responsibility a nation recovers and prospers."

Do you see why we are saying that leadership is an important matter and where there is deficiency in leadership, where there is a failure to account for serious misjudgments we must presume that there is lack of leadership?

"A leader's first responsibility is to know where he wants to go."

A Prime Minister really cannot know where he wants to go if he is indecisive and if he is continuously making mistakes, and misusing his power. He would not know where to go. You cannot be driving a car without a destination in mind; you would exhaust the passengers with your twists and turns.

"Firmness of belief and purpose is critical to responsible leadership ..."

Mr. Manning: All that is useless.

Mr. R. L. Maharaj: He says all this is useless. You mean, you do not agree with what he said. If you tell me that you do not agree with it, I would stop reading it. Does the Member agree with what Mr. Maraj said?

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"Firmness of belief and purpose is critical to responsible leadership without which you run the risk of being replaced by another driver."

That is the whole purpose of this Motion. The whole purpose of this Motion is that if the Prime Minister cannot justify his actions, then this House can decide that this country should have a new driver. How can it decide? Members can vote in favour of the Motion and go to the polls.

"A leader must know what his unit is capable of achieving. Don't hang your hat where you can't reach goes the old saying. Do not live by trying to keep up with the Joneses. Know what you are. Start with what you have. Build from there painstakingly so that your growth is sustainable..."

That is exactly what we have been saying.

"... and that you are not totally vulnerable to the vagaries of fortune as happened to a hemispheric neighbour recently."

Mr. Manning: Which one?

Mr. B. Panday: Mexico.

Madam Speaker: The Member has five more minutes.

Mr. R. L. Maharaj: Much obliged, Madam Speaker.

"Your goals must be achievable, your growth real and not imagined. It is the responsibility of the leader to ensure that there is a pervasive..."

The photocopy is not clear.

"A leader must be large in heart and mind. There is nothing more crippling than pettiness at the top. I have seen technically competent people, bright and articulate individuals ... with all the possibilities for success but whose failure both as people and as leaders stem from a tragic flaw in their character, a meanness of spirit." Abusive

Do you agree with that? I believe that this Member was writing something for us, later down for the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago and for the future generations of Trinidad and Tobago. Look at the philosophy of this! He could not have got this philosophy unless he was inspired by his surroundings and the circumstances that he had to face.

We see that the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago—and that is the focus of this Motion—has, by his *modus operandi* in these matters, shown that he is careless with the truth. He has been guilty of serious misjudgments and

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statements and ill-considered decisions. In the manner in which he handled himself as leader in the treatment of Minister Maraj, he has displayed deviousness, high-handedness and pettiness.

I urge the Members on the other side to put aside party and to show the country—we know that you would not vote with us. We know that you will support the Prime Minister. But we wanted the history of this country to be shown. If you want to have this Prime Minister you could have him. As a matter of fact, it would be an asset to the United National Congress to have him leading the PNM team in the next election. We were trying to see if you would have used the initiative we have given you to pave the way to give you greater chances for 1996.

I support this Motion and I hope that all the Members of this House display objectivity in this matter.

Mr. Basdeo Panday (*Couva North*): Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister had indicated to us that there were two more speakers. He said that he would speak after me. Should he do that, it would be an act of cowardice.

Madam Speaker: Under what Standing Order would he speak?

Hon. Member: Standing Order 34.

Madam Speaker: All right, I just wanted the authority.

Mr. B. Panday: Traditionally in this House what happens is that the mover of the Motion speaks last, but there is a provision in the Standing Order 34 which says:

"The mover of a motion may reply after all the other Members present have had an opportunity of addressing the House and before the question is put, and after such reply no other Member may speak, except as provided by paragraph (2) of this Order. "

Paragraph (2) says:

"A Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary may conclude a debate on any motion which is critical of the Government, or reflects adversely on or is calculated to bring discredit upon the Government or an Officer thereof."

And upon that basis the Prime Minister will speak. But in my humble submission, that provision was put in there so that the Government would always have an opportunity to defend itself on a Motion against itself.

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4.25 a.m.

This is a Motion against the Prime Minister, and the fact that the Prime Minister chooses to speak last, after the mover of the Motion, is an act of cowardice. That is to say, he wants to speak when there is no one to rebut what he has to say. That, itself, is a sign of guilt. The Prime Minister, knowing that if there is an opportunity for anyone to speak after him they would be able to demolish whatever he has to say, has chosen the coward's way out, and the coward's way out is to speak when no one can reply.

But that does not surprise me in the least. We have raised several issues in this matter. My Friend is right. The time has come now for us to tell them what our strategy in this Motion has been. When we moved this Motion, as the Member for Couva South said, we did not expect that they would vote with us. We are not so naive as to expect that they would vote do so. We knew that when we moved this Motion they would not be able to defend it because they cannot defend the indefensible. We knew that.

Mr. Manning: Do not say that. I have not spoken yet.

Mr. B. Panday: But will you defend the Motion after everybody else has spoken? I am glad the Prime Minister has admitted that nobody has defended the Motion as yet. But the point is, we knew that nobody on that side would be able to defend him, and because they cannot defend him, they will resort to the device of shifting the argument away by talking about their respective ministries. But that would not satisfy the demands of the Motion. So that they would be committed to saying, "Look at how nice our ministry is running; we support the Prime Minister." Our trap that we set for them was that at the end of the Motion they all would have committed themselves to the Prime Minister as their leader, and having done so and given him their vote of confidence, they hopefully cannot change him before the next election, and once they cannot do so, we are sure to win.

We hope that we have sealed the fate of the PNM by having all those Members there—I hope their commitment is irrevocable because we do not want them to back-track on this, for that is going to ensure that we the coming election.

Several points we have raised have not been answered. In fact, each Member sought to give an account of his own ministry. The first contribution we had on the Motion was from the hon. Attorney General who said that he interprets this Motion as a Motion against the Government. The hon. Member for Diego Martin Central thinks that you cannot file a no confidence Motion against the

Government. He has been in politics so long that he believes that if you want to file a no confidence Motion against the Government you have to file it against the Prime Minister. That is his interpretation of filing. That is not our interpretation.

As far as we are concerned, if you want to file a Motion of no confidence in the Government, you file a motion of no confidence in the Government. If you want to file a Motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister, you file that. You can file a Motion of no confidence in a Minister. They cannot, first of all, tell us what Motion we should file. We filed a Motion against the Prime Minister and in fact we have seen that the hon. Prime Minister himself, when he was Leader of the Opposition, had filed a Motion under section 77(1) of the Constitution.

Mr. Manning: That was censure. That is a different matter.

Mr. B. Panday: So that the hon. Attorney General makes it clear from the word, go, that they were going to change this Motion from a Motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister to a Motion of no confidence in the Government. Of course that was the device by which they were going to avoid the question. But I must give him credit, he did attempt in a way to speak about the dismissal of Mr. Lau.

His whole speech was centered around the shortcomings of Mr. Lau, that Mr. Lau was leaving the country's seals and documents, and so forth, in the hands of unauthorized persons; he was not going to be there. But even in so doing, he again demonstrates the incapacity of the Government to speak the truth. For did the Prime Minister not say in his speech on the 7th that the reason for removing Mr. Lau was not his incompetence; not the mistakes the Attorney General was talking about, but to give him another job; to appoint him as something else, and if he had come and crawled, and so forth, they would have given it to him, but now he has not crawled they cannot give it to him so, "Thank you for your services?" Is that not contained in the speech. So that even the brief attempt at giving an explanation with respect to Mr. Lau further adds to the complication and further points to the Prime Minister as being unable to speak the truth.

The Minister of Finance, made no bones about it. I have always had respect for his competence; he knows that. He made it clear that he was going to talk about his ministry and what the Government has done and so forth; that he considered himself part of a team and the team had a head and therefore he had to defend the head—the same device.

However, the Minister repeated so many times that he had a leader and he had confidence in the leader that I was wondering whether he was not trying to

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persuade himself that he had faith in this leader. He must have mentioned at least 15 times. Maybe the gentleman was protesting a little too much. He spoke of unity, how the members of Cabinet were very united, but I shall show you later on how united this Cabinet is.

I found it a little curious, though, that among the listed achievements of the Government was the appointment of Mr. De la Bastide as Chief Justice. I did not think that was the Government's function but maybe it considers it to be so. So it regards that as its success, and I take its word for that. But in order to avoid the issue, the Minister, very cleverly, begins to speak about Chile, about all the good things that are happening in Chile, and so forth. Unfortunately, the Motion is about the Prime Minister dealing with this Hong Kong affair. He said that the Chinese do not like the way our newspaper reports. I am afraid, if that is going to determine whether they are going to come here they had better not come.

I loved his expression: "Land ho". Do you know how many times sailors have heard the words "Land ho" just before there was a shipwreck?

Hon. Member: No. How many times?

Mr. B. Panday: Well, this is one time.

4.35 a.m.

I will not deal with anything the Member for Arouca North said because the Member obviously had decided that he was going on a campaign of character assassination. I can only tell you one thing. When it comes to character assassination, no one is as competent in doing that as those on that side.

As my learned colleague said, once they do not like the message, they set out to kill the messenger. They do not defend the message at all. So do not think I was surprised when he launched a personal, vicious and vindictive character assassination attack—the Member on that side or anybody on that side who launches that on us, does he or she think that surprises us? Every time they get into difficulty that is their style. They did it to their own Member who is a Minister, who is part of this "great team". They launched a campaign of vilification against him.

I just want to read what the Member said.

"New Minister of Public Utilities, Ralph Maraj, said yesterday that an attempt is being made to destroy him publicly. He said that it was clear from what he has been reading and hearing, that the rumour mill is now being made to work overtime to discredit him."

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He accepts the existence of a rumour mill and he also later identifies where that mill is located.

"Maraj was fired as Foreign Minister by Prime Minister Patrick Manning on May 7 and was appointed Public Utilities Minister on May 19, after taking a stand against what many thought was an attempt to demote him. But now he is on leave and is not due to take up his new post before two weeks time. He told *Newsday* yesterday that he was being accused of several things, including being involved in drugs..."

Do you see what you would do to your own team?

Dr. Rowley: Who would do that?

Mr. B. Panday: I will tell you later. I will tell you who he thinks it is.

Dr. Rowley: Who do you think it is?

Mr. B. Panday: I think it is you. You know that.

"of being an alcoholic, and leaking confidential Cabinet information to the media, and of being involved in something called a Chinese immigration scam. "

Do you think I am surprised when the Member for Arouca North talks about Guyanese? He cannot rise above the level of his own party. How can he do that? Do you know something? Now you accused your own Minister that while he was in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs he was involved in a Chinese immigration scam.

Mr. Manning: Who is making that accusation?

Mr. B. Panday: How you so hurry? You were asleep all the time. Go back to sleep until I am finished.

"The Minister charged: 'All of it is lies, lies and more lies as some people seek to find or give reasons for my recent experience..."

'Let those who are spreading rumours come out in the open, rather than make these insidious assertions in the public mind.'

'Let those who want to challenge me, come with facts and not lies, rumour and gossip).'"

I challenge anything the Member says. Anything he just said in this Parliament just say it outside and I would show him something.

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Mr. Narine: You called me a liar.

Mr. B. Panday: I did not tell you anything. The insidious method of spreading propaganda against their own kind. Do you think I would escape? Do you think we on this side would escape?

"Maraj was not present at yesterday's Cabinet meeting but a source revealed that one of Maraj's colleagues in the Cabinet expressed concern over the allegations being made against him,..."

Oh! Do you mean there is a decent one among them?

"...which are seen as being engineered from within the PNM."

That is where the location is. You expect me to reply in this debate to the Member for Arouca North? How can I do that? No, I would not degenerate to that level, I assure you. I do not care. We are talking about a Motion of noconfidence in the Prime Minister and we hear about a foot-path—and the foot-path was constructed under the leadership of the Prime Minister. Somebody talks of a one-way mirror.

And then came the hon. Member for Diego Martin East. Unable to avoid the point we raised and one was: Did the Prime Minister exercise his power in order to install almost in perpetuity a person to act as Prime Minister who was not elected, do you know what the hon. Member said? That Sen. Dr. Saith acts as Prime Minister because he is the Minister of Planning and Development and he knows all the plans and everything that is going on. So that is the continuity that he has.

He engaged also in personal attacks which I have absolutely no intention of replying to—but I agree with him on one thing that he is not worthy to stoop and unloose the latchet of the shoes, not only of the Prime Minister, but anybody else in this House. He avoided the issue which is before the House. Every single Member, even the Member that said, "Strike the shepherd and scatter the sheep".

Mr. Imbert: Who wrote that nonsense?

Mr. B. Panday: Who wrote that nonsense? That was said by the Member for La Brea. "Strike the shepherd and scatter the sheep." That is our strategy. I thought the analogy was very proper indeed. That is to say, he recognize that the Members on that side are sheep. So he is totally correct in his analogy—
[*Interruption*]

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It was unfortunate that he reduced this Parliament to a level of degradation rarely seen—he defended the Prime Minister's claim to be "Father of the Nation" in a very inspiring way. He said the Prime Minister was not really saying he was Father of the Nation, he was aspiring to be Father of the Nation and that answered the question we raised about this. Obviously, the Member did not understand what this Motion was about and he did not know what we were talking about.

He thought that the Prime Minister was right to say that there would be full employment even if he did not mean it.

Mr. Bereaux: That is not what I said. I said that is a laudable objective and if you disagree with that, fine.

4.45 a.m.

Mr. B. Panday: I tend to believe that this Member is practising illegally as a lawyer. I understand his position. I understand that he has a job in a state enterprise. I understand why he must behave in the way he does.

The Member for Barataria/San Juan spoke next and she talked about this Prime Minister being approachable. Do you know what is strange about the hon. Member for Barataria/San Juan? When the hon. Minister of External Affairs was dismissed, she was on his side. She thought he was being alienated and treated badly. Do you know that the moment she became Minister of Health, all that has gone?

That speech which was delivered by the present Minister of Public Utilities at the Raja Yoga Centre was very revealing. Because everybody knows who and what he was alluding to. When one reads that speech, one will see all the hypocrisy of the other side exposed.

I continue from where my learned colleague left off. The Minister, in that speech, said that:

"A leader must be large in heart and mind. There is nothing more crippling than pettiness at the top. I have seen technically competent people, bright and articulate individuals leading organizations with all the possibilities for success ...

whose failure stems from a tragic flaw in their character..."

I continue:

"What is required always is generosity/magnanimity..."

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not arrogance. But you know, as if he was speaking to the party to which he belongs, he said that leadership cannot be cowardly. Sometimes either as leaders or followers we face the choice between being safe, selfish and consequently irresponsible and speaking against injustice, tyranny and corruption.

"And that is why a leader should have courage..."

should never have favourites, should never encourage the formation of cabals and cliques."

What do you think he was talking about? Some airy-fairy organization, or the one to which he belonged?

"A leader must be equidistant from each member of his team. All must have equal access to him and he should be even-handed in his treatment of his people, giving credit where it is due, capable of admonishing and correcting all, allowing to rise, those who deserve to do so only through merit.

Such leadership is hardly ever corruptible. In all organizations small people with small minds seek to ascend to positions of influence, pouring poison into a leader's ears as they seek to advance their own cause...."

That is the theme and this comes from someone who knows, from the proverbial horse's mouth. This comes from someone who has been in the bosom of the PNM where he has had to undergo the torment and the torture of this kind of leadership. When one reads this, one can see a heart and soul crying out to have a just leader.

4.55 a.m.

Madam Speaker, do you see how this debate goes? I moved a Motion against the Prime Minister but he is talking about me. *[Interruption]* Because the hon. Prime Minister thinks I lack credibility, I have chosen his most credible representative to speak on his behalf.

Mr. Manning: He is talking about you.

Mr. B. Panday: No, I am talking about both of you. *[Interruption]* Yes, he knows he is in our organization. Oh! I know how this must hurt because he never thought that someone would have the courage to come out and say what goes on inside the bowels of the PNM. I will read that for him since it has had such a salutary effect on him. It states:

"In all organizations small people with small minds seek to ascend to positions of influence, pouring poison into a leader's ear as they seek to advance their own cause, destroying rivals, perceived or real, in the process."

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Is that what happened to him? Is that the team spirit we are hearing so much about? He goes on to say:

"A leader must be careful about the kind of influence to which he is susceptible,..."

I do not know if what he was talking about was Mr. Choi Tai Lai or whether it was Mr. Sterling Belgrove. I do not know whether he thought that is what was putting his leader off, making him look as though he had a loose screw here and there, or whether he thought the Prime Minister was losing touch with reality. He is probably right about that. If one is not careful about the kind of influence one comes under, one can, in fact, lose touch with reality, which is what many of the editorials and so on are saying. Not me.

"A leader must be careful about the kind of influence to which he is susceptible, remembering always that one's vulnerability to pernicious influences is itself a statement of one's character."

Mr. Maraj did not mention the Prime Minister by name but he described him perfectly.

"A leader must be self-assured and secure. He must be grand in his self-confidence and in the awareness of his role. He should not compete with his followers or any members of his team."

Madam Speaker, Mr. Maraj is actually saying that the Prime Minister should not be envious if he is servicing his constituency and the Prime Minister is condemned in his. The quote continues:

"Leadership is a thousand times larger than any individual performance. He must not be jealous of any of his followers."

Madam Speaker, that was the team, the team which became their theme. This is the team which they talked about and which they are preserving so carefully.

I think the only Member who sought to tackle the issue was the Member for Diego Martin Central. He made a valiant attempt to deal with the matter. He gave dates, but even in so doing he further complicated the matter, he did not end up defending the Prime Minister, but he by impaling him on his own guilt.

One of the Members on that side, I do not think it is the Minister, I do not want to give him credit or even condemnation for things he did not say, I think it was the Member for Diego Martin West who said: What nonsense are we talking about on this side when we say that the Prime Minister did not get any invitation?

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And how can one get an invitation when one is going to look for investment?
[*Interruption*] Well, the Member either forgot what he said or that they did not go there to look for investment at all. Madam Speaker, I will tell him what they went there for.

According to the Prime Minister's own statement which he made on Sunday 7—
[*Interruption*] Exactly, to examine a model, not to look for investment. If they do not know the difference, then they wasted \$2 million. That is what the Prime Minister said in his statement to the nation—not that he had gone to look for any investment at all. [*Interruption*] This argument is about what the Prime Minister went there for. I quote from the Prime Minister's statement to the nation.

"We were also aware that significant growth and development was taking place in many of the other eastern countries and so the Government decided that a delegation headed by the Prime Minister would go to a developed country in the East to experience at first hand some of these developments and to have a first hand look at how things worked in that area and how that pattern of development could influence our own future as a small country of the Third World."

[*Interruption*] That is what the Prime Minister said he went there for. In fact, what he was saying is that he did not have a model, he did not know what he was doing in Trinidad and Tobago, this country's model was not working. The model that he inflicted upon the people of this country was not working, so he had to spend \$2 million to go to Hong Kong to look at a model. Any place in the Far East would have done.

"One would realize, Ladies and Gentlemen, that the Prime Minister and his delegation did not go on visits to many countries in the East but rather, recognizing that Hong Kong is a newly industrialised country and a major financial and business centre in Asia, we felt that all countries in that part of the world will either have a base in Hong Kong, or otherwise have some kind of operation there, and therefore, Hong Kong would be the best place to examine their ideas and approaches and strategies and methods of operation."

The Prime Minister has said it over and over that that is what he went there for.
[*Interruption*] When the Minister told people that he went there for one reason, did he not know what he went there for? Because that was his justification for saying, "How can one expect an invitation to come to someone when he is going

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to look for investment?" As a matter of fact, he was going for information. Let me tell the Prime Minister what he was going for. I continue to quote:

"The Government would like to state that indeed we have accomplished what we set out to achieve and that is we have acquired invaluable information which will help us in the future in our way of looking at the international developments, in our way of looking at the East and in our way of looking at ourselves and understanding how we are viewed in the emerging World scenario."

So, Madam Speaker, even when the Member for Diego Martin East attempted to answer the Motion raised, he made a mockery of what his leader, the head of his team, said on the matter. We learnt one thing from the explanation given by the hon. Minister in the Ministry of Finance and it has put us on the alert—that the expenses of Belgrove and Rev. Tai Lai were paid by TIDCO. And that is something we want to examine: that most of the moneys spent in travel are never reflected in the Government's accounts because they are paid for by state agencies.

Mr. Valley: Madam Speaker, Rev. Tai Lai and Mr. Belgrove are private sector persons. If the Government official is travelling what is done—and the Member ought to know, he was in the Cabinet for some time—is that the moneys come from the Overseas Travel Vote. If there are private sector persons travelling, in a situation as that, one has to make arrangements and TIDCO is set up for that purpose. The whole function of TIDCO is investment facilitation.

Mr. Maharaj: What about the National Gas Company?

Mr. Valley: The National Gas Company has the mandate with respect to the energy sector.

Mr. B. Panday: Who paid for Mr. Julien? Was it the National Gas Company?

Mr. Valley: Yes, the National Gas Company.

Mr. B. Panday: Madam Speaker, when they said it was \$2 million—

Mr. Manning: No, everything was included.

Mr. B. Panday: Was it \$2 million spent by the Treasury?

Mr. Manning: No.

Mr. B. Panday: Well, you will have to tell us more about this. We will ask, Madam Speaker, not today, however.

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My learned colleague was absolutely right: that was just strategy to cause us to lose the votes on this side, but it does not matter because we have succeeded in the purpose of this Motion, which is that we are sure that we are going to face the PNM in the next election.

Madam Speaker, they have not answered any of the points as my learned colleague rightly said. The debate is now over and the Prime Minister may speak. He may also now answer the questions if he wishes, so that we could all go home and nobody would have an opportunity to reply to what he says.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Patrick Manning): Madam Speaker, I should like to thank all the hon. Members on this side, who, in contribution after contribution expressed support in the Prime Minister. I am very thankful for that support. Indeed, that support is necessary if we are to maintain the cohesive team that we consider a prerequisite to the proper governance of Trinidad and Tobago. I thank my colleagues very sincerely.

I also should like to congratulate the hon. Member for Ortoire/Mayaro hon. Attorney General for his contribution to this debate, putting squarely into perspective at the beginning of his contribution the nature of the Motion that is before this honourable House. It is not possible to improve too much on what the Attorney General said; I thought that his explanation was quite comprehensive. Permit me, however, to make one further comment on this whole question of Motions of no confidence.

In my own experience the approach that is taken by various countries in the British Commonwealth varies from country to country. In some jurisdictions a Motion of no confidence in the Government is expressed in that way, as a Motion of no confidence in the Government itself. In other jurisdictions, as indeed it is in Trinidad and Tobago, a motion of no confidence in the Government is expressed by way of a motion of no confidence in the Prime Minister.

Whether the Motion is worded "Prime Minister", as in the case of Trinidad and Tobago, or whether it is worded "Government", as in some countries in the British Commonwealth, the effect is the same. It is a question of which of the models an individual country would choose. It is quite clear that what, in fact, is before us this morning is a Motion of no confidence in the Government. I should add, if only *en passant* that it was for that reason that I found the wording of the Motion curious indeed, in including the name of the Prime Minister. It is most unusual and I suspect that it is a precedent itself.

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If it were that a Motion of no confidence was relating actually to the individual, then it would be possible to move a motion of no confidence in any Minister of Government. Under our Standing Orders that is not possible. What our Standing Orders call for is a Motion of censure of individual Ministers.

Indeed, in the last Parliament when we were in Opposition, we moved two such Motions of censure on two Ministers and in fact, those Motions were withdrawn at the appropriate time, when we thought instead, having regard to the circumstances that confronted us, that it would have been more appropriate to move a no confidence motion in the Prime Minister, as indeed, we did in 1988. One cannot move a motion of no confidence in Minister. If one wants to Censure a Minister one has to move a motion of censure in the Minister.

If, therefore, it was the intention of the hon. Member for Couva North to censure the Prime Minister for actions or activities within a particular time-frame, a time-frame to which he had referred, then the proper course of action would have been to file a motion of censure in the Prime Minister.

The Member for Couva North failed to do that and because he has advanced himself as a legal luminary of some standing, aided and abetted by the distinguished and hon. Member for Couva South, both lawyers of some repute, as they say, I could only come to the conclusion that what was filed was not filed in error, but that indeed they intended to file a Motion of no confidence in the Government.

5.05 a.m.

I think that the Member for Couva North will be well advised to take his own advice. I notice that he is greying gracefully—and there are many people who would like to grey as gracefully as he is—but as his hair gets greyer, the hair of the hon. Member for Couva South gets blacker. This is a point of which the Member for Couva North is advised to take note. It is quite clear that what we are here to discuss today is a Motion of no confidence in the Government.

I have one regret, that is, that the hon. Member for Tobago East did not have the endurance to participate as fully in this debate as I should have liked him to. The reason for that is that the hon. Member for Tobago East is a former Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and, therefore, is in a position to bring a unique perspective to a debate of this nature. He is the only former Prime Minister who sits in this Parliament. His experiences, therefore, are unique. They have to be! He has occupied the position of Prime Minister.

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I now find myself in a similar position. I am sure that he and I, if he chose to be as open, straightforward and sincere as one expects of somebody who held that office, certainly, he could have brought something to bear on this debate. The fact that he chose to absent himself at an appropriate stage is an indication to me—as I am sure it is to many Members, not all, because some can see and some cannot see—that he did not agree with the course of action pursued by the hon. Member for Couva North. I took very careful note of that.

I advise hon. Members of this House and the national community that the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago is not an insecure man. He is very secure indeed. He holds the position of Prime Minister, not only by virtue of the fact that he was elected by the population but by virtue of the fact that he is political leader of the People's National Movement. Those who are not members of the PNM will not understand what that means. The PNM is truly a unique organization. When the PNM elects a leader, it supports that leader. Whenever the PNM loses confidence in its leader, I imagine, because, as of now, that has not been tested—*[Interruption]*.

Mr. B. Panday: What about Karl Hudson-Phillips?

Hon. P. Manning: None of them has been a political leader of the PNM. Those are individuals, and that is the point I am making. What has happened to the gentlemen whom the Member says did not support the leader. There have been three political leaders of the PNM: Dr. Eric Williams, Mr. George Michael Chambers, and I hold the office for the time being.

Any political leader of the PNM must consider himself extremely fortunate to lead a party of that nature. This would not be understood by the Member for Couva North. They do not have the structure that we have; they do not have the constitution that we have, and they certainly do not have the loyalty of the party membership that is characteristic of members of the PNM. No leader of the PNM need feel insecure. I do not. I feel quite secure.

Therefore, when I appoint Ministers, as I am authorized to do under the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago, there is no need for me to be jealous of them—none whatsoever. If a Minister performs well, it reflects on the person who appointed the Minister in the first place. It demonstrates good judgment. That is what it does. Therefore, I listen in amusement when Members on the other side seek to make all kinds of suggestions, particularly related to the hon. Minister of Finance. They do it all the time, and I sit here and smile. What they do not understand is that as the Minister of Finance performs well, the

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Government's image goes up. If the Minister of Trade and Industry performs well—indeed as he is doing—the Government's image grows; and the image of the Prime Minister incidentally.

If any Minister of Government performs well, it is a reflection on the leader and on the Government of which we form an integral part. I am very pleased with the performance of the Ministers of this Government. There is no need to be jealous of anybody, and I am not. Insecurity is not my way of thinking. Anybody who wishes to see it, can see it. It can be seen quite easily in the way I conduct my public affairs.

There are other things that are characteristic. There are rules by which our Cabinet is conducted. Before any Minister took up office, we spent two days in team-building exercises. At the very first Cabinet meeting, things that I had been giving consideration to for the five-year period while we were in Opposition, in the temporary political wilderness, were discussed.

The rules by which our Cabinet operates were established at the first meeting of the Cabinet. We have a very different approach in our Government from what I understand the approach to have been in the Government of which the mover of the Motion was a part. He will never understand that when we sit around the Cabinet table, everybody is free to express whatever view he or she has. He or she is free to agree or disagree with the leader.

One thing he or she is not free to do is to act in a manner designed to undermine either the leader's authority or image. The minute one begins to do that, one undermines the team and it will destroy not only the leader but all of us. We understand that on this side. It cannot be otherwise. If the hon. Member for Tobago East was here, he could have spoken volumes on that.

5.15 a.m.

When we were in Opposition we did many things. We discharged our responsibilities. We criticized the Government wherever we felt the Government needed criticizing. We supported the Government wherever we felt that the Government's actions were worthy of our support. But what we also did, was that we observed very carefully what the Government did right and what it did wrong and we came to certain conclusions at the end of the day.

People talk about the way the Prime Minister appoints and adjusts the portfolios of Ministers. I must tell you that there is a very good reason why PNM Prime Ministers act in a certain way. All have acted in a certain way, and that will

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continue. There is a very good reason but many will not understand if they are not part of the PNM. We have a constitution which is quite explicit in a number of areas. People who are not members of the PNM do not know it, because they have never had cause, or most of them would not have taken the time to sit and understand the PNM's constitution and understand why in the entire history of our party we are seen as the only stable political party in Trinidad and Tobago.

It has to be. We put a high priority on discipline. The day the PNM allows indiscipline to characterize its activities at governmental level, that would be the beginning of the end of the PNM as a stable Government. I assure you that under my leadership that will not take place.

I refer you to page 81 of the PNM's constitution. It is at Appendix IV: "Regulations for the Election of Party Representatives on Legislative Bodies". At paragraph 8 it goes as follows—and it is instructive for aspiring Prime Ministers: I suggest that they take note. The fact that they may never achieve their aspirations is neither here nor there, but they must plan. Page 81, paragraph 8 states:

"Nominees for election to central and local bodies before their presentation to the public, shall give the following undertakings in writing to:"

And listen to what "(a)" says:

"(a) serve in whatever capacity the Political Leader may decide."

It cannot be otherwise. The Constitution of the PNM calls for such an undertaking to be given in writing before you are presented to the public as a candidate for the PNM either at the central or at the local level.

In fact, my understanding is that that is not an original provision of the constitution. But that provision was included in the Constitution subsequently, because of the experiences of party government. As our experiences grow, we modify the constitution of the party to be a reflection of the collective wisdom of the PNM over the life, the history and the experiences of the party.

That was put in there, and it was put in for good reason. Whenever portfolios have to be allocated, a Prime Minister would make the greatest mistake of his life if he puts himself in a position where he begins to negotiate portfolios with any individual. You cannot do that. On the question of allocation of portfolios., it has to be a take-it-or-leave-it situation. It has to be that.

If it is not that and a Prime Minister finds himself in the unfortunate position where he has to negotiate portfolios with individuals, that is the beginning of the

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end of his authority, and his authority, incidentally, is what keeps the Government together, and it is his authority which will dictate the extent or otherwise of the success of the Government in the task that the people of the country elect that Prime Minister to carry out.

Some people may say it is authoritarian. I am saying it is in the PNM's constitution. I did not write it. It was written before I became a Member of Parliament. But those who wrote it were seised of tremendous wisdom. They wrote it on the basis of their own experiences.

So that when you are going to allocate portfolios, you cannot negotiate. It is for that reason the dangers associated with negotiating portfolios that the PNM makes the point all the time that we would be part of no coalition government. That is the reason. Because the minute—the hon. Member for Couva North, I am sure, has a point of view on this matter—you were a member of a coalition government.

The hon. Member for Tobago East, without realizing that is what he had headed, began to run into problems when portfolios were allocated without consulting the Member for Couva North. That is where his problems began. Because the Member for Couva North, as I understand it—and he can correct me if I am wrong—was of the view that had it not been for the input of his party in the coalition, the NAR could not have been in government, and therefore he should have a say in the allocation of portfolios.

It cannot work. The Member for Tobago East came out of a PNM history and therefore understood what this meant, even if those with whom he was unfortunate enough to find himself with in a political bed, did not understand that point. So that all the hullabaloo about how Ministers are appointed; how portfolios are changed, and so forth—the party authorizes that, and it authorizes it, not to make the leader strong or any such thing, or not to make an autocrat of the leader; the party authorizes it so that it can carry out what it promises the population—stable, sound, efficient and good government. That is the difference between the People's National Movement and so many of the other political conglomerations that masquerade as political parties.

Mr. Maharaj: I wonder if the hon. Prime Minister would give way. I do not think that the contributions on this side deny the Prime Minister, the political leader of the PNM, to make allocations or re-allocations. What we are talking about and what we would like his response on is the manner in which he did it and the reasons.

Hon. P. Manning: I would say something else. In all the melee that emerged out of my address to the nation on May 7, you would notice that I have said nothing further on the matter. The minute the Prime Minister gets up and begins to get involved in that kind of calamity and starts to want to give reasons why he did this and that and so forth, and to counter statements that are being made, the Government begins to look unstable.

Everybody else could do it, but the minute the Prime Minister does it, the Government begins to look unstable. Therefore, the Prime Minister who has knowledge in respect of the particular issue and knows why he has acted in certain ways, has to endure all of the uninformed comments in silence. That is what I have done; I do not propose to break that now. It just has to be so. To do otherwise is to prejudice the Government that I lead. I do not propose to do that.

So all who want to comment on it, they are free. It is democracy. People are free to comment on the activities of a Prime Minister. Let them do it. That is fine. I will just endure it in silence, because my objectives are not winning battles. I have a war. Do you know what the war is? The war has nothing to do with individuals in that sense. The war has to do with poverty and unemployment and the standard of living of the citizens. That is what my objective is. I do not propose to be sidetracked with a lot of the side issues that come up from time to time.

Another matter that I notice is becoming very current these days is the appointment of Senators to ministerial office. I am sure you are familiar with the provisions of the 1962 Constitution, as indeed the hon. Member for Couva North is and I imagine my good Friend the Member for Couva South would be equally familiar with them. In that Constitution, the number of Ministers who could be appointed from the Senate was restricted to four. In the 1976 Constitution the restriction was removed. Why was the restriction removed? Because the then Prime Minister who had the responsibility to appoint ministers understood the difficulties that we faced over time in putting the best possible government in place.

5.25 a.m.

It is not by accident, therefore, that the Prime Minister today is free to appoint any number of ministers from the Senate. That position was arrived at after the experience of the country during the period 1962 to 1976, by which time advantage was taken of the opportunity in the establishment of the Republican Constitution, to correct what the then Prime Minister of the country felt was a serious impediment in the proper governance of Trinidad and Tobago.

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It is no mystery. It is not there accidentally. It is there deliberately, and all Prime Ministers have taken advantage of it—my PNM predecessor in office, Mr. George Chambers, took advantage of that and I have taken advantage of it. In fact, the last Prime Minister took advantage of it—and it matters not to what portfolios.

The Constitution says that the Cabinet is formed by two Ministers, the Prime Minister and the hon. Attorney General.

The Prime Minister of the country is the person who commands the support of the majority of persons of the Government side as the law says; it is the Lower House—elected.

It does not preclude somebody who is appointed, from discharging the functions of Prime Minister in the absence of the Prime Minister from the country. The Constitution provides for it and the framers of the Constitution, if they wished that that should not be the case, would have specifically debarred any Prime Minister from making an appointment of that nature. It is not accidental, we gave it considerable thought, I was a Member of the Government in those years. The fact that it was not specifically debarred meant that those who framed the Constitution wanted to allow it because of their experiences in government up to that time.

We are a small country. We are 1.2 million people and there are even fewer of us who are prepared to come into public life to make the sacrifice, not just a financial sacrifice in many cases, but the sacrifice of your character, the sacrifice to your family life and the sacrifice to your integrity. Each is assailed every possible day and, in fact, it is only because I know my integrity is intact, I just do not take it on and I am not going to be sidetracked by those things. I do what I am expected to do; what I have to do, I will do it.

Any Prime Minister has to do that and if a Prime Minister feels that he is unable to do what he has to do, my advice to that Prime Minister is to go home. It will only be a matter of time before he is sent home. You have got to do what you have to do.

We learned from the hon. Member for Tobago East and his Government, which he headed between 1986 and 1991. You would have listened to Member after Member on this side talking about team spirit. Does it not surprise you that so many of the Members on this side have made that point? What is the significance of it? Why is it that Members on this side consider team spirit to be so important?

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When we looked at what happened between 1976 and 1981—in England—and we were first alerted when we were writing the acceptance address of the political leader in December 1987. It was the now Minister of Education who drew our attention—it was included in the address which incidentally was a vision for Trinidad and Tobago—to the Cabinet of Lord Chatham of 1866. There was a comment made on that Cabinet by Edmund Burke—I think that was his name—and while I do not remember the exact quotation, basically it was saying that Lord Chatham had put together in the United Kingdom in 1866 a Cabinet of people who did not know one another. They had nothing in common. They were different people from all over the place; and that is what happened between 1986 and 1991.

Had the Prime Minister of that day taken the precaution at that time—perhaps he did not know it would have been necessary for starting his administration with team-building exercises—the parameters within which each Minister had to operate would have been clearly established upfront and they may still have been in Government today. We saw the problem, we decided to correct it.

I was not a believer in that process. It is the person who, today, holds the portfolio of Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister responsible for public services reform. We discussed this in Opposition. That is the gentleman who convinced me that there was an advantage in that approach, and now that we have gone that way, I thank Almighty God that we did it.

Had we not done it we too, could have ended up in the position the hon. Member for Couva North and certainly, I could have ended up in the position in which the hon. Member for Tobago East found himself. It is not me. Yes, I would have lost, we would have all lost; the country would have lost.

When we formed the Government, it would not be two days: we were doing team-building exercises for one week before we took up any Government. It is absolutely necessary to the conduct of the political affairs of any country and we continue to do it. You have no idea what that does in the terms of building camaraderie among people, where if you touch one, in fact, you touch all. That is how this Government operates.

When Ministers were getting up and talking about the Prime Minister, it was not as some were suggesting on that side, that they were seeking to get something. It is not something to get. They were not seeking to get anything at all. Most importantly, it was the manifestation of a genuine commitment to a team that has

arisen out of an approach that we had sought to take to the governance of Trinidad and Tobago.

It is important that we put those things into the public record.

The hon. Attorney General, went into the details of what has now been described as the Alexander Lau affair. Now that affair has been put into perspective and I am sure that everybody in this Parliament now understands what the facts are. We could have talked about those facts before, but in the atmosphere that was prevailing in the country, we did not think that there was anything to be gained by doing that. We thank the hon. Member for Couva North for bringing this Motion today to give us an opportunity to put that into the record and to explain the facts to the national community.

I thank him very sincerely. Nothing to explain—it was straightforward and everybody can now clearly see that we acted in a manner designed to protect the vital interest of Trinidad and Tobago. That is what we are elected for. Nothing to do with personalities. We do not operate in that way. We acted in the manner designed to protect the vital interests of Trinidad and Tobago and we did it in accordance with established diplomatic procedures.

The other point I need to talk about—because there has been much uninformed comment. I am not here dealing with individuals now. I am dealing with the office of Minister of Foreign Affairs. One of the matters we agreed on at the beginning of our term in office is that portfolios tend to overlap at all times. No portfolio is completely separate and distinct from any other, therefore, you will always find the grey areas and that if grey areas arise, Ministers must operate in such a way that no friction arises. More than that, Ministers must not put the widest possible interpretation on their portfolio. If that should happen then conflict would arise.

5.35 a.m.

Consider the position of the Minister of Finance. If the Minister of Finance puts the widest possible interpretation on his portfolio—if he says that once it is a financial matter, it is a matter for him to handle—then he would interfere in every other portfolio in the Government because every portfolio spends money which comes from the Minister of Finance.

If a foreign minister puts the widest possible interpretation on his portfolio, then he can argue that nothing can happen abroad unless he is involved. That, I assure you, cannot work. If a foreign minister puts the widest possible

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interpretation on his portfolio, then he would argue that the Prime Minister cannot go abroad without the foreign minister accompanying him. We have had a number of visitors here for the year. The Canadian Prime Minister was here. The Canadian Foreign Minister was not here. The Zambian President was here, and if I recall correctly, the Zambian Foreign Minister was not here. Leaders understand that. Foreign Ministers must.

When we were in Opposition, the hon. Member for Tobago East consulted me as Leader of the Opposition from time to time on a number of matters. He could have afforded to do that. He knew he was dealing with a reasonable man. *[Interruption]* I said no such thing. I was consulted on Haiti when in Opposition. In fact, I was kept informed by the then Prime Minister of what the Government was doing in respect of Haiti, so much so that when the possibility of intervention in Haiti arose, we, the PNM in Opposition, took a decision that should that arise when we were in Government, we were prepared to send troops to Haiti. We took that decision and it was announced by me before the election, on behalf of the PNM, at a public meeting held in 1991 on Coffee Street in San Fernando.

The question of an intervention by Trinidad and Tobago forces arose in our term and we had no difficulty in taking a decision. We had taken a decision in Opposition. We sent our troops to Haiti and it represented the first time ever that soldiers from Trinidad and Tobago were called to act in an operation outside our own borders.

Madam Speaker, if you were present, as I was, at Piarco Airport before the departure of these soldiers, you would have seen wives, mothers, children, girl friends, sisters, brothers, aunties, uncles and other relatives, and you would have seen the depth of emotion with which some of these relatives and soldiers were seised, excited as they were to go to Haiti in the first ever operation of Trinidad and Tobago forces outside our own borders.

For them it had to be an unusual experience, and particularly for the group of soldiers who were called upon in a three-month stint to miss Christmas at home, which is a time for the family getting together and to miss Carnival—two important festivals. While everybody else was enjoying Christmas at home and was participating in actual Carnival activities, 51 of our soldiers were in Haiti keeping the peace and contributing to hemispheric stability.

When the Falkland Islands War broke out in 1982 and the British Government decided to act in a certain way, I will never forget the day when Mrs. Thatcher appeared in the Falkland Islands. Do you know what it takes to get from London

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to the Falkland Islands? Because none of the South American countries supported the United Kingdom, they could not refuel in any one of those countries, they had to fly direct with one stop somewhere. Mrs. Thatcher, the British Prime Minister, appeared in the Falkland Islands to tell her troops that the contribution that they were making on behalf of their country was understood, acknowledged, accepted and respected by the Prime Minister and government of the day.

That is not unusual. Whenever conflicts break out around the world, the media all the time show leaders visiting the troops. It means something. If, therefore, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago decided to spend \$69,000 to take a contingent of artistes from Trinidad and Tobago, in a season of goodwill, to entertain 51 members of a troop who were on a mission outside the country for the first time, who had missed Christmas and who were about to miss Carnival, I should like to know what the hon. Member for Couva North has against that.

Contrary to what they say about the Government owing someone who performed in Haiti, none of the persons who went to Haiti was paid. They all did it voluntarily and they were pleased to do it. Not one of the Ministers who went to Haiti was paid a *per diem* allowance. Everyone went on the condition that they go free. We had nothing to eat. Woe betide the armed forces of this country if Members opposite should ever get into power! They do not understand simple basics like that. They have condemned that. I sat here in amazement listening to these hon. Gentlemen trying to score political points—that is what they were trying to do—not understanding that man shall not live by bread alone. This is what happens in a country, but it is much more than that. It is appreciation for what one does. One is risking one's life, not for one's country directly, but for other people—for another country. They are making a sacrifice they did not have to make.

If the least we were able to do was to bring some entertainment to them—and as has been pointed out [*Interruption*] It matters not; we took a contingent of entertainers to Haiti. It was a cultural mission—which cost \$69,000. When the hon. Member for Couva North went to England with his family on the last occasion, I am sure that it cost more than that. What does he have against spending \$69,000 to bring cheer to our soldiers serving in Haiti under military conditions? What does he have against soldiers? [*Interruption*]

He calls it a joy ride. Madam Speaker, do you know what they call a joy ride? We left in the morning and came back the same night. [*Interruption*] Relaxation? Sure! Sure, it was relaxing. The group comprised the members of

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the National Security Council, the hon. representative for the constituency closest to Chaguaramas, representing Teteron where the soldiers are located and the Minister of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs, who organized the mission.

It is easily explained, but hon. Members opposite will find every other construction to put on the Government's activities. It is impossible for hon. Members opposite to take anything for just what it is. We were trying to entertain our soldiers, and not just ours, but soldiers of the Caricom contingent and the American soldiers.

And Madam Speaker, you should have seen the reaction of those soldiers when the Trinidad and Tobago contingent performed. I was so pleased.

5.45 a.m.

Madam Speaker: The hon. Member's speaking time has expired.

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

Question put and agreed to.

Hon. P. Manning: Madam Speaker, I thank hon. Members for their kind indulgence. I did not intend to speak for this length of time but the matters are important. The hon. Gentlemen and Ladies on that side aspire to government and one can never know what can happen in this country should they—God forbid—end up in Government. [*Interruption*] If the Member is harbouring such thoughts, he should perish them. In the same way that they cannot understand what it means to entertain troops abroad, they do not understand what is involved in attracting investment and creating jobs in Trinidad and Tobago.

They would make heavy weather of a \$2 million expenditure for a mission that went to Hong Kong. It never occurred to them that this has been an objective of successive governments of this country and it has not been achieved. It is difficult to do it. Had it not been difficult it would have been done already by other governments. If one has to do it, where one is seeking to raise the standard of living, quality of life for all one's citizens, to create jobs for all who are unemployed, it does not come cheap.

All they do is sit and argue about \$2 million. Madam Speaker, if we had spent \$10, they would have complained about it. What they feel should be done—in fact, I do not know what they think should be done. What I do know is that they

do not understand what is involved. We are not the only country trying to attract investment.

Incidentally, the hon. Member for Couva North spoke about the purpose of going abroad being to look at a model. Yes, we did that. We went abroad to look at the model in Hong Kong. What they do not know is that while we were in Hong Kong a similar mission was in Ireland looking at the model there. We believe the Hong Kong model developed out of an Irish model and there is an organization in Ireland that trains in the model that Ireland used to reach the point it has now reached. Two places, Madam Speaker.

They can ask the cost of the Ireland visit and we will tell them. They do not understand government. All they know is politics and everything is dictated by political consideration, nothing is dictated by the need to provide jobs for our people, but that is what we have been elected to do.

Mr. Maharaj: When the people from Hong Kong came here, what did they ask them? They asked why the locals did not—

Hon. P. Manning: How do you know what they asked?

Mr. Maharaj: Ah!

Hon. P. Manning: Ah! What? What does it do to you? That you know, does it make you richer in any way? Do you understand, Madam Speaker? It is only politics, they do not understand serious governance. They do not understand a government providing for its people.

Mr. Maharaj: Are you providing for people?

Hon. P. Manning: Madam Speaker, I ask the Member to wait and see. Two years ago I visited the United States and I met an ambassador from a country called Mauritius. The Mauritian Ambassador—he was not the Mauritian Ambassador to the United States—said to me that their unemployment was 33 per cent; today it is 3 per cent. Mauritius has been able to reduce its unemployment level from 33 to 3 per cent. The 33 to 3 has a significance in Trinidad and Tobago.

The unemployment level in Hong Kong is 2.6 per cent; in Singapore, Taiwan, Tokyo and in a number of countries around the world it is low. They did not start off with low or effectively zero unemployment—3 per cent is effectively zero—they started off with unemployment levels that were significantly higher. How did they get to that position? They aspired to it and they felt they had the capacity to do it. That is what we are doing in Trinidad and Tobago.

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When I made the comment it was not ill-conceived at all. Other countries have done it. Why do we feel we cannot do it? If the Government of the country feels we cannot do it, then let us go home and let somebody who feels he can do it, come and do it. This is what we are elected to do, that is our objective, to have effective zero unemployment in this country. We are working towards it, and just for the record, we believe that it is achievable in a reasonable time frame. *[Interruption]* I will give more details on that in due course.

In the boom years, on the base of construction and some non-oil business expansion, unemployment fell to 9.8 per cent. It is possible! We know much more today than we did then—I was a part of the Government in those years—I am not saying that we know everything—there are many things we do not know—but we know much more today than we knew then. That is why we set aspirations in that way. We feel we can do it and we are working towards achieving it. They do not understand that!

They do not understand it, although they were in government too. They produced a pretty manifesto, it was the best looking manifesto I have seen in my life: glossy, pretty too bad! I compared that manifesto with what we have in ours and the area in which the difference was most stark, was in the area of the energy policy.

Let me tell you what their manifesto says—they called ammonia, methanol and urea, the mega-projects in which the Government of the PNM had embarked, sunset industries. The then Prime Minister used that language in Barbados in 1987—sunset industries!

They condemned the mega-project approach on which the PNM had embarked prior to their accession to office, arguing instead, that they would shift from mega-projects to projects of a smaller scale in the energy sector whose viability, as the manifesto argues, would be guaranteed on the basis of the domestic market. Talk about being uninformed, Madam Speaker!

Our population consist of 1.2 million people. What size petro-chemical industry could that justify? If one wanted to construct an ammonia plant purely for domestic concerns, what size plant would one construct? *[Interruption]* They do not build them in that size. To have said that, of course, was to misunderstand and to take no cognizance at all of the need to export to earn foreign exchange.

We in the PNM, condemned that approach, and I will say why. Because of that approach, two major plants were built in this country during the years 1987—1991; one in the private sector and the other was to take liquids out of the natural

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gas which had been instituted when the PNM was in office, the other is the CMC methanol plant.

We have made a reversal of that policy and look what has happened between 1991 and 1995—three and a half years later. There is one ammonia plant under construction now, one methanol plant under construction and another to start before the end of the year; an ammonia plant to start by September in the La Brea/Brighton Industrial Estate; an LNG plant to start before the end of the year and the only iron carbide plant in the world is in Trinidad and Tobago—with more to come—already announced by the company. This is what a proper policy in the energy sector has led to in three and a half years.

They have a way of saying that because these projects are capital intensive they are really not the kind of projects on which we can embark; completely oblivious to the reality that in the construction stage these plants provide a significant number of jobs over a two and a half to a three—year period. In the case of LNG it is 3,500 jobs at peak; in the case of an ammonia or a methanol plant it peaks between 1,000 and 1,500. We have singled out the construction sector as a major area for short-term job creation and that is what they are expressing no confidence in.

The hon. Minister of Finance, my colleague the Member for St. Ann's East made a sterling contribution to this debate. He placed into the record what our approach has achieved and the view—not of us—of so many other reputable and knowledgeable authorities on the matter, as to the direction in which Trinidad and Tobago is going and what we have achieved. How many have you put into the record, four?

Mr. Mottley: Four.

Hon. P. Manning: Madam Speaker, I should like to add one more—The *Economist Intelligent Unit*. I could read the whole report but I would not.

"Overview

Political parties are preparing for local and national elections."

Mr. Maharaj: What is the date?

Hon. P. Manning: Madam Speaker, June 1995.

"The economy is on course for a period of robust growth accompanied by stable prices and a current account surplus. Strong revenue in the 4th quarter

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had produced a full—year fiscal surplus, our oil exploration has been stepped up and the LNG project is expected to be given the go ahead."

That is the outlook for Trinidad and Tobago.

5.55 a.m.

This is No. 5.

As many as there are reputable journals which have spoken about Trinidad and Tobago, as many you will find speaking in these terms. The outlook is bright because of what we have done. It is bright because there is a Government in place that took its time to carefully consider what it was about and implemented what it was committed to. The results are seen earlier than expected. That is what Members opposite have no confidence in.

What would they have preferred? Instead of spending \$2 million to go to Hong Kong to try to understand the model used to reduce unemployment to 2.6 per cent and to try to attract some foreign investment, we should have said \$2 million was too much and, therefore, sit there while people experienced high levels of unemployment and frustration in the country with the possible threat that could have to the country's social stability. That is what they would have preferred. It could have cost us \$5 million, it did not matter. When the future of the population is being looked at, one cannot take that kind of expenditure into account.

There is just one other issue I want to deal with. Today, in many of the developed countries in the world there is growth without job creation. Therefore, it would be a legitimate comment to say that notwithstanding the growth we are seeing in Trinidad and Tobago, it may not be a consequence that jobs will be created. Jobless growth is a feature of large economies. That is the first point I wanted to make.

In smaller economies, governments have a much closer handle on job creation. We knew that countries were experiencing jobless growth. Therefore, our strategy for the development of this country was done in two phases; long term and short term. As we seek to have stable economic growth and job creation in the long term, we singled out for short-term job creation, industries that are labour intensive, such as, construction, not just of houses.

The hon. Minister of Housing and Settlement did not speak in this debate but had he spoken he would have told you that the Government's plan for the next two years is to produce 8,200 houses with short-term job creation that operates in the

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tens of thousands—housing construction, public sector building construction, plant construction and hotel construction; Jobs in the construction stage in the hotel industry, that is, labour intensive. Even after the hotels are built, permanent jobs are created on a scale that is not seen in the capital intensive industries.

We are aware of the problem of jobless growth and we have put in place a strategy that is designed to address that. It is on that basis that we can come to the Parliament today and say that whereas the unemployment level was 22.3 per cent in 1988, we closed last year with an unemployment figure of 17.5 per cent. It would fall again in 1995 and 1996. What scares Members opposite, and what they have no confidence in, is that our policies are working. Jobs are being created continuously..

There are a few figures that I would talk about because they asked for figures; I think it was the Member for Oropouche. Not many of them spoke because they had nothing to say—talking about jobs, who are getting the jobs and who are not getting. It was said with special reference to La Brea.

January to mid-June, 1995, La Brea Industrial Estate. How many people were working on that estate from January to mid-June, 1995? There were 412 persons. Therefore, 412 jobs have been created on the La Brea Industrial Estate from January to June, 1995. How many of the people are from La Brea? Two hundred and sixty-two of them. Not only are jobs being created, but the people of La Brea are the beneficiaries of jobs that are created in their area. That does not take into account all the service that develops—food and other things like that.

Madam Speaker, we have come to the end of what has been an historic debate. It is just after 6.00 o'clock in the morning and we came here at 1.30 p.m. yesterday. I know that the Member for Diego Martin Central is not in the habit of sleeping out but I am sure that when he gets home this morning he has no questions to answer. But even if he does, he could say that he has participated in a most historic debate where the Government was tested by the Opposition and where the Government came out with flying colours.

I thank my colleagues for their support. I thank members of the PNM Women's League who were here and who supported us. Also, other members of the PNM, the Baptist Church, and other members of the national community who took time off from their many duties to come out in support of their Government.

I join with my colleagues in rejecting the Motion that has been moved by the hon. Member for Couva North.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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Question put.

The House divided: Ayes: 12 Noes: 19

AYES

Maharaj, R.L.

Panday, B.

Humphrey, J.

Sagewan, Miss I.

Palackdharrysingh, R.

Hanomansingh, G.

Panday, S.

Jurai, K.

Haniff, M.

Hosein, S.

Sharma, C.

Bhaggan, Miss H.

NOES

Valley, Hon. K.

Manning, Hon. P.

Sobion, Hon. K.

Mottley, Hon. W.

Ramrekersingh, Hon. A.

Rowley, Dr. The Hon. K.

Eckstein, Hon. J.

Baboolal, Dr. The Hon. L.

Collis, Hon. K.

Griffith, Dr. R.

Imbert, Hon. C.

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Lasse, Dr. The Hon. V.

Pierre, T.C., Hon. J.

Casimire, A.

Narine, J.

Hart, E.

James, Mrs. E.

Allum, D.

Bereau, H.

Motion negatived.

Motion made, That this House do now adjourn to Friday, June 23, 1995 at 1.30 p.m. [Hon. K. Valley]

Question put and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 6.07 a.m.