

*Leave of Absence**Wednesday, October 04, 1995***HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES***Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

The House met at 1.40 p.m.

**PRAYERS**[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, I have granted leave to the Member for Siparia (*Mr. Sahid Hosein*) from today's sitting.

**PAPER LAID**

Report of the Auditor General on the accounts and financial statements of the Technical Assistance Loan Project for the year ended December 31, 1994 as required by Loan Contract No. 3153-TR between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. [*The Minister of Finance (Hon. Wendell Mottley)*]

*To be referred to the Public Accounts Committee***HOUSE OF PRAYER (INC'N) BILL****Select Committee Report****Presentation**

**Mr. Hedwige Bereaux** (*La Brea*): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I present the report of the special select committee of the House of Representatives appointed to consider and report on a Private Bill for the incorporation of the House of Prayer: Churches, Shrines, Healing and Theological Schools and for matters incidental thereto.

**ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

**The Minister of Trade and Industry and Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Kenneth Valley):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Government is able to answer five of the eight questions on the Order Paper and those are questions Nos. 168, 169, 177, 187 and 195.

*The following questions stood on the Order Paper:***URP Workers  
(South)**

**189.** Could the hon. Minister of Works and Transport and the Minister of Local Government state:

- (a) How many workers are attached to the URP stockpile location at Frederick Boulevard, Union Hall East, Cross Crossing, San Fernando?
- (b) How many URP workers are actually working there?
- (c) Whether any URP workers are engaged in the construction of a private dwelling house near the site? [*Mr. T. Sudama*]

**Association of Caribbean States Conference  
(Cost of)**

**194.** Would the hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs state the cost to Trinidad and Tobago, of hosting the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) Conference in Port of Spain in August, 1995? [*Mr. R. Palackdharrysingh*]

**Agricultural Access Roads  
(County Caroni)**

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

- (i) The names and lengths of all the Agricultural Access Roads in County Caroni?
- (ii) The last time maintenance work was carried out on each such road?
- (iii) The annual cost of maintaining each road?
- (iv) What plans he has for the ongoing maintenance of such roads? [*Mr. R. L. Maharaj*]

*Questions, by leave, deferred.*

**Road Improvement Fund  
(Second Biannual Report)**

**177. Mr. Ramesh L. Maharaj** (*Couva South*) asked the Minister of Works and Transport and Minister of Local Government:

- (a) Would the hon. Minister indicate to this House whether the Second Biannual Report of the Road Improvement Fund Programme has been completed?
- (b) If it has been completed, could he state why it has not yet been presented to Parliament?
- (c) If it is not completed, could he give the reason why it has not been completed, and could he also indicate when the report is likely to be completed and presented to Parliament?

**The Minister of Works and Transport and Minister of Local Government (Hon. Colm Imbert):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Second Biannual Report of the Road Improvement Fund Programme has now been completed.

The presentation of these reports was delayed because it was considered necessary to carry out a thorough check on the information in order to minimize errors. It will be laid in Parliament at the earliest opportunity.

**Executive Director, TIDCO  
(Remuneration and Selection)**

**187. Mr. Trevor Sudama (Oropouche)** asked the Minister of Finance and Minister of Tourism:

Could the hon. Minister inform this House of:-

- (a) The annual salary and other allowances paid to the Executive Director of the Tourism and Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO)?
- (b) The financial value of any other perquisites attached to the above position?
- (c) The mechanism through which the holder of the position was selected?

**The Minister of Finance and Minister of Tourism (Hon. Wendell Mottley):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, in an effort to recruit a suitable candidate for the position of Executive Director of the Tourism and Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO), an executive search was launched in Trinidad and Tobago. This included newspaper advertisements and the use of a professional recruitment agency. This search failed however to unearth a suitable candidate.

Thereafter, consultations were initiated with Trinidad and Tobago nationals holding senior positions in the multi-lateral agencies, as well as overseas Ambassadors. During these consultations, an appropriate candidate, Mr. Kirk Ifill, a Trinidad and Tobago national, who is a permanent member of staff of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), was identified. It was agreed that the IFC would make Mr. Ifill available to assume the position of Executive Director of TIDCO, on secondment, for a period of three years.

It was also agreed that the IFC and the Executive Director would be responsible for benefits such as pension and insurance, while TIDCO would be responsible for the payment of salary at no loss to what he enjoyed at the IFC plus housing and relocation expenses.

It should be noted that TIDCO is responsible for promoting investment through tourism, trade and industry in direct competition with all other nations and

*Oral Answers to Questions*  
[HON. W. MOTTLEY]

*Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

therefore top class performance is required. Its Executive Director holds a first degree in Business, majoring in finance and an MBA with a major in Marketing from the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania.

He is also experienced and well suited to his present position having spent several years at the IFC, the largest and premier project finance company in the world.

His experience in project financing and knowledge of international lending agencies in particular, are proving to be invaluable in moving critical projects forward such as, the proposed Guardian Life, Angostura, Hilton 250 Room Hotel Project in Tobago which is estimated to cost US \$26 million, and the proposed 250 room Neal and Massy Hotel Project, also in Tobago. He was also able to source technical assistance valued at over US \$100,000 from the World Bank to hire specialized consultants for Trinidad and Tobago. These consultants are being funded by grant funds and not by TIDCO or the Government.

**1.50 p.m.**

Within the Caribbean region, countries which employ industry professionals to manage their tourism authority such as The Bahamas, Cayman Islands, US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, have remuneration packages ranging from approximately US \$70,000 to US \$200,000 per annum.

The compensation package of the Executive Director, who is on secondment from the IFC compares with international rates and is as follows:

Annual salary—US \$85,000

Monthly housing allowance, US \$1,000

An Executive Director of TIDCO does not receive any other perquisites.

*The following question stood on the Order Paper in the name of Mr. Raymond Palackdharrysingh (Caroni Central):*

**Amblyomma Tick  
(Threat to Livestock)**

**195.** Would the honourable Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources state:

- (a) Whether the Amblyomma tick has become a threat to the nation's livestock industry?
- (b) If the answer is in the affirmative, would the Minister indicate:
  - (i) How serious is such a threat?
  - (ii) What plans he has for eradicating the deadly tick?

**The Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (Dr. The Hon. Keith Rowley):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to request that the answer be deferred for a period of one week.

*Question, by leave, deferred.*

**WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

*The following questions were asked by Mr. Ramesh L. Maharaj (Couva South):*

**Road Improvement Fund  
(Award of Contracts)**

- 168.** (a) Would the hon. Minister of Works and Transport and Minister of Local Government please state the names of the companies and/or firms which have been awarded contracts in respect of projects under and/or in respect of the Road Improvement Fund?
- (b) Could the Minister state whether officers of his ministry and/or their spouses or relatives have shares and/or interests in these companies? If they do, could he give the names of the officials, the names of the spouses or relatives, the nature of the family relationships and the names of the companies?
- (c) Would the Minister give the particulars of these contracts, which particulars are to include the names of the contractors, the contract price of each contract, and the place the contract was performed?

**Road Improvement Fund  
(Rental of Vehicles)**

- 169.** (a) Could the hon. Minister of Works and Transport and Minister of Local Government state whether the Road Improvement Fund has been used by his ministry for vehicles to be rented for officials of his ministry?
- (b) If the answer is in the affirmative, could the Minister state whether the officers who used these vehicles also collected travelling allowances as public officers?
- (c) Could the Minister give particulars of the rental agreements, giving the names of these companies and/or firms with which these agreements were entered, the sums of moneys paid for each rental and the reason and/or reasons for the rentals?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** There are questions for written answers—168 from the Member for Couva South. Has that answer been provided? [*Pause*] It will be circulated. Also question 169 from the Member for Couva South. Will that also be circulated?

**Hon. C. Imbert:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have the answers here, so I will arrange during the course of today's session, with your permission, to have them transmitted to all Members, including the Member for Couva South.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Please, proceed.

*Vide end of sitting for written answers.*

**DEFINITE URGENT MATTER**

**(South Outages)**

**Mr. Mohammed Haniff (Princes Town):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, in accordance with notice served, I hereby seek your leave, in accordance with Standing Order 12, to discuss a matter of urgent, public importance.

The matter relates to frequent outages to many parts of South Trinidad which have worsened as a result of a recent blowout at one of T&TEC's substations. Sir, the matter is definite because there were two blowouts at T&TEC substations—one at Phillipine on March 15, 1995 and the second at St. Mary's Village, Moruga Road on September 30, 1995. These blowouts are having serious effects on an already poor supply to thousands of consumers, who are already experiencing frequent outages on a daily basis, which result in the loss of foodstuff, and so forth. This is also causing concerns about security both indoors and outdoors, together with other related inconveniences. In addition, there is no water supply because WASA's pumps cannot function during these outages, causing even greater hardships.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the matter is urgent because it appears that these conditions will continue for several months yet, leaving consumers wondering what is taking place and whether any action is likely to take place shortly to solve the problem. The matter is of public importance because, in particular, businesses are seriously affected through regular problems, especially at the Poui Trace and Saunders Trace feeders, and these problems were there even prior to the recent blowout.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, residents in a wide range are affected. Some of those areas are: Moruga Road, Matilda, Naparima-Mayaro Road, New Grant, Tableland, Mandingo Road, Lengua Road, Realize Road, St. Croix Road, Papouri Road, Inverness Road, Princes Town and environs; Cunjal Road, Cumuto Road, Jaipaulsingh Road, Barrackpore, and others. Thousands have been affected for several months now. Things have just got worse with the recent blowout, but these consumers of southern areas deserve better. Therefore I am of the view that the authorities should explain what the situation is.

Thank you very much.

*Definite Urgent Matter*

*Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Member is advised that this matter does not qualify under Standing Order 12. However, he may wish to raise it under Standing Order 11.

**CUSTOMS (AMDT.) BILL**

Bill to amend the Customs Act, Chap. 78:01 [The Minister of Finance]; read the first time.

**ARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS**

**The Minister of Trade and Industry and Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Kenneth Valley):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I seek leave of the House to consider at this time Motion No. 11 at page 9 of the Order Paper before considering Public Business.

*Leave granted.*

**HOUSE OF PRAYER (INC'N) BILL**

**Select Committee Report**

**Adoption**

**Mr. Hedwige Bereaux (La Brea):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this House adopt the report of the special select committee of the House of Representatives appointed to consider and report on a Private Bill for the incorporation of the House of Prayer: Churches, Shrines, Healing and Theological Schools, and for matters incidental thereto.

*Question proposed.*

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Report adopted.*

*Question put and agreed to, That the Bill be now read the third time.*

*Bill accordingly read the third time and passed.*

**ARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS**

**Hon. Kenneth Valley:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I seek the leave of the House to consider Bill No. 1 on the Order Paper before "Motions" under "Government Business."

*Leave granted.*

**TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
FREE ZONES (AMDT.) BILL**

*Order for second reading read.*

**The Minister of Trade and Industry and Minister the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Kenneth Valley):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move,

*Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Bill*  
[HON. K. VALLEY]

*Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

That a Bill to amend the Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Act be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the existing legislation to restrict the application of that legislation to the non energy-based industries. That is the first purpose. Secondly, it is to allow for private involvement or participation in the development and management of Free Zones estates.

**2.00 p.m.**

The Bill also provides for a higher level of transparency or to have clear guidelines with respect to the approval process for the approved enterprises. It seeks also to expand the range of activities that could be undertaken in the free zones, coming out specifically from the Bill, to allow the private sector to get involved in the management of free zones, and so on, because this Bill would provide such an investor the tax benefits, and so on, that is attributable to the free zones.

The amendment would also allow us to provide the benefits of the free zones legislation to the investor who gets involved in distribution, given that we want to establish Trinidad and Tobago as a transshipment hub. I would want to develop on that a bit later on.

Lastly, the amendment is to correct some anomalies in the legislation which were pointed out in the operation of the legislation, and we are taking the opportunity to correct those, the most obvious being the fact that no longer do we have foreign exchange controls, and so on, and therefore wherever there is reference to that we need to delete it.

This Bill is a direct result of the work of the Government reviewing where we are going and what we need to get there. Members would know that the manifesto on which the Government won the election said clearly that the major initiative is to position Trinidad and Tobago, to put it back on a path of sustainable growth. When we looked at what was required to do that, we saw quite clearly that we needed macro-economic balance, a monetary balance which we have been working on since 1992, quite successfully, if I may say so, and we needed the institutional and legal reform. Of course, Members would know that we have been pursuing that with the series of financial legislations, and the institutional reforms, such as TIDCO in place of the IDC, and the TDA, and so on.

Most importantly, we needed to gear the economy for external competitiveness. Again, Members would know of our work with respect to liberalizing the economy to rationalize our state enterprises sector, and also to look at our incentive framework. When we looked at the existing incentive framework in 1992, we realized that there was need for rationalization.



So the non-oil committee, which is the forerunner of the present Industry and Services Committee, at one of its meetings in August 1993, set up a committee chaired by the then Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, Mr. Randolph Kong, who is the present Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance. It was given a mandate to review the Fiscal Incentive Act, 1979, which is the major incentive legislation here in Trinidad and Tobago, the Free Zones Act of 1988 and the provisions relating to the Export Allowance under the Corporations Tax Act, Chap. 75:02.

The committee was also to make recommendations for the streamlining of arrangements to improve efficiency in the administration of the legislation listed at (i) and (iii) which is the Fiscal Incentive Act and the Export Allowance, and to recommend appropriate amendments to those legislations with a view to harmonizing those laws consistent with updated national development priorities.

The committee reported that in undertaking its work, the team reviewed Government's national development priorities as outlined in the *Medium-Term Policy Framework*, the 1992-1995 edition. As you know, every year we come to the House with the *Medium-Term Policy Framework*.

The report noted that:

"Government's main economic policy objectives as articulated in the Medium Term Policy Framework: 1993—1995 identify as its major objective the movement from stabilization to growth during the period. The document identifies an economic growth path for the economy and provides guidelines for the development of programmes for both the Public Sector and the Private Sector. The thrust of Government's policies, therefore, is focused on:

- attaining sustainable growth with significant and sustainable increases in employment;
- improving the framework of incentives to the private sector, thereby enhancing external competitiveness and encouraging export oriented growth;
- further diversification of the economy; and
- establishing Trinidad and Tobago as the Business and Financial Centre of the Caribbean and the Gateway to Latin America.

The national development priority is the creation of a market-oriented economy, with the private sector operating as one of the major engines of growth. In this context the Government intends to play the role of regulator and more importantly facilitator as it seeks to create an appropriate business environment which will allow maximum opportunity for successful private sector effort particularly as it relates to export-promotion activities."

The committee then noted, of course, the number of different initiatives which were already taken by the Government to create the environment required, among them, the reduction of the fiscal deficit. Members would know that the Government has done such a wonderful job especially my colleague the Minister of Finance. The facts are that as at March 1992, the Government was indebted to the Central Bank in overdraft facilities of some \$1.9 billion or \$1,900 million. As at June of this year, not only was that overdraft liquidated, but also the cash position is positive, of some \$453 million.

**Mr. Sudama:** And I cannot get water in my constituency.

**Hon. K. Valley:** That did not come by chance. Members would know that we have been attacking the problems on all fronts; that the resolve that with the Brian Lara Promenade is the same resolve with which we tackled T&TEC or BWIA and with the same resolve we will tackle WASA. That is why we can tell the Member very soon he would be getting water. Whether it is LIAT, BWIA or the Brian Lara promenade, we are tackling the problems head-on—even for that matter, the Tobago issue. We are dealing with the issues and really providing leadership to the country. I am making the point, quite simply, that the committee considered some of the initiatives already taken, such as:

"- Reduction in the fiscal deficit to ensure the availability of credit on the domestic market to the private sector..."

We looked at, for example:

"- Liberalization of the exchange and trade regimes in order to increase the country's competitiveness."

### **2.10 p.m.**

Of course, at that time there were those doomsayers who thought that the currency would get to \$10.00 rather quickly. As a fact, the currency has remained as solid as a rock. It is very small, around the norm. When it was liberalized it was \$4.76; at present it is around \$5.95. One sees the confidence that is back in the economy. Not only is foreign exchange once more quite in a healthy position, but also the unemployment rate is down, business confidence is up and so is investment.

We have seen what is happening with respect to legislative reform in terms of the securities exchange legislation with the deepening and strengthening of the capital market. The committee looked at all of these things and decided that they ought to structure the incentive framework so as to assist in that drive to move the economy into the 21st Century.

The committee reported that it was therefore necessary to support the initiatives already taken by a comprehensive review of the present incentive legislation to ensure consistency with the national development objectives, particularly with respect to employment creation, diversification of the economy, private sector investment both local and foreign in export oriented activities, redirecting the local private sector investment towards export, and the introduction of new and enhanced technology. The committee was clear on the purpose of the incentive legislation. It was going to provide those incentives so as to achieve those objectives.

Perhaps it might be of some use to review the incentive framework which exists at present. The one that is the subject of this legislation is free zones. That provides 100 per cent exemption from customs duties on capital goods, parts and raw materials for use in the construction and equipping of premises and in connection with the approved activity, so that there is total relief in terms of custom duties on capital goods and raw materials that are used in the process.

There is also 100 per cent exemption from import or export duties, taxes on licensing requirements, lands and building taxes, fees for work permits, foreign currency or property ownership restriction. We do not have that any longer. There is 100 per cent exemption from corporate capital gains, withholding and value added taxes.

The Fiscal Incentives Act, 1979 provides total or partial relief from corporation taxes up to a minimum of 10 years, a waiver of income tax on dividends or other distributions, other than interest out of profits derived from the manufacture of approved products. It also provides for loss without limitation. That is for the five-year period after the tax exempt period.

It also provides for import duty concessions on plant equipment, machinery, raw materials or components intended for use in the business construction. It provides for exemption from value added tax for highly capital intensive industries. There is the export allowance which provides tax exemption on sales that are extra-Caricom.

In addition, there is the provision under section 56 of the Customs Act which allows for import duty concessions. A full exemption from customs duty is available in the following areas: agriculture, forestry, fisheries, petroleum, hotel or tourism and the import of machinery, equipment and raw materials. Partial exemption from customs duty is available in the following areas, manufacturing, assembly and processing. In the case of machinery and equipment, it is at zero per cent or 2.5 per cent, raw material input at zero per cent, and parts for assembly at 5 per cent.

As a fact, at the last Cabinet meeting, the Government confirmed a decision to have inputs into manufacturing exempt from duty. Now there is a zero rate of

duty on inputs into manufacturing. More than that, to avoid any delays or sleight of hand, the Government has also decided to allow zero rate of duties for the import of cloth, paper or wood products. Those items even when used as a final product attracted a 5 per cent rate of duty.

However, those products may be used in the manufacturing process or as a final product, for example, a consumer importing a piece of cloth to make a dress or the retailer importing cloth for sale to the public. The problem is that a garment manufacturer may also be a cloth retailer, so that if one were to have left that 5 per cent for the non-manufacturer, then that garment manufacturer could then have imported cloth duty free and retailed it, rather than put it into the manufacturing process. Of course, that would have provided some unfair competition against those sole retailers who would have had to pay 5 per cent on import of cloth, the raw material. To avoid that and give a benefit to the consumer, the Government thought it simpler to have those items tax exempt also.

At present, a manufacturer may qualify for incentives under the Fiscal Incentives Act 1979, the export allowance scenario, or the free zones regime. In the analysis by the committee, it saw quite clearly that a particular manufacturer geared to export could have qualified for benefit under any of the three regimes. The feeling was that such a manufacturer would have chosen the free zones regime since it was the most attractive. It provided the "in perpetuity" tax holiday for profits at corporation tax as well as income tax via dividends.

### **2.20 p.m.**

So, in undertaking the assignment, the team determined that the free zones regime ought to be restricted to those firms which would not come, were it not for the free zones legislation. In other words, they are restricting the free zones regime to those particular firms that would come only because there is that regime in place. The team reported that:

"In view of the generous incentives offered to industries in free zones, it was important to limit the industries capable of qualifying under the Free Zones Act to those which would not otherwise find it attractive to establish in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Free Zones Act should therefore exclude industries involving the exploration for and production of petroleum, natural gas and certain petrochemicals and industries in which petroleum or natural gas is a major input even if used as a fuel, involving investment in excess of US \$50 million. Industries such as iron and steel, aluminium, methanol and urea would therefore not qualify."

One sees, therefore, that the committee was clear that we need to have an incentive regime given where we want to go, but that we must not give gifts. We

have the fiscal incentive legislation, we have the export allowance. The free zones, because of their lucrative benefits, should be restricted to firms which would not otherwise come to Trinidad and Tobago.

Some of the other recommendations of the committee do not have anything to do with the free zones, but since the committee's mandate was to look at the total incentive framework in Trinidad and Tobago, I think I should read the main recommendations.

"The second highest level of incentives is afforded under the Fiscal Incentives Act. It is recommended that the maximum tax holiday period be increased from 10 to 15 years and that exemption be granted from all import duties on inputs."

Members would know that we have now taken that decision to remove import duties on inputs.

"The Fiscal Incentives Act provides inter alia, for incentives to industries such as the production of iron and steel, aluminium, petrochemicals and other heavy industries using large quantities of petroleum or natural gas, such as those recommended for exclusion from free zones."

So those industries—the energy-based industries—which will not now qualify under the free-zone legislation, would qualify under the fiscal incentive legislation. You will note that the committee is recommending that we extend the maximum period from 10 years to 15 years. Remember, under the free-zones legislation, the benefit is in perpetuity. They are saying that we must give even the energy-based industries an incentive by extending it a bit, but they must not qualify for no tax in perpetuity.

"The Fiscal Incentives Act should continue to exclude products of established industries in Trinidad and Tobago as it should be targeted at the creation of new industries."

Again, under the Fiscal Incentives Act, one may not qualify, if already there is production equivalent to 60 per cent of market demand.

The committee looked at the export allowance.

"The export allowance should be targeted at other types of manufacturers and should primarily be a tool to encourage exports by companies not receiving other incentives ..."

The point is that to the extent that we want to gear our economy to export competitiveness, we must provide incentives for the firm which is not now in exports or in exports only in the Caricom area, to move them beyond Caricom, by

restricting the export allowance or so structuring it that it would be of advantage only to these firms.

"It would provide incentives to established industries which export their product to countries other than Caricom countries but would exclude those products approved under the Fiscal Incentives Act and products which are recommended for exclusion under the Free Zones Act. Re-exports are also ineligible for the export allowance but incentives may be granted under the Free Zones Act."

The committee concluded:

"Should the recommendations in this Report be accepted and implemented, the Team is confident that the following benefits would ensue:

- (1) There would be clear guidelines in the legislation which would leave no doubt as to which incentives would apply in relation to a particular investment;
- (2) The proposed amendments to the Free Zones Act to remove ambiguities and to provide for improved benefits to investors and enhanced supervisory powers of the Free Zones Company, as well as the proposals for streamlining the administrative arrangements between free zones and Customs, would give the Company the framework to implement and administer an effective free zones programme."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to make the point that this legislation is not expanding free-zones; it is restricting the application of the free zones regime. We are taking out the energy sector, which is roughly 30 per cent of the economy. That is the first thing we are doing. That is the main purpose of the legislation.

The Government, when it looked at the investment framework had different choices. It could have abandoned the free zones by repealing the legislation. It could have left it as it stood, or positioned it, given what we would like to do. We see clearly that after looking at it, the committee is saying that we should reposition the regime to cater only for those companies which would not come other than for the free zones legislation.

There is the other area I mentioned. We have expanded the legislation to allow the private sector to get involved in managing and operating our free zone. Given Government's intent to remove itself as much as possible from direct involvement in the economy, allowing the private sector to invest, with the Government acting more as a facilitator, it is now putting in place a structure so that the private sector would put its capital on the ground for the free zones.

We are providing in this amending legislation the tax benefits that an approved enterprise obtains in such a situation. Further, one of the initiatives of the Government is to pursue the transshipment hub concept, meaning that we can position our country as a distribution outlet into and out of South America. One knows that that is one of the five initiatives on which this Government is working.

**2.30 p.m.**

Because we want to do that, we had to provide in the legislation for the tax benefit of the free zone. In other words, if a firm wants to set up shop and add value via repackaging, relabelling and so forth, for onward transmission into South America, perhaps out of South America into Caricom or outside Caricom, then such a firm ought to qualify for the status of approved enterprise under the legislation and so get the benefit of the free zones regime. As I mentioned, there were certain anomalies in the existing legislation that we are correcting.

Most importantly, Sir, the Committee, in coming up with the criteria for the free zones made the following recommendations. Firstly:

- "- that petroleum, natural gas and certain petrochemical industries should not qualify for approval as free zone activities and that such activities be listed as prohibited activities..."

It is provided:

- "- for the development and management of Free Zones as approved activities."

In other words, private sector involvement:

- "- that free zones should be designated by the Minister responsible for industry after receiving recommendations of the Free Zones Company, instead of being designated by the President as at present prescribed in the Act."

What that means, is that the company would make recommendations to the Minister who would then be under an obligation to report to the Cabinet on a periodical basis. That is simply to reduce the bureaucratic delays in the approval process. More than that, with respect to the approved enterprise, we agreed that we would have clear guidelines under which the company would operate, and given that an investor meets those guidelines, then his investment would be approved.

"The committee also recommended that:

- "- for dividends paid by approved Free Zones enterprises to resident share holders to be exempt from income-tax for a period of ten (10) years..."

*Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Bill*  
[HON. K. VALLEY]

Wednesday, October 04, 1995

Members would know that under the current legislation, dividends are tax-exempt in perpetuity so that the amending legislation is restricting that exemption to a period of 10 years.

The Non-Oil Committee considered the report of the committee and agreed:

"...that the principal policy objective underlying establishment of the free zones should be:

- (a) The promotion of employment and the generation of foreign exchange;
- (b) The establishment and stimulation of export-oriented industries for the generation of foreign exchange;
- (c) The attraction of industries that would not otherwise find it attractive to locate in Trinidad and Tobago;
- (d) The facilitation of technology transfer by creating a conducive environment for firms that possess pioneer and other technology to locate in Trinidad and Tobago."

The Non-Oil Committee also approved certain guidelines for the use by the Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Company for the approval or designation of a free zone. These guidelines are:

- "1 The Minister shall only approve/designate an area a free zone, when the activities to be carried on satisfy the policy objectives set out above."

This is listed above at (a) to (d).

**Mr. Sudama:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, would the Member give way? For my information, could the Member indicate whether this Non-Oil Committee Report was laid in this House? Whether that report is available? What vintage is this report?

**Hon. K. Valley:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Non-Oil Committee was a Cabinet sub-committee—I say 'was' because it is now replaced by the Industry and Services Committee [*Interruption*]. No, the report has not been laid in the Parliament; I am merely giving information coming out of the committee. [*Interruption*] Well, what comes to the House is a Bill which may arise out of the work of the Cabinet sub-committee. Of course, that is debated. If the Member feels he has another point of view with respect to any recommendation outlined by the committee, as enunciated here, he can challenge that.

**Mr. Sudama:** Could the hon. Minister tell us the date of this report?

**Hon. K. Valley:** Friday, September 17, 1993.



The second guideline:

- "2. The President, may, by order, prescribe areas in Trinidad and Tobago in which free zones may not be designated (but not so as to prejudice existing approved enterprises)."

If the Member looks at the legislation, he would see that some of these guidelines are included in the legislation, others would be included in the by-laws and so forth. For example, in the legislation before us, clause 3(1) states:

"The President may, by order, prescribe areas in which a free zone may not be designated "

The other guidelines that the committee approved:

- "3. No area shall be designated a free zone except with the consent of the owners and anyone having a registered interest in the property."

I think that has found its way into the legislation also.

- "4 The Minister may, by order, designate an area a free zone provided that:-

- (i) (a) Notwithstanding Section 15(2), the Company may only grant approval to a single enterprise to undertake approved activities in the free zone, and
- (b) Notwithstanding section 16(b), the Company may grant approval for activities in the free zone only to a company which has been incorporated or registered in Trinidad and Tobago in accordance with the Companies' Ordinance, and
- (c) The Company may not grant approval to a company to carry out activities in the free zone which represent, wholly or in part, the transfer of existing activities in the customs territory."

In other words, simply making a provision to disallow an existing and established firm closing down on separation in the custom's territory, in other words, in Trinidad and Tobago, and moving it into the free zone. I continue:

- "(ii) Any order made by the Company, designating a free zone, shall name the free zone, shall define its limits, shall name the enterprise approved to carry out activities in the free zone, and shall come into effect on the date of publication in the Gazette, unless an earlier or later date is prescribed in the order.
- (iii) The company may amend an order made by it under this section, but not so as to prejudice existing approved enterprises established in the free zone.

5. (a) The President may, by order, on the recommendation of the Company designate an area a free zone to accommodate the activities of more than a single approved enterprise, or in any other circumstance where the Company is not authorised by the Act to designate an area a free zone."

So that if the Act does not allow the company to do so then the President, by order, can do so.

- "5 (b) Any order so made by the Minister, shall name the free zone, shall define its limits and shall come into effect on the date of publication in the Gazette, unless an earlier or later date is prescribed in the order.
- (c) On the recommendation of the Company, the Minister may amend an order made under this section, but not so as to prejudice existing approved enterprises."

**2.40 p.m.**

As I said, most of these guidelines have found their way into this amending Bill or would be in the bye-laws. This is to heighten the transparency in the approval process. So that no longer would there be a situation in which the free zone would make a recommendation where it comes to the ministry then it goes through another approval process before it gets to the Minister. What happens now is that there are clear guidelines on which the Free Zones Company must operate. Given that the requirements are met, the clear recommendation comes to the Minister and it is on its way.

In recommending this legislation to the House I want to remind Members—because of my experience in another place—that this is not the 1988 debate, this is the 1995 debate. I really wish most of the Members on the other side were there with me in 1988 when we had to deal with that piece of legislation. The fact is, the legislation is now on the books—

**Mr. Sudama:** The world has changed.

**Hon. K. Valley:** The world has not changed. The legislation is on the books. We know that business needs a certain level of certainty under the law. The legislation is there; we have found a way to make it useful and we have decided, however, that it ought not to apply to our energy-based industries. Therefore, we are restricting the application of the legislation to the non-oil sector of the economy.

Further, we are saying that we want the private sector to get involved. If this is such a great thing the private sector must get involved to develop free zone sites and so forth. We want to give them the benefits of the approved enterprise, but we want to back off from being its developer. As you know, so far it is the Government that has developed the free zones in Point Lisas. A private sector individual, I think, is now developing one at D'Abadie and we want other private sector investors to get involved. Of course, we have taken the opportunity to correct some anomalies in the Act.

When one compares the export allowance benefit and the fact that we have now removed customs duty on capital equipment and on inputs into manufacturing, one sees that most firms would gain a similar benefit via the export allowance that they can get under the free zones. More than that, while under the EPZ one is limited with respect to one's sale in the customs territory or also within Caricom, there is no such limitation with the firm outside the EPZ which may qualify for the export allowance.

I commend this legislation to the House as I said, positioning the EPZ legislation in an area where we believe it can be useful.

I beg to move.

*Question proposed.*

**Miss Indera Sagewan** (*Caroni East*): Mr. Deputy Speaker, an export processing zone, whether it is constrained in its activity to only certain industries or whether it is by and large provided for in its infrastructural development by private sector as opposed to the Government, has certain characteristics from different perspectives including a functional perspective, which bring to bear certain concerns that we on this side have with any export processing zone.

Whether we like it or not, Trinidad and Tobago—like so many developing countries which have embarked on extensive policy with respect to trade liberalization—is on its way to establishing Export Processing Zones. The Member for Diego Martin Central has offered several reasons for export processing zones. He has outlined a set of criteria by which the decision is to be made, whether an industry should be allowed into this particular zone. In fact, he has outlined for us such factors as export processing zones are developed in order to, and they are encouraged if they can to:

- (i) promote employment and the generation of foreign exchange.
- (ii) encourage the establishment and stimulation of export-oriented enterprises for the generation of foreign exchange earnings.

- (iii) attract industries and enterprises that would not otherwise find it attractive to be based in Trinidad and Tobago.
- (iv) facilitate transfer of technology by creating a conducive and facilitatory investment environment for enterprises.

None of us can argue that these are features which are very commendable providing that industries set up and then export processing zones can deliver on these very praiseworthy objectives.

I would like to back-track for a minute and, for the benefit of the Members of the House, to define what is an export processing zone. I do not think the Member actually did this. I use the definition of the ILO in its document entitled *Labour Education 1991 to 1993*.

I took it from an article in this document which is entitled; "Export processing zones: Insights from a recent ILO survey." There are many different names by which we call it—an export processing zone or EPZ, as we know. We also refer to it as a free zone, and there is a particular Mexican-Spanish name for it. There are a number of industrial free zones, free export processing zones, special economic zones. All of these terms are one and the same. This document defines an export processing zone as follows:

"A clearly delineated industrial estate which constitutes a free trade arcade in the customs and trade regime of a country and where foreign manufacturing firms producing mainly for export benefit from a certain number of fiscal and financial incentives."

Therefore, we see that an export processing zone is a particular production, it is an industrial estate that has particular characteristics. It really is about the business from the host country perspective. One of the major considerations is that we are seeking to do two major things: Firstly, we are seeking to tap into the large supplies of international capital that is available in the international market. Through our export processing zone, we are seeking to attract direct foreign investment.

**2.50 p.m.**

Secondly, most developing countries such as ours in the process of liberalization, we have caused unemployment in our countries in the process of displacement and privatization and so forth. Therefore, EPZs and the industries therein are seen as a major source of employment generation.

These really are two of the major factors that cause a host country to position itself to attract industries into an export processing zone (EPZ). There are a

number of factors that attract direct foreign investment into EPZs, and I think for the benefit of Members, it is worthwhile that we consider what these factors are. Some of these are:

A multinational corporation or foreign investment is attracted to export processing zones in a host country where the following set of criteria exist:

Firstly, where the host country has an environment of trade liberalization. As we all know Trinidad is ideal from that perspective, because we, like so many other countries, have embarked on a very concerted effort re: trade liberalization.

Secondly, where the process of administration in the host country is very efficient and there is not much red tape and bureaucracy involved in the process of engaging in the business in which they are involved.

Thirdly, where there is a strong commitment by Government to foreign investment. This is largely translated in things like the foreign investment policy of a country, like the free movement of foreign exchange. It is attracted to countries where the government allows for quick and efficient customs procedures. The Member for Diego Martin Central went into detail explaining all the kinds of requisites that are being put in place to ensure that these conditions are in place.

Fourthly, where there is an attractive package of fiscal and other incentives. As we heard from the Member for Diego Martin Central, there is a very attractive package of fiscal incentives for foreign investment in the export processing zone particularly with respect to their not having to pay duties on imported goods, inputs that are used in the production process, not having to pay corporate taxes and these kinds of things. These are measures that are very attractive to foreign investment.

Another factor that encourages foreign investment is the existence of cheap labour and, as you will see from the examples that I will quote EPZs have been particularly successful in countries where there is a very large surplus labour and where the wage rates in that particular country are significantly low. Their real objective is to find an environment where they can produce their products for export as cheaply as possible.

The objective is to minimize cost of production. Therefore, where they do not have to meet all these kinds of fiscal requirements which will be transferred into price, where the wage rate is as low as is humanly possible—these are the factors that will obviously attract foreign investment into export processing zones.

A sixth factor is the existence of strategic location, that is, access to ports and airport facilities.

Another factor is the existence of modern telecommunications because in the world in which we live, having easy and immediate access to parent companies or markets is very, very important. Modern telecommunications are another significant determining factor in whether industries will locate in export processing zones. These conditions really form the enabling environment that will encourage enterprises to enter such zones and produce.

Internationally, there are certain conditions with respect to firms operating in EPZs and, by and large, the Member has made note of these. Firstly, we must know that industries in an export processing zone must not compete with domestic taxpaying industries, because if that was the case, then there would be conflict of interest given the extent to which they have a very attractive incentive package.

Secondly, their production must be primarily for the purpose of export. So they must come into this zone and produce primarily for export. Where they are allowed to sell to the host country, the domestic economy, they can do so only on a very limited scale; it should not be more than 20 per cent of their total output. In addition to which if they sell into the domestic economy their product is treated like any imported product and therefore it is subjected to the licensing and duties restrictions that exist in the importing country.

I have, as the Minister has done, outlined what the gains can be from an EPZ, but I wish to state them again in the order I have. I will go on to voice the concerns we have with respect to the reality of achieving these objectives.

The gains that one can achieve from an EPZ are put into four categories: Firstly, an EPZ allows for increases in foreign exchange earnings, secondly, it allows for increased employment. Thirdly, it allows for backward and forward linkages with the rest of the domestic economy. Finally, it should allow for technological transfer and domestic human resource skills enhancement.

EPZs have existed since the early 1970s and in fact, their growth has been tremendous. Expansion has been really significant in developing countries but the question is: to what extent have EPZs been successful in achieving these objectives? I will quote extensively from a survey that was conducted by the ILO over the period 1991 to 1993. Given that the Member quoted from a report that came in 1993, I think the information I have here would be recent enough.

This survey shows that with regard to most of these objectives that I have outlined, EPZs have not been able to produce the kind of output and benefit one would expect and hope that they would. As we move further into the promotion of EPZs, I think those who are in the seat of management, if they do not yet know, should take strong cognizance of these matters, whether it is managed directly by Government or by the private sector.

**3.00 p.m.**

Let us look again at the evidence before us. The first matter is that of foreign exchange earnings. The survey at hand did not look at the amount of foreign exchange earnings that have been generated by the export processing zones, but one has to understand that the ability of an export processing zone to generate foreign exchange is significant.

But that cannot, of itself, be the primary objective of a country, because foreign exchange generation in a country, particularly a developing country, can only be of significance if it is such that it can be translated into economic activity in the country; can facilitate the development of infrastructure, and can allow for the furtherance of economic growth in the country.

The constraint, therefore, that may exist with respect to an export processing zone is the freedom that exists in the environment for the repatriation of retained earnings. If most of the firms which are set up in the zone are foreign firms, and we do not yet know, then there is a very great certainty, as has been our history and that of many developing countries, that most of the foreign exchange that will be generated, will also leave.

Foreign exchange will leave as retained earnings; it will leave where there is a significant number of expatriates employed in the sector. It will leave in the form of their salaries because, while they will be working in Trinidad and Tobago, most of their long-term commitments, really, will be in the country from which they originate and, therefore, most of their salaries will be going towards paying their indebtedness to those countries.

One can argue that the ability of the earnings in foreign exchange that can be generated from an EPZ to benefit the host country is very largely debatable. One would, therefore, want to ask: What kind of measures does the Government have, or will be putting in place, to maximize the benefits that can be derived from the inflow of foreign exchange into Trinidad and Tobago via export processing zones?

The second issue that I want to look at is that of the increased employment that one would expect would be generated as a result of EPZs coming on stream. While the statistics re increased employment are variable; in some instances it is argued that there have been significant increases; and in other instances it is argued that the increase in employment is less than one per cent of the total labour force. The question is: What kind of employment is generated, and what are the conditions under which employment is generated?

Let us look at the percentage of the labour force which the survey shows us has been employed by export processing zones. What we see, for example, in Pakistan—a country that has been engaged in export processing zones—EPZs account for less than one per cent of total employment in industry. The question is, therefore: what is really the potential of the EPZs that we are setting up to treat with the chronic unemployment situation we have in the country today?

The second factor under the issue of employment, which I would like to consider, is that the type of employment that is generated by EPZs and the industries set up are assembly-type industries, where all the component parts are imported from where they are made, and brought into the zone and simply put together. Really, such activity does not require any set of skills, so that the type of employment created by EPZs is employment for very low-skilled labour. Its ability to engage in employee training is very constrained, because the industry itself does not have the demand for highly skilled domestic employment. Therefore, as an objective it will not have to engage in skills enhancement for its employees.

To substantiate this point, I wish to quote from the survey, and I quote page 8 of the document where it states, with respect to the creation of employment—

"The Barbados Workers' Union and the Fiji Trades Union Congress were of the opinion that Multi National Enterprises did not endeavour to contribute to increased employment opportunities....

Also, the introduction of new technologies, part-time work and the use of casual/temporary labour were identified by the All India Trade Union Congress, the Indian National Trade Union Congress and the Pakistan National Federation of Trade Unions as having adverse effects on employment."

So, there is the argument that EPZs have, in fact, had an adverse impact on employment, because it concentrates on the introduction of part-time work—casual/temporary labour—and one has to ask the question whether this is the kind



of long-term employment opportunities that we as a country—those in Government—want to provide for our labour force. Is that the kind of message that we want to send to our young graduates coming out of school—that this is what they have to look forward to? Temporary, part-time unskilled work opportunities?

The issue of unionization, has been a very long and contentious one with respect to EPZs. There are those who argue—and I am sure that later on the Member will tell us that there are no problems—that workers will be free to unionize in the EPZs. Unions will be free to operate. Mr. Deputy Speaker, what this document shows us is that even in countries where there are such statements coming from governments, there are two ways by which the export processing zone gets out of it. One, it gets a special concession by government to allow it to operate outside the labour laws of the country; or, it simply makes a decision that it will not hire unionized workers; and the evidence in this document shows that.

**Miss Nicholson:** The Minister of Finance supports that, you know.

**Miss I. Sagewan:** With respect to industrial relations and EPZs, again I wish to quote from this survey and it states:

"Amid mounting discontent on the part of the unions, industrial relations practices in EPZs have been investigated and extensively discussed by workers' organizations as well as certain governments. Some unions have also brought complaints to the ILO about the non-observance of Conventions Nos. 87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize), and 98 (Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining). For example, the 1991 Report—

**Mr. Valley:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wonder if the hon. Member would inform us whether she has done any research on the operations of our own EPZs. We have a history of EPZs operating in Trinidad and Tobago since 1988, and given that she has found it useful to quote from a survey of EPZs in other parts of the world, I wondered whether she did any research on our own operation.

**Mr. Palackdharrysingh:** That is your job. You should tell us!

**Mr. B. Panday:** I can tell you, none has been done—not a single one.

**Miss I. Sagewan:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I continue with my discourse on what is the reality with respect to EPZs in the international environment.

**Mr. Valley:** Can I take that to mean that the answer is no? [*Interruption*]

**Miss I. Sagewan:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, actually the Member for Diego Martin Central should be giving us the answer to that question himself.

**Mr. Palackdharrysingh:** That is right. He is making the case. Do not give way to him.

**Miss Nicholson:** Sit down, man!

**3.10 p.m.**

**Miss I. Sagewan:** I will emphasize again the point that I made, notwithstanding the fact of whether they do or do not and I trust that the Member will give us the guarantee that this will not occur, that all will be unionized and that no industry in the export processing zone will be able to make a decision that it will not hire individuals who are not unionized. That is the guarantee that we want on this side. Let us continue:

"For example, the 1991 report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations contained observations based on complaints from unions in Bangladesh, the Dominican Republic, Fiji and Pakistan."

I did look very closely at the Member's contribution in 1988 when he tore into EPZs and really criticized the past regime for even thinking of bringing EPZs to this country. I will re-emphasize my point. Whether restricted or given free rein, the fact remains that EPZs internationally have a certain reputation, and what I am seeking to do is not to antagonize those on the other side, but to show, for their benefit, the reality of EPZs in the international environment. I trust that this information would be useful to the Members on the other side. That is primarily my objective.

**Mr. Valley:** Mr. Deputy Speaker—

**Miss I. Sagewan:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, unless the Member is on a point of order I am not giving way. In the case of the Dominican Republic it showed:

"...that there were only five unions registered in all the zones in which some 200 companies operated. Moreover, between 1989 and 1990, three applications to register unions in the free zones were refused under section 349 of the Labour Code, while for the same period more than 80 unions representing workers outside those enclaves were registered."

So we see that in countries where there has been unionization, to some extent, in the EPZs, the applications of other unions have been rejected. The question is: Is that going to be our experience?

The next issue with respect to employment is job security. The Member mentioned that these industries in the export processing zones will not have tax benefits in perpetuity. It would be restricted, not to ten years, I think he said 15 years. It is limited under the incentive. Such a situation really has created in the case of EPZs an environment of insecurity with respect to security of tenure. This really is an extremely sensitive issue.

You see, what these companies tend to do—because the objective, really, is to find an environment that gives them the best incentives for producing at the lowest cost possible—is, they come into country "A", where they are getting these incentives; take advantage of it over that fixed period, and at the end of it they look for another host country. So that after 10 years the individuals who are employed in the particular industry really have to seek jobs elsewhere. To substantiate what I am saying, let me quote again from the survey. It says, at page 9, with respect to job security:

“Security of employment in enterprises in EPZs is another sensitive issue because of the very special nature of the conditions under which these firms are encouraged to invest in these enclaves in the first place.”

I will repeat. It is particularly sensitive—

"...because of the very special nature of the conditions under which these firms are encouraged to invest in these enclaves in the first plac"

It goes on:

“One well-known argument is that, as the period of liberal concessions and guarantees draws to a close, some enterprises may be tempted to relocate to other countries offering similar or better incentive packages.”

If we are aware of these things, would we not be in a better position to ensure that we protect those of our people who are engaged in these activities? It goes on:

"The probability of arbitrary dismissals is also perceived to be higher in those EPZs where workers are not organized and in countries where the relevant labour legislation may not be effectively enforced."

So that we can learn from the experience of those parts of the world where EPZs have existed, over time. Let us not try to repeat their mistakes. These are very legitimate concerns, and as much as they are of concern to us on this side, they should be of concern to those on the other side. And I would expect that the comment that should be coming from the other side is: "We are aware of this; we

*Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Bill*  
[MISS SAGEWAN]

Wednesday, October 04, 1995

are taking notes and we are putting in place the necessary requisites to ensure that things of the kind do not occur in Trinidad and Tobago," not snide remarks and attempts at clouding the issue.

On the same topic of job security, there is another issue that is tightly tied in and that is the high rate of turnover in EPZs in some of these countries. As we all know, if I hire somebody on probation, during that period I am allowed to fire him or her with really no notice. So what you do is, you engage in a high rate of turnover with respect to employment so there is no need to worry about things like unionization or severance benefits and so forth. These EPZs, it has been found, suffer from a high rate of turnover in respect of employees. Again, so that I am not accused of speaking off the top of my head, I will continue to quote what came out of this particular survey.

**Hon. Member:** The same book?

**Miss I. Sagewan:** Same book, same survey. The book is labelled: *Labour Education, 1991-1993*. The article that I am quoting from is: "Export Processing Zones: Insights from a recent ILO survey."

Would the Member like me to read the little caption that outlines the countries that were surveyed and all of that? I just thought that in the interest of time, since I am quoting from a very respectable source, those on the other side would respect that.

I am on page 12: It says, on the issue of High turnover:

"Another factor which was not mentioned but which may help to explain the absence or limited presence of unions in EPZs, is the high turnover of personnel, for whom employment in the zones is not perceived as offering long-term career prospects."

So that we can establish very early that export processing zones will not be about the business of providing long-term sustainable employment to the people of Trinidad and Tobago. The question, therefore, is: To what extent does the Government anticipate that EPZs will contribute to employment creation?

Secondly, what kind of employment is it anticipated that the EPZs will generate? *[Interruption]* Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Member has the benefit of having a large technical staff that can give him results. It is my function to ask the questions of the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry with respect to what he anticipates, since he is in the seat of policy. He certainly is the one who should be answering these questions. For the benefit of this country I have to ask these

questions. Even if I know the answer, it would be of greater significance if they are placed in *Hansard* by the hon. Minister.

**3.20 p.m.**

Another very contentious issue with respect to the export processing zones is the condition of work and pay. This one is particularly contentious because if you would recall, when the debate on EPZs was at its high in the 1980s, there was a school of thought that the EPZs were sweat boxes, particularly those industries that were engaged in chemical type activity. There was the argument that EPZs target particularly young women and it resulted in women having deformed children or being unable to conceive. A lot of exploitations particularly with respect to female labour is associated with the export processing zones.

This particular document does not enter into that kind of debate but on the issue of conditions of work and pay it is very instructive. I think I heard a Member wanting to know which country. This is one of the countries that were in the survey. Our experience in EPZs has been so insignificant, how can we be drawing conclusions? The Member is a social scientist and should know that a social scientist attempts to draw conclusions from research and analysis.

"The Dominican Republic noted that while MNEs generally offered better pay and benefits than local industry, those in the zones provided wages and benefits that were either similar to or in some cases less favourable than those offered by domestic enterprises.

In the case of Mauritius, the Government said that in order to attract investors to one of the zones that were set up in the early 1970s, compromises had to be made in certain areas. One of those concerned overtime payment which is computed on a weekly rather than daily basis as is the general practice.

The BWU reported that wages were less favourable in the electronics industry, while the FTUC said that the same was the case in EPZs as a whole, and particularly in the garment industry, where the minimum hourly wage for learners and beginners was inferior to that paid outside of the zones.

Paid sick leave for garment workers was also said to be less than that prescribed by the Employment Act. The Government of Jamaica acknowledged that workers in textile and garment enterprises had less favourable pay and working conditions."

Here we see that this survey that was done by the ILO confirms the fact that conditions of pay and rates of pay in export processing zones are less favourable

than those paid in the rest of the economy. Therefore, the question that comes out of this is: Do we have in this country minimum wages legislation in place to protect our people who will get employment in the export processing zone? Do we have health and safety regulations to ensure that the conditions of employment will meet the basic requirements of this country? These are the concerns.

Interestingly, this survey has shown that even where the labour laws of the country are very clear that EPZ or no EPZ one should function under the labour laws of the country, the governments of these countries have seen it necessary to grant exemption to the EPZ to allow it to carry on. *[Interruption]* If the Member has a problem he would have to contest it with the ILO, not with the Member for Caroni East. I am not the one who did the survey. Page 10 of the document states:

"...specific laws and policies were drawn up, waiving the application of certain legislation in the zones for a given period. Two governments acknowledged that such exemptions had been granted.

In the case of Turkey, the legislation concerning strikes, lockouts and conciliation is not to be applied for ten years following the start of operations. Labour disputes arising during this time are to be dealt with by the Supreme Arbitration Committee.

The Government of Bangladesh reported that the application of some labour laws was indeed suspended, but that nevertheless, workers were allowed to form associations and engage in collective bargaining. However, this is not borne out by the information contained in the 1991 Report of the Committee of Experts which focused on the situation in that country during the period covered by the Fifth Survey.

The Government, in its statement to the Committee of Experts (1991 Report) explained that since wages and other benefits in EPZs were above the national average, it did not 'consider it expedient to allow formation of trade unions for the time being'.

In the case of the Philippines...the formation of unions was prohibited during the first five years of the operation of enterprises in the zones."

The evidence is here for us to see that notwithstanding the existence of labour laws to protect the labour force in the country, the governments of these countries saw it fit to create exemptions outside these laws to allow and attract industries into the export processing zones at the expense of labour in the country and the

working class. At the end of the day we have to ask the same question again. Where is the caring Government that we hear about? Where are the policies to protect the employees in this country?

I made the point already that the decision was taken in a particular country where unionized labour was not hired.

"In the case of El Salvador where the labour legislation guarantees workers in all enterprises the right to be represented by a union for the purposes of negotiating collective agreements, the Government advanced some reasons for which, in its view, workers in the EPZs were not organized. The fact that their wages, benefits and working conditions were better than those of workers in other sectors was believed to account for the lack of interest in joining or forming unions."

It was the decision that was taken that enterprises in the zone did not hire workers who belong to unions.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The speaking time of the hon. Member has expired.

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

**3.30 p.m.**

**Miss I. Sagewan:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. By and large, I have spoken on the issue of direct employment. The survey has shown that there are cases in which the EPZs have not really contributed to the creation of employment. Where it has, it has been insignificant, and with the conditions of work and kind of employment created, we have to ask ourselves whether that is the kind of employment we want for our people.

The issue is indirect employment, which is linked to a third point I will mention—backward and forward linkages. This survey has shown that there has been little impact on indirect employment in export processing zones because there have been little or no backward and forward linkages. There is the argument that if these companies are allowed duty free access to imported raw materials, why they would bother to take a policy decision to purchase raw materials in the host country. The evidence shows that these linkages have not taken place and, therefore, little indirect employment has been generated as a result of EPZs coming into effect in countries.

In the case of backward and forward linkages in Mexico, the statistics show that only 1.7 per cent of the value of total inputs was purchased locally. In the EPZs, there are firms producing for the export market which are simply importing all their inputs, putting them together and exporting the product. So it is almost as if there is an economy operating within an economy because only 1.7 per cent of the inputs used in the process came from the domestic economy. The question, therefore, is, what kind of incentive is Government putting in place to ensure that it is attractive to the industries getting into the export processing zones to purchase inputs from the domestic market? I pose this question to the Member and I trust that he will enlighten us on this.

Backward and forward linkages are very, very important. In fact, it can be one of the very few benefits that we can get from having export processing zones in the country. If we do not use this and develop it to ensure that the country benefits from its presence then we will really be spinning top in mud. I trust that we are not about the business of doing that. The document specifically says that linkages have been almost non-existent in respect of EPZs in these countries.

The last issue is that of technology transfer and skills enhancement. I have the *Hansard* copy of the Minister's contribution in the other place and I heard him again today talk about the benefits to be derived from the EPZs in the name of technology transfer. How can we speak about technology transfer when we know that EPZs really engage in a summary-type industry?

Core technology does not come into the EPZ, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is a screw-driver type industry that sets up in an export processing zone. All the core elements of the technology exist elsewhere in developed countries and simply the component parts are imported into the country, if at all, for the entire product. *[Interruption]* Unless it is a point of order, I am not giving way, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. Valley:** It is a point of order. If the Member had done her research in Trinidad and Tobago, she would have found out that Nucor's state of technology is under the EPZ.

**Miss I. Sagewan:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is the reality of export processing zones all over the world. A summary-type industry is the order of the day. There is, therefore, little room for the transfer of technology. More than that, those who are engaged in any type of technical activity in these industries, by and large, are expatriates who come in with the firms. They are the ones employed at that level and the locals are employed at the last end of the production process. They



simply put the product together. Where are the human skills enhancement that we would like for this country?

In the final analysis, export processing zones in Trinidad and Tobago are here to stay whether we like it or not. The reality is that there are major problems with them all over the world. The success factor of EPZs is not so significant that we can be assured of success in Trinidad and Tobago. We can recognize the constraints that exist in other parts of the world, and learn from their experience, bringing it to bear on our own reality.

We can minimize the negatives and enhance the positives and be in a better position to ensure, as far as possible, that the export processing zone that is set up in this country is as successful as possible. If those on the other side who should be committed to treating with these problems that exist with export processing zones, in a very concise manner, but pretend that they do not exist, we would again be sitting on another white elephant as far as the development of Trinidad and Tobago is concerned.

**The Parliamentary Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister (Mrs. Eulalie James):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I join this debate to make a short contribution and to record my support for the measure that is being proposed.

The term EPZ has generated much adverse comment both internationally and locally, as the debate here confirms. We fear, and rightly so, having regard to the experiences of some countries, that the introduction of EPZs in this country may bring with it social consequences which far outweigh its utility.

There can be no dispute that the introduction of EPZs will be accompanied by the creation of much needed jobs. More critically, it will create job opportunities for persons who have been encountering difficulties in obtaining employment. These persons form the backbone of the constituency I represent and are no doubt represented more than adequately in every constituency in this country.

I speak of the group that is of special concern to me, that group of women—single mothers, female sole breadwinners and their children of school age—whose employment skills are limited and whose potential for gaining permanent employment with fair wages consequently minimized.

I am told that not only is the unemployment rate of this group among the highest, but also the prospect of providing employment also meets a great challenge because of the intrinsic difficulties with which every representative is well acquainted.

*Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Bill*  
[MRS. E. JAMES]

*Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

For this reason I am heartened when I receive the assurances of the hon. Minister of Industry that the Government, in facilitating the start-up of industry in the EPZs, has a keen eye on providing employment for the group I have just described.

I am particularly excited to know that among the industries that will pioneer this industrial sector will be the garment industry. In fact, as part of the Hong Kong initiative commitment we have already received from at least one such company plans to start immediately a garment factory which will provide employment far in excess of 200 women. Additionally, a mission is expected within the next six weeks, whose purpose would be to initiate steps for the start-up of another such factory. I know of many persons who are ready, willing and able to provide their services at a moment's notice.

**3.40 p.m.**

Like my colleagues on the other side, the Members on this side have read, and are acquainted with, the many negative experiences of countries which have introduced EPZs. This Government has studied their experiences and intends to learn and benefit from them. This will substantially prevent, if not totally alleviate, the exploitative conditions which many Members have highlighted and expressed their concern about.

This Government has not—and there is no reason to believe that it will—banned trade unions as was done in Bangladesh and the Dominican Republic. Workers will be free to organize themselves as is done in every industry in this country. By so doing, they can and will protect themselves from the common ills that have presented themselves in well-known EPZs worldwide.

The working population of this country, for the large part, is literate, articulate, and knowledgeable. Let us not underestimate the strength and resilience of our women. We must not assume that our people will—with or without trade unions—allow themselves to be exploited and/or ill-treated.

Even though it may be a cause for concern, unemployment in this country has not reached those levels where it will permit the dehumanizing conditions and poor wage rates that other countries with chronic unemployment problems have experienced. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I assure you that this will not happen under a PNM Government.

This Government has already signalled its intention to vigilantly monitor the activities of companies operating in the free zone areas. If necessary, it is

prepared to consider the introduction of new legislation to control undesirable practices. I am satisfied that the word "free" in free zone, as it applies to this country, will relate only to the free movement of goods and not to freedom of companies and their owners to ignore the laws of this country—which will continue to apply to free zone areas—to do as they please. In my view, given the culture of this society and the commitment of this Government, there is virtually no chance of the much reputed "sweat shops" developing here.

I feel certain that the free zones that will develop here will be models upon which other developing nations can rely, where respect for labour and industrial growth can flourish together. I am optimistic and I urge other Members to put their anxieties aside for a moment and look at the positive aspects of this measure.

While I share the anxiety of hon. Members that we must not allow this country to be savaged by unscrupulous companies which may seek our hospitality, I am confident that this Government will do all in its power, with the knowledge and expertise at its disposal, to ensure that its citizenry, especially its women, is adequately protected and fairly treated.

With these words, I join with Members on this side in asking this honourable House to support this measure.

**Miss Hulsie Bhaggan** (*Chaguanas*): Mr. Deputy Speaker, firstly, I must commend the Member for Laventille West on a fairly balanced contribution, except the part, of course, about the PNM. I share her sentiments with respect to the women, especially unskilled women benefiting from the free zones.

The most important thing confronting this country today is the issue of unemployment. I believe that whatever our country plans to do, that would help the unemployed, we ought to support it once it is honourable and within the law. We have had a situation in this country where we have had growth with joblessness. We have had growth with increasing poverty. We have had growth, where the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen.

Whatever measures are being brought therefore, once they might be to the benefit of the people, especially the unemployed, we have to find ways to support them but, at the same time we have to make recommendations for the improvement so that we would not fall into the kind of traps some other countries are falling into.

With respect to the EPZs in various parts of the country, the facts are there to show that there are many problems. Therefore, if the hon. Minister had said, in

*Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Bill*  
[MISS BHAGGAN]

*Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

our EPZs we are avoiding those problems—I hope at some time we may get some incite as to how we would be operating our EPZs.

Before I go into the whole concept of the EPZs, I want to make a special appeal to the Minister of Labour and Co-operatives. Over the past few months I have been writing to that ministry seeking help for workers who right now are not within the EPZs but are not being protected in their jobs, they are being mistreated, they are being exploited. It seems to me that the Ministry of Labour and Co-operatives is not taking the kind of interest, or perhaps does not have the kind of powers to ensure that there is fairness, there is equity and justice in the labour market.

Because of the high rate of unemployment, there is a great level of exploitation of workers in this country. While the Government may see itself as a facilitator, there are times when it has to intervene to ensure that we do not have a form of capitalism in this country with slavery. I believe if the Government does not intervene now, through its respective ministries, we would have a situation—which I overheard some Members on the other side speaking about—where small contractors, in particular, people \$20.00 per day, people who are working for 16 and 20 hours per day. That is something of which I am very much aware.

There is a Senator in the other place, who owns a quarry. I know that people have had serious problems working in that quarry; they have become very ill and in cases where there have been accidents, they have absolutely no compensation coming to them. Those people are in my constituency and they have not been compensated by this Senator, and interestingly enough, he is an Opposition Senator.

On the issue of labour therefore, we have to ensure that not only within the EPZs—I listened to the Member for Caroni East and I think she has made some very valid points with respect to the surveys conducted in other parts of the world. I also ask, therefore, that the same kinds of considerations be given, not only to the EPZs, but also to every sector of the job market in Trinidad and Tobago.

The concept of the free zone is a good one, except for the various deficiencies which have been pointed out. I think, therefore, there must be safeguards in place, and those safeguards should include the things that the Member for Caroni East spoke about. I do not believe in belabouring any point. I would like to know what the Government's policy is with respect to labour and its role within the EPZs. Are they going to have unionized workers?

Secondly, there is an emerging trend in the world where we are moving from one of confrontation between labour and capital, to one of co-operation. I hope that this Government would therefore assist in creating the kind of environment where there could be co-operation, because, after all, the big enemy is not really among ourselves, but the world outside. As long as we are able to co-operate in the interest of our country to fight against those other forces outside, I believe our country would benefit and move forward.

**3.50 p.m.**

We know that in the country today there is a globalization process and we have been introducing economic policies which have to do with liberalization. In looking at the whole situation, therefore, I perceive that EPZs would soon become a thing of the past because in the medium and long term the idea is to free up the country and the whole world and as such we would have more freedom with respect to trading and all the regimes and so forth.

I see the whole concept of EPZs as something within a medium and long term development strategy to be able to develop your productive base within your own country. Therefore, in keeping with that, we have to establish the various linkages within our country so that we can have that productive base being properly established.

One of the main criteria must be that labour must not be sacrificed at the altar of profitability. I believe that is the more important thing because we do not want to have a situation of EPZs in different parts of the country and there are persons who are working in there who are not able to survive and there is poverty at the same time there may be jobs.

Also, we tend to compare Trinidad and Tobago with every other country in the world and sometimes we have to be very careful with that. Whereas in some countries a person may be able to survive on US \$1 per day, in Trinidad and Tobago a person cannot survive on that. So we have to also examine our own reality and ensure that the conditions of work, the levels of wages and so forth are consistent with the cost of living in Trinidad and Tobago. Therefore, we cannot operate like some kind of extension of Hong Kong or some other country. Their cultures and economies are vastly different from ours.

I also want to ask the Government to answer some questions. I understand that at present there are a number of companies operating. We would like to get details about the investors who are there. We would like to know how many jobs have been created? Also, we would like to know whether the company which has

been established has had a strategic plan. We cannot just establish EPZs because they are fashionable, we have to make sure it is part of a strategy for this country.

Have this company and the Government considered, for instance, looking at exactly from where we intend to attract them? Are we going to attract investors from Latin America? Are we going to Europe and the Far East? Or, is there going to be a combination? You do not just have a *carte blanche* approach. If you are going with an approach, it means that you are not going to be focused in your marketing and you may very well spend much money without getting results into our country.

Now to the type of industries. We speak of non-oil industries. "Non-oil industries" is expansive terminology. What non-oil industries? I would recommend therefore that the industries we are looking at must have linkages with our local economy with respect to agriculture, so we would look at agro industries; We have got to look at those industries which can utilize our local services such as our airports, ports; and our local manufacturers may be able to have inputs into that such as packaging—our freight forwarders and so forth.

So we have to ensure that whatever industries come in here, they do not just come to operate in a small part of our country and then from there they utilize their own resources to be able to export the items. The intention, therefore, is that we must so design our EPZs that they must create the kind of linkages in a deliberate way as part of a deliberate strategy.

Also, with respect to the site selection, we must have clear criteria with respect to those sites. We cannot, for instance, to a site invite industries which may impact adversely upon surrounding communities. We have to be very careful about the environment. We have to be very careful about the availability of utilities. We do not want to have a situation of having a site in a far-out place where there are no kinds of development and we have to spend more of the money on infrastructural development.

Also, the question of existing skills. Are we going to encourage assembly-type industries? Or, are we going to mix it with other industries where we will have our people utilizing their own skills, developing new skills and encouraging technology transfer?

With respect to marketing, if we are going to talk about a free zone company in this country and establish these sites, marketing becomes key because there are countries throughout the world competing for the same scarce resources. We

cannot, therefore, adopt a more bureaucratic approach. We have to be more competitive in our approach. We got to be more professional and aggressive.

I believe that we ought to have a clear marketing strategy and we have to go for the markets that we want; we have to target those industries that we want. The idea is, as I said before, to create a productive base so that we can have a more level playing field for our exporters and manufacturers in Trinidad and Tobago.

Also, we have to look at this whole concept of the Government having a vision of being the gateway to Latin America and being the financial hub of the Caribbean. To realize that vision I would expect that the industries which have been brought in would have been brought in with that in mind. Because if you are speaking of a vision you have to do concrete things to realize that vision. I would expect if you are speaking about the financial hub, maybe the kind of services that we have ought to be such that would feed into that kind of vision.

In Barbados there is a tremendously good offshore industry. I have friends who are working there as managers, and I can assure you that they are doing quite well. I believe we have the capacity to do that in Trinidad and Tobago.

We are also speaking about the private sector being the engine of growth. I believe our local private sector must be given the kind of incentives to be able to compete in the external markets. I have seen where we are speaking of the Free Zones Act, the Fiscal Incentives Act and so forth.

Also, I believe you have to move towards harmonization because if you are saying that some people would benefit from some incentives and others would benefit from other incentives, that could create a bit of confusion. Who makes that decision? Is there going to be fairness? Are we going to be able to say we have approached something and there is a professional way of deciding who gets incentives?

My own feeling is that our local manufacturers and exporters ought to be given special treatment with respect to these incentives. After all, if they are into the export industry and their exports are entering the same market as those of the other people who are in the EPZs then our manufacturers are on an unfair competitive scale. I believe our local investors ought to be given some kind of preference where these incentives are concerned. Perhaps you ought to consider giving them the status of free-zone incentives.

I have been speaking with someone and I understand that there is the problem of a licence. I do not know whether it is still so, but apparently those who apply have to pay a licence fee of US \$10,000. I would like the Minister to let us know

whether that is so or not. If that is so, it means that we are debarring the industries of small and medium size from entry into the duty free zones. I would like to get the Minister's reply as to whether this licence is applicable and what are the fees which are being charged.

Apart from monetary incentives we ought to be looking at things such as giving incentives to companies and industries which create employment. Some countries give certain grants and facilities to industries and companies that create employment. There must be a link between those incentives and employment creation. There also has to be a link between human resource development and incentives. For instance, we have to encourage these companies to develop our people, to transfer the skills; and we ought to give them some incentives to do that, or else they will be tempted to merely bring in the kind of activities which do not need any kind of real training of the people.

We also ought to give incentives for research and development. Whether we like it or not, we are now in a highly competitive world and we want to ensure that our products and industries are so developed that we would be able to compete on an even scale with the outside world. As such, research and development become extremely important in industrial development. We recommend, therefore, that that be considered among the list of incentives that we are looking at.

I also want to make a very brief point. The final one has to do with the linkages with our local agencies. For instance, Tidco. What is going to be Tidco's role in this? Is there going to be a link between Tidco and the company which is being established under this Act? I believe it is important for us not to have too much red tape and overlapping because in the final analysis, we may create a bureaucratic structure which does not produce the kind of results we want.

I know that there have been complaints from persons who have been interested in getting involved, having to interface with different agencies. What I would recommend is that there be some kind of one-stop arrangement where people who are interested in entering these EPZs must be able to get facilities so that they do not have to go to WASA, T&TEC, Town and Country Planning or whoever, on their own.

**4.00 p.m.**

If we are serious about ensuring that the private sector really becomes the engine of growth, if we are serious about ensuring that Trinidad and Tobago is on the competitive edge as far as the international global environment is concerned,



if we are serious about job creation and creating linkages within our economy, and about developing a strong productive base, then we have to approach this new legislation with some more energy and some professionalism—a more positive and strategic approach.

The idea, therefore, is not simply to have amendments and packages being brought to this House just to make it look good so we could go to the World Bank and say we have these packages in place. We want to ensure that whatever is passed in this House must be enforceable so that we could bring results to the people of this country. There is much hope out there that the EPZs would create employment for our people, our single mothers and so forth. When we create hope, and we do not deliver, then people become more frustrated.

I make a special appeal. The free zones do have potential; let us learn from the experiences of other countries and ensure that we do not repeat their mistakes but, at the same time, let us ensure that we are so developed that we can really be a model for other parts of the world. I must agree with the Member for Laventille West: that is a point she has made: not because other countries have not had a good experience with EPZs it means that we must throw it out the window. We need to have projects which can create employment. That must be our number one priority. All Members of Parliament ought to give support to such a piece of legislation provided we ensure that the safeguards are in there.

I want to reiterate my appeal that we ought not to focus just on the free zones and the problems of labour there, but at the same time we have to focus on the labour market throughout this country. We have to ensure that our people are not exploited, that they may not go back to the days of slavery in these so-called modern times. I believe it is the responsibility of the Government to ensure it does not keep its hands off and say it is a facilitator. It has to intervene when things are getting out of hand.

I suggest to this Government here and now that things are out of hand in the labour market and it has to get its act together; in particular, the Ministry of Labour and Co-operatives has to do its part.

We have problems where workers are paying their National Insurance, the employers are deducting it but they are not covered properly because their payments are not being remitted to the relevant agency. There are situations where, as I have said before, basic working conditions are not being adhered to.

There are situations where things we have gained from the days of slavery—and slavery was abolished—all those things now are being dismantled. We

*Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Bill*  
[MISS BHAGGAN]

*Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

cannot therefore say for the sake of free trade, we have to give up rights that we have gained in those times. That, for me, is a very important point with which we have to deal.

The issue of occupational health and safety must never be overlooked. There must not be a situation where our people because they are unemployed and desperate would go to a job where they are exposed to all kinds of dangers on the job, whether it has to do with wearing helmets, special gloves, special equipment, whatever it is. Right now there are people who are working in small factories and industries and who are not protected at all, whether it is from raw fire coming out of furnaces when they are making these plastic tanks, I understand; whether it has to do with toxic chemicals and waste; whether it has to do with dumping in our rivers.

While we are looking at employment creation, the whole environment is being destroyed and people who have become victims of this kind of development are becoming a burden on the public health system simply because at the private level, we are not taking the precautions that are necessary.

I believe in prevention, and, therefore, when we are bringing free zones to this country in a big way, we ought to ensure that all the safeguards are put in place so that our people would be free from disease and all the exposure they are likely to have; that their working conditions are such that they would not see themselves as new slaves in a whole new scenario; and, at the same time, our small businesses, in particular the private sector, be properly developed to compete in a globalized environment.

With this, I say that I have absolutely no problem with the free zones as long as the Government would adhere to some of the things we have said.

Thank you very much.

**Miss Pamela Nicholson** (*Tobago West*): Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is the second time I shall be doing something like this. I want to start by quoting a hymn from the Methodist Hymn Book, No. 578.

**Hon. Member:** Sing it!

**Miss P. Nicholson:** The voice is not good. I do not have a good voice.

"1 A charge to keep I have,  
A God to glorify,  
A never-dying soul to save,  
And fit it for the sky:

- 2 To serve the present age,  
 My calling to fulfil:  
 O may it all my powers engage  
 To do my Master's will!
- 3 Arm me with jealous care,  
 As in Thy sight to live;  
 And O Thy servant Lord, prepare  
 A strict account to give!
- 4 Help me to watch and pray,  
 And on Thyself rely,  
 Assured, if I my trust betray,  
 I shall forever die."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thought it was very critical for me to quote that very important hymn from the *Methodist Hymn Book*. From the perspective that we need honest persons in this House, we need persons of moral stature and, from a Trinidad perspective, we need rejuvenation in this society.

I thought, when the Member for Diego Martin Central got up here this evening he would have said he was sorry for what he did in 1988 and he would have had some shame not to talk about stimulating incentives, creating employment, diversification of the economy, introduction of new technological transfers and so forth. I could not believe it. I am a supporter of the EPZs against the background of what is taking place where unemployment is concerned in our country and I am not going to back-pedal. Thousands of people are unemployed—many social problems in the homes—that is why there are the problems in the family in this country today.

Almost every week, there are several incidents in the homes—the man killing the wife, and children. Addressing employment in a very aggressive form is important, and if we had all agreed in 1988 from then to now the gains that we could have made in Trinidad and Tobago, would have pre-empted the whole social instability that we have today in our country. In 1988 a former Minister in this country, Winston Dookeran said:

"I think it is a move that should be supported and that appropriate safeguards should be placed to ensure proper industrial practices.

It has good export prospects, and is an attempt to expand the economic base of the country. Some consideration must be given to the nature and type of economic activities that would take place, so as to maximise the national benefit..."

**4.10 p.m.**

Free zone areas have been successfully employed in many countries, aiming at making a dent in the international market, and since we are now poised to re-orient our production dramatically in an outward looking manner to secure new export markets, this could be a catalyst to assist in that goal.

That was June 04, 1988, *Trinidad Express*—not June 04, 1995 I want to quote now a Member's whole speech here this afternoon—almost the whole speech. He was then Sen. Kenneth Valley, Minister today of Trade and Industry, the Member for Diego Martin Central—totally contra to what we were doing here.

Firstly, he defined "Export Processing Zones." I will not do that, because my hon. friend the Member for Caroni East did that. Let me quote him. He quoted the definition from a document—

"Export processing zones or free zones within which foreign or domestic firms may manufacture or assemble goods for export without being subjected to the normal customs duties on imported raw materials or exported products. Frequently firms occupying the zones also receive special treatment in the leasing of land for their factory sites, purchase of utilities such as electricity and exemptions from other regulations normally applying to firms producing within the domestic economy."

Then he went on to state that the approach of EPZs in the economy is not one that Trinidad and Tobago should follow. He quoted a number of areas to make his point and started with Malaysia.

**Mr. Valley:** Proper research!

**Miss P. Nicholson:** I am quoting from the Member for Diego Martin Central who should be ashamed. The Members opposite are here today, discussing this. The population out there do not know that the People's National Movement is today amending the 1988 Act, which it opposed vehemently. Caused people who could have made serious contributions to our economy to even leave the Government at the time [*Interruption*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when one looks at the amendments—very minor. Some of these are just restructuring what the document said. Mr. Deputy Speaker that Member was one of the most vehement critics of bringing it.

**Mr. Valley:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, just for the record, I am still thoroughly against the classical-type EPZ. I leave that on the record.

**Miss P. Nicholson:** You sit down! He is disturbing the House. Tell him to bear his burden today. Whenever I do something wrong I am able to bear my burden. Sit down and take it!

They did not tell the country that "we want to amend it" or "why we want to amend it." So that there is total silence in this country today. I am not hearing Asha Kambon; I am not hearing Faith Wiltshire; I am not hearing Hazel Brown.

**Mr. Sudama:** She has gone to Beijing.

**Miss P. Nicholson:** I am not hearing Merle Hodge—"EPZ must not come like a thief in the night". But she is allowing it to be concretized in this country. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Faith Wiltshire: "EPZs will impede self-development." Like that gone to the sky!

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Could you tell us where you are quoting from?

**Miss M. Nicholson:** Sorry, Sir. Just as the Member researched his work, I have done proper research.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Just tell us where it is coming from.

**Miss P. Nicholson:** Faith Wiltshire. I am quoting from the *Trinidad Express*, July 04, 1988 and this is the headline: "EPZs will impede self-development" and she argued that free zones should not be allowed in the country because of the negative impact it would have on the ladies; because all over the world it is the ladies who are using these institutions, etc. Merle Hodge, May 21, 1988, *Trinidad Express*. The headline is: "The EPZ must not come like a thief in the night." "Women plan forum to discuss issue." She said:

"The most frightening thing about the period we are living in might not be the crime rate, as serious as that is."

She went in to the same arguments, more or less—that 90 per cent of women are employed in these areas. Cheap labour, the conditions they work under and that kind of thing.

Hazel Brown—same thing. Headline: "EPZs are not the answer" *Trinidad Express*, June, 1988—I cannot make out the exact date, it is not distinct, but June 1988, Sir. Asha Kambon, Saturday June 18, 1988. She says here, the headline: "FTZs (same thing) must not be tolerated in this country".

"Free Trade Zones are designated areas..."

She went on to define it to.

“within a country, which are earmarked to house foreign businesses, in an environment which is unencumbered by the host country's existing regulations governing business and trade. The foreign business is unfettered by regulations governing safety, health, industrial relations practice, minimum wages, maternal benefits, redundancy, severance or any other regulation.

Their labour force is predominantly young, female (80—90%) and unskilled. Their production processes are characterised by labour-intensive production, low wages, long hours, short holidays, high levels of intensity of labour, poor working conditions and rapid rates of labour turnover. Studies have attributed the labour turnover to the high mental and physical exhaustion of the workers.”

She went on to talk about sufficient studies having been done to justify why she was saying that we should not establish them in the country. She said—

"Sufficient studies have been done to indicate that because business in the zones being established in Latin America and the Caribbean concentrate mainly in utilising unskilled labour, the benefits of technology transfer and training of labour virtually don't exist.

Are these economic Free Trade Zones high foreign exchange earners or significant contributors to the host economy?"

Then she quoted the Jamaica case:

"Dr. Carl Stone in discussing the Jamaican experience, states that 'research has established that the net foreign exchange value is minimal;...' "

People who introduce foreign exchange introduce the free zones and always argue that that is one of the main benefits that you go after, and she is saying here, based on the Jamaican case, very little foreign exchange value exists:

" 'the upgrading of labour skills is marginal and the value added is very low because of high levels of raw material imports and low wage levels.' "

They were out in force, Sir, in 1988, to denounce EPZs—to say it must not come into Trinidad and Tobago. They joined the forces of the People's National Movement. And today "not a drum is heard, not a funeral note"

**4.20 p.m.**

We want to know who is seeking the interest of the ladies today. I supported their interest because I knew that we would have seen to it that certain things

would happen in the EPZs in terms of the hours of work and so on. The Government is saying it is against it because of all these things. It is amending the Act, but nothing is said in the amendments about the conditions under which people would be working in the EPZs, particularly the women.

The Government must put something there. It has the opportunity to do so now. So that women are totally silent. Not a drum is heard in this country today. The trade union movement is busy, with due respect to the Leader of the Opposition business in the other place; he was one of the strong trade union people speaking out against it. Then you had others like Owen Hinds.

When I saw the Bill I thought the People's National Movement was repealing the Act, based on its arguments and the commitment that it gave to the population of Trinidad and Tobago. If it has changed its views, based on the committee—the Member was using a committee to justify the change. "It was not we, but the committee recommended." What was the name of the committee—Kong Committee?

He was saying it was because of the Kong Committee that the Government was introducing it, not the People's National Movement. The Kong Committee said, they must do this; Kong Committee said it is good for employment creation; Kong Committee said that it was good for the promotion of employment; Kong Committee said, diversification of the economy; Kong Committee said that you can introduce new technology transfers—not the PNM.

That is what has been said. It is the dishonesty and those kinds of unethical approaches that are bad for this society. If the Government has changed its views—

**Mr. Valley:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have to take objection—

**Miss P. Nicholson:** Sit down!

**Mr. Valley:** I have to take objection!

**Miss P. Nicholson:** Is it a point of order?

**Mr. Valley:** Yes, it is a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am asking that the hon. Member withdraw that statement. She is charging me with dishonesty.

**Miss P. Nicholson:** Yes, it is true. Sir, do you want me to prove the dishonesty? I will go on to prove it now, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. Valley:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Member is imputing improper motives to me. I am asking for a ruling that the Member withdraw that statement, or prove it, if she can.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Will the Member please withdraw the statement or prove it?

**Miss P. Nicholson:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will try to prove it and if I cannot prove it I will withdraw. I am quoting the Member for Diego Martin Central from the *Hansard* of Tuesday, June 28, 1988. He said then:

"We on this side are of the view that this Third World free zone model can be a serious issue for our country only if we are still a colony, and in spite of what the Members behind me may say, to us it is inconceivable that we, a people who marched in the rain for Chaguaramas, a people who have achieved independence, a people who have localized the key sectors of our nation, a people who have shifted the locus of economic decision-making from the metropole to Trinidad and Tobago..."

Which he now puts back in the metropole. That is part of the case that I am proving, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I continue:

"...a people who have a clear sense of self-worth, can today willingly agree to compromise the quest for self-sustaining economic growth and economic independence."

He laments that we were going into the EPZs. Today he is concretizing the EPZs and he is saying they are a good thing. But he cannot say, "I am ashamed, and I am sad that I did not take the correct decision in 1988, and I apologize now, Sir." He could not get up and do that and say, "we all make errors and all of us who opposed the EPZs, we are sorry that we did so because we could have gained so much more."

I am just going to quote some more and ask the Member if he is sorry or if he is still supportive of these, or if it is the non-oil committee that is making him act. I cannot read his whole contribution because it is fairly long. The hon. Member used Malaysia. He was trying to use a number of countries to show the impact of the EPZs in those countries and he was arguing that even though Malaysia was one of the most successful of those countries, it did not achieve the goals fully that the governments wanted.

The Minister quoted a number of other countries with free zones to show that they were not beneficial and that people should not implement them in their countries. That is how he came up saying, "after we marched to Chaguaramas and



after we took control of our private business, people are coming and telling us about EPZs." That was the line and tone of his discourse. He said:

"By 1982 free trade zones accounted for more than half of Malaysia's total exports of manufactured goods and 90 per cent of electronic components. However, as a percentage of the total merchandise exports, FTZs accounted for a mere 14 per cent and total employment in the free trade zones was merely 8.8 per cent of manufacturing employment. "

That is the area that he has promised the Member for Laventille West. He continues:

"So that you are talking about a system, 90 per cent of electronic components, 51 per cent of total exports, very low employment.

With respect to the use of domestic raw materials, a backward linkage. For the year 1973, the amount used by these firms in the zones of domestic raw materials, 2.2 per cent; 1979, 2.8 per cent; 1982, 3.6 per cent. In other words, as late as 1982 these zones were importing 96.4 per cent of the raw materials used in the zones. There was no significant, or let us put it this way, there was a backward marginal linkage with the rest of the economy."

The Member for Caroni East has been arguing that you want forward links. He is saying, it was backward.

I am reading his speech; I have decided to do that here today.

**4.30 p.m.:** *Sitting suspended.*

**5.10 p.m.:** *Sitting resumed.*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I am not seeing the Member for Tobago West, so I am prepared to rule that someone else make his or her contribution at this point in time, and I will refer to the Member when she is available.

**The Minister of Works and Transport and The Minister of Local Government (Hon. Colm Imbert):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have had some excellent contributions in this debate today especially from the Member for Laventille West. I would like to compliment him on being forthright. He has spoken from the heart. He dealt with the fundamental issues in a manner in which Members on the other side might not be able to understand.

I would also like to congratulate the Member for Chaguanas on her excellent contribution. I can now understand why the Member for Chaguanas is in so much trouble on that side. The hon. Member is capable of making sense, informed

cogent arguments, and contributing meaningfully to debates in this House. That is something of which Members on the other side generally are incapable.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Member for Tobago West is back and before the Minister gets fully into his contribution, I want to ask whether it would be all right with him that she continue at this point.

**Hon. Imbert:** Yes.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Member for Tobago West may continue.

**Miss P. Nicholson:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Sir, I have definitely taken the line that I must remind the people of Trinidad and Tobago about the position that was taken by the People's National Movement and the vehement way in which the EPZ was denounced by them. That is why I was going through what the Member for Diego Martin Central said. This is what he said on the Malaysian case. I quote from *Hansard* dated June 28, 1988. It states:

"The electronics industry which accounted for 85 per cent of total free trade zone exports and 76 per cent of total employment in the zone in 1982 exported all of its output, and almost all of its raw materials, and capital equipment was imported. Value added in the industry is 22 per cent of total sales, but only a fraction of this amount constituted a payment to Malaysian factors of production. Wages, for example, accounted for only 38 per cent of total value added, or approximately 8.3 per cent of total sales. Sales on the domestic Malaysian market are allowed, and in 1982 they accounted for roughly 20 per cent of total output."

He then dealt with the Philippines.

"By 1976/77, 40,000 direct factory workers were expected to be employed in the EPZ itself with another 100,000 jobs indirectly created by the operations of the zone.

When we look at page 224, we see the expectation with respect to linkages in that economy did not materialize."

I would like to ask the Member for Diego Martin Central what he expects to materialize in our economy. He has not articulated that here this afternoon.

"So that we saw in Malaysia that the backward linkage in 1982 was merely 3.6 per cent. We are seeing now that in the Philippines it is 6 per cent.

...It says that in the Philippines which they claim is above average in terms of wage, the wage rate average is US \$4.00 a day."

He argued that in the Philippines and Korea the expectations were not achieved. In Malaysia, where the expectation was supposed to be about 40,000 jobs in 1982, they only achieved 5,000 jobs. He went on to ask: What do you expect to get in Trinidad and Tobago? He referred to the low wages in China, what they expected and achieved. He said that in his view it was a total waste of time.

"Mauritius's was created in 1973. And they are talking about this in 1986. The number of jobs created was 46,000 and the number of companies operating was 194. That is over a period. In Egypt the sites were created in 1974 and there were 361 companies operating in 1986. The number of jobs created was 10,000.

In Angola there was a site created in 1961. The number of jobs created was zero and the number of companies operating in 1986, obviously zero. The Ivory Coast, the number of zones created in 1974 was one and the number of jobs created was 2,000 while the number of companies operating was 24."

He continued.

"From the articles we see clearly that we are talking about cheap labour, we are talking about poor working conditions, we are talking about subsidized rent, subsidized public utilities such as water and electricity... We are talking about the risks that some operations may expand throughout the country thus undermining the independence of the people, and lastly there is the risk that the zones may be convenient—this, of course, did not come from the research articles, but in today's age of drugs we have to be careful—enterprises for illicit drugs, arms and ammunition."

That was his thinking on what happened in those countries. I would now like to hear his view on the enterprises in Trinidad and Tobago; what they are doing to control illicit drugs, arms and ammunition in our country, and how he sees the development of those kinds of conditions.

When you look at his contribution, you see he was totally against the implementation of EPZs, today, he is taking a different line.

**Mr. Valley:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Member is following a line that is not correct. I was against the classical type EPZ in 1988. I am not introducing EPZ legislation today. I have brought legislation to restrict the application of that legislation. There is no contradiction in what I am doing and what I have done.

**5.20 p.m.**

**Miss P. Nicholson:** It is my view that the Government in power took a certain line. If it is amending the Act today, and has not addressed the fundamental flaws it has seen, what is it doing?

The Prime Minister, then the Leader of the Opposition, criticized the Bill. He said it was slavery. Let me quote an article by Andy Roberts dated July 9, 1988.

"Manning: Jobs, Not Slavery.

"Opposition Leader Patrick Manning suggested yesterday that the Government could revert to the days of slavery and indentureship if its main focus was on creating employment ..."

The committee that did the work said that one of the main things was employment creation and the Government had subscribed to that. The Member for St. Joseph was one of the strongest opposers. *[Interruption]* I do not mind. I like my tabanca. He dealt with the Jamaican case which showed that after so many years what has happened, what was not achieved and so forth. It is said that the EPZs are very footloose. He was very vehement.

"It is said that the free zones, Kingston and Montego Bay together, are now employing 10,000 to 12,000 persons."

That is after maybe a decade.

"The Kingston Free Zone was established in 1982 originating out of something that was established in 1976. I refer to Working Paper No. 42—'Employment effects of multi-national enterprises in export processing zones in the Caribbean ...

"The Kingston Export Free Zone was first inaugurated in 1976 as a warehousing and trans-shipment facility. In the 1980s, its role increasingly became a centre for the production of manufactured goods for export to the international market. In 1982, the Jamaican Export Free Zone Act brought the Kingston Free Zone under its regulations."

When he articulated his case, he went on to show the kind of employment that was created, the kinds of people who were employed; all of the cases showing that it was mainly women, unskilled labour. Many of them also criticized the whole labour scenario, for example, the present Prime Minister stated in 1988:

"Important in the EPZs is the whole question of trade unions and trade union activities. It is not good enough to say that EPZs will exist in the context of the laws of the country."

What amendment do we have in this Bill to deal with the case he has made here? He was saying that we should have had a clause in the document to deal with the worker and the trade unions. I have gone through the parent document with the amendment Bill and there is no clause there dealing with the problem of trade unions. He stressed how disadvantageous it was to the workers, particularly the women, and he went on to quote what happened to a pregnant woman—when she left the job and went back she had to start from square one. He said that was what the then Government was going to impose upon the people of Trinidad and Tobago. If now the Government is amending the Bill, it should deal with that. He said:

"What I am saying is that it is all well and good to say that the opportunity is there for you to unionize if you wish. The reality is that the employers have an upper hand in that matter and to become a member of a trade union of your choice may well be more fiction than fact. A lot of women tend to find employment in the EPZs. One of the things that have been noticed in other countries is maternity leave. In some instances if you leave your job on the grounds of maternity when you come back you have to reapply for the particular job that you had."

He was saying that there should be provision in the Bill for industrial facilities to deal with that situation. If the Government's thinking has changed, if it is saying that the EPZ is a good system that can be used in our country, and it is amending the Act, some of the criticisms that it made it should address. For example, there is the trade union problem the woman would come up against. In most of the cases that the Member quoted, and from the research he did, it was argued that 90 per cent of the workers were women. Therefore, the whole question of the maternity case is there.

Based on what the Prime Minister is saying here, the Government should have addressed it in this Bill. They should not have had this Bill here without a clause to deal with that. That is why it is so important for the Government to talk about this particular Bill. It is an amendment to an Act which the Government was totally against when in opposition. The women of the country rose up against it and this case that I have just raised from the present Prime Minister's contribution was one of the areas the Government objected to vehemently. The whole question of people being able to join trade unions and what should happen should they have to leave and go back, should be here. Where is his voice?

Where is the voice of the People's National Movement on a Bill to amend the Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Act? The Government should amend the Act by

*Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Bill*  
[MISS NICHOLSON]

*Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

bringing in that clause and it should have had discussions with the women. Let the women open their mouths again. There is total silence now. There is no Merle Hodge, no Kambon, no Faith Wiltshire, no Hazel Brown. Everybody is silent. What is very, very pathetic is that it brings out distinctly the quality of the society that we have today. Total regeneration is needed in Trinidad and Tobago.

I would like, today, to remind them of their thinking. The present Prime Minister talked about Barbados, Santo Domingo and others and what obtained in those countries, and he said the PNM did not want them. *[Interruption]* To argue about tabanca is folly.

The Minister is trying to fool the Member for Laventille West. She said that she was assured that there would be good industrial relations and good facilities for the women. They cannot just say that. The Member for Laventille West has to support me here this evening. On behalf of the women of Trinidad and Tobago, let the Government put a clause or two to facilitate them. Facilitators, the Government says it is. Let it put a clause or two to cover the industrial relations scenario in the EPZs. I am a supporter, but now that the Act is back in the House, we have to clean it up and deal with the areas where there are problems. Every woman here should be supporting me strenuously—all.

**Mr. Deputy 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.*

**5.30 p.m.**

**Dr. Rowley:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was trying to figure out from my colleague the Member for Tobago West, whether, in fact, she had any use for my support. I am willing to support her but I have not had any request. *[Laughter]*

**Miss P. Nicholson:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am saying that we have to view this thing seriously. That is one of the major flaws we saw, particularly the industrial relations aspect with the trade unions and so on. The Government is saying that it has changed its mind because it is 1995 and the world is a changing world. I have changed my mind to improve the document from an industrial relations perspective and I would like that area to be looked at seriously, although I know that the Member for St. Ann's East does not want any trade union in this country.

The Member for San Fernando East, said that the NAR would have crucified the trade unions; well, he has crucified them for they cannot even come out today

and say something on behalf of the people of the country. We are not hearing McLeod with reference to the EPZs and what they expect, as they declaimed before. We are not hearing Mr. Hinds. We are not hearing Mr. Mungroo. We are not hearing Mr. Selwyn John. We are not hearing the one with public transport.

Now is the time for these unions to speak because they are their friends that they were playing cards with, and they expect them to vote for them again. *[Interruption]* Well, Mr. Weatherhead under plenty pressure from them so he cannot get the chance. *[Interruption]* Well, I am sure that Mr. Basdeo Panday is going to give his support this evening. Do not get in our contention, you just leave that alone.

I will quote what the present Prime Minister said on Friday, July 08, 1988. *[Interruption]* Well, he was then the same representative for San Fernando East. He said:

"First of all, Mr. Speaker, we need assurances by way of legislation that the system of industrial relations and collective bargaining of the country will be scrupulously respected—condition number one. Condition number two, that there must be a meaningful transfer of technology..."

He said there was no transfer of technology and so forth. When one read all the cases that the Member for Diego Martin Central quoted—he said there was very little transfer of technology. Yet, he is saying here that the Non-Oil Committee, headed by Mr. Kong or Hong, or "Hong Kong" *[Laughter]* They said that there will be introduction of new technological transfers, but almost every case—

**Mr. Valley:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, just on a point of correction. What the Kong Committee was merely saying, is that one of the guidelines for allowing *[Interruption]* Not the benefit! They did not say, as a general rule that there would be technology transfer, but to the extent that there would be technology transfer, one would be inclined to have that firm in the EPZ.

**Miss P. Nicholson:** Yes, but all the cases the Member quoted from in his contribution, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was one of the areas that they said was absent. All the cases the Member for St. Joseph quoted—absent. All of them criticized the whole question of industrial relations. As I said, the Member for San Fernando East said that there should be legislation. I am saying, now that the Government has the opportunity, the legislation should be put in this document. It should amend this document, giving the worker, particularly the woman, that industrial relations facility—if you care.

*Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Bill*  
[MISS NICHOLSON]

*Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

I am very pleased to stand here this evening. As I said, I am a supporter of the EPZ, from the perspective that I believe that if the areas are highly monitored, certain things can be done. I was that supporter from 1988. Members opposite were the most vehement opponents in this country. That brought a dilemma in this country. People could not act with what they did. That was one of the areas that they used. Today, they are saying that they care and that they support. The Minister said that the Non-Oil Committee has set out guidelines, and he went on to say that, even though he was against, he is following the Non-Oil Committee. That is what he said here this evening.

Yet, there is no legislation to deal with the industrial relations scenario. There is no legislation to tell us about the quality of the manufacturing centres that the people would work in and that sort of thing. That is why I felt I had to come here, for "a charge to keep, I have". I am here to defend all the women of Trinidad and Tobago—all the workers, but the women in particular. I am appealing to everyone here this afternoon to ensure that the further amendment is amended as far as industrial relations. I hope all the women, including everyone sitting in this House, will support this Bill.

I think I have to write a book—[*Interruption*] better than yours, hon. Member for Diego Martin Central—on this whole scenario and the behavioural patterns of parliamentarians. When we behave in this way; when we are not consistent in our thinking; when our moral ethics degenerate, when we do not have the moral fibre to function against the background of principles—that penetrates the whole society. And that is what affects the people. They are at the University of the West Indies. Mr. Dennis Pantin, the one that is their supporter; we do not hear him on anything constructive; everyone's mouth is locked up tight.

**Mr. Sobion:** Who is that?

**Miss P. Nicholson:** Your partner, Mr. Ryan.

I quote an excerpt from an address delivered by the one who is now Prime Minister. It says:

"How PNM reacts to the EPZ idea

The Government's most recent attempt to deal with unemployment will perhaps be the most devastating blow to the economic..."

And he is tightening it up to deal with unemployment in this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you very much for the opportunity that I have had to make this contribution. Every week I come here to deal with anything that



was done in 1988, I have committed myself to doing all the research I can to remind the Government about its wickedness and its meanness.

When the NAR was in Government, every week the Member for San Fernando East said here that my Prime Minister was wicked, vindictive and callous. Besides the Member for San Fernando East being wicked, vindictive and callous, he is mean, deceptive and hypocritical to the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

**5.40 p.m.**

**The Minister of Works and Transport and Minister of Local Government (Hon. Colm Imbert):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, thank you for allowing me to resume. As I said, we have heard some excellent contributions in the House today, especially the contribution of the Member for Laventille West and Chaguanas.

Let me try to deal with some of the matters raised by the Member for Chaguanas. As I said, she is the most responsible Member of the Opposition in the House, today; I am qualifying what I am saying. The Member for Chaguanas wanted to get some information on the companies that are presently operating as free zone enterprises in Trinidad and Tobago. During the contribution of the Member for Caroni East... *[Interruption]*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Member is having some difficulty making his contribution. Allow him to proceed.

**Hon. C. Imbert:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Member for Caroni East claimed, not for the first time, that the Opposition does not have available to it the resources to do proper research; but that we on this side can do indepth research.

**Miss Sagewan:** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I said no such thing. I would appreciate if the Member would withdraw that.

**Hon. C. Imbert:** What did the Member say, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

**Miss. Sagewan:** What I said was that the information that I brought to the House, I dated it, and I said that it was the most recent data available to me. That is what I said.

**Hon. C. Imbert:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are into the realm, once again of memory lapses. What the Member for Caroni East said was that the hon. Member was unable to do indepth research into the conditions existing in free zone companies in Trinidad and Tobago because she did not have the resources

*Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Bill*  
[HON. C. IMBERT]

*Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

available to the Government side. She indicated clearly that she as a Member of the Opposition, is unable, not for the first time, to do indepth research into prevailing conditions in Trinidad and Tobago in respect of this matter. That is what she said. And it was clearly demonstrated in her contribution.

When this PNM administration was in the Opposition it was the best Opposition this country ever had. The quality of research, the quality of contributions from the Members then in this House—the hon. Member for San Fernando East, the hon. Member for Diego Martin Central, my dear departed colleague the Member for Laventille West and so forth—embarrassed the then Members of the Government and it was done with the same resources. I would even venture to say with less resources than the Members of the Opposition now have.

So I do not buy that argument. I simply wish to say that it is my view that the Members on the other side are either incapable or unwilling to do proper research to prepare themselves for debate in this honourable House. They treat this honourable House with indifference, and their whole approach is superficial.

Let me deal now with the Member for Chaguanas. The companies, I am advised, which operate in free zone in Trinidad and Tobago at present are as follows: Nucor Iron Carbide Incorporated of the United States directly employs 62 Trinidad and Tobago nationals, and between 1993 and 1995 it purchased US \$21 million or approximately TT \$120 million from Trinidad and Tobago and paid US \$921,000 or close to \$6 million in income taxes to the Board of Inland Revenue as a result of its operations. It was approved for operation in March 1993.

Ocean Harvest Processors Limited involved in processing, trading of sea foods; approved in 1994 have temporarily ceased operations and are currently negotiating a new joint venture to provide raw materials to recommence production. At the time they were operating they employed 235 nationals.

Caribbean Tyre, manufacturers of tyres, employed 160 nationals when they were in operation, I understand that Carlyle Tyre of the United States is expected to purchase the plant and manufacture tyres for export in 1995.

I would like the Members on the other side to take careful note of the names of the companies, because the Member for Couva North said—I took down what he said during the contribution of the Member for Caroni East, in his attempt to support the inaccurate statements that the Member for Caroni East made—"not a

single free zone enterprise is unionized." As far as I am aware Caribbean Tyre is unionized and the Oilfields Workers' Trade Union represents the workers.

We also have Screen Manufacturing of the United States of America, manufacturer of oilwell wire clocks screens employing 20 persons; Trinidad Cement Limited in collaboration with Ponsa Manufacturing Limited manufacturing slings, employing 22 people; again I believe, they are unionized. Retrofit Limited, manufacturers of electronic components, employing 40 persons; Nestlé Caribbean, perhaps they are unionized—I do not know if the Member for Couva North would tell me—employing 22 persons between 1993 and 1995, exported 1,370 containers valued at US \$2 million or TT \$12 million and paid US \$163,000 in income taxes to date to the Board of Inland Revenue.

Matouk International Limited, I believe that they have some kind of union present, I do not know, perhaps the Member for Couva North would tell me; he said not a single one of them was unionized, in his usual way he just does not know anything. TSTT, providing services to exporters. Then there are a number of service organizations, international trade managers, Regency Fireplace International, Nabisco International Limited and so forth.

The total number of jobs created—this is for the benefit of the Member for Chaguanas because she asked pertinent questions unlike the Member for Caroni East—591, since the free zones have started to operate.

I have answered some of the questions of the Member for Chaguanas and dealt with some of the issues raised. I hope I have now enlightened the Member for Couva North on the fact that several of the companies are local and are unionized with some of the most powerful and important trade unions in the country.

**5.50 p.m.**

The Member for Chaguanas will also realize that contrary to the statements made by the Member for Caroni East, quite a number of the companies now operating free zone enterprises are involved in significant value added operations. They are not simply assembly-type operations, they are significant value added, and there are some linkages in the case of Nestlé which uses local products to manufacture many of its items and there are some backward linkages to the economy.

It would be incorrect, however, to indicate that free zones have contributed in a very substantial way to employment generation in Trinidad and Tobago. To

*Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Bill*  
[HON. C. IMBERT]

*Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

date, they have not done so; they have created 591 jobs, which is a significant number, but it is not a very substantial number because it is not in the thousands. This is what the Member for Tobago West—it is a pity she has left, her usual hit and run behaviour—the Members on the other side were trying to portray in 1988 when they came into this House to champion the development of free zones. They talked about 20,000 or 30,000 jobs.

The fact of the matter is, the free zones enterprises have not generated thousands of jobs, hundreds of jobs, yes; meaningful jobs, productive jobs. It is an important area of our economy. What the Member for Caroni East missed in her contribution, is the fact that the Bill before the House today—and may I remind the Member for Caroni East that when we come into this Parliament we come to debate legislation. I do not recall during even one minute of her contribution when she referred to a single clause in this Bill, not a word about the Bill before the House today. It is unfortunate. One would expect when we come into this Parliament, we come here to debate legislation and we are not on a frolic of our own to make irrelevant points.

**Mr. Maharaj:** What about the Member for Laventille West?

**Hon. C. Imbert:** The Member for Laventille West was supporting the introduction of the Bill by the Member for Diego Martin Central, who dealt with the various clauses so it was not necessary for the Member for Laventille West to repeat clause by clause the various aspects. She was in support of the detailed introduction of the Member for Diego Martin Central. I would not expect the Member for Couva South to understand that. Anyway, I would not get into debates about court and who wins a case, who loses a case and why.

The Member for Diego Martin Central made the point that this PNM administration had a choice; on our entry into Government in 1991, we could have either scrapped the free zone legislation entirely, or we could have looked at it recognizing that it had already been put in place and seen whether we could have improved it.

I found it most ironic during the contribution of the Member for Tobago West—I notice the Member for Tobago East is also absent, it is typical—that she complained bitterly about the lack of a clause in our amendment bill relating to trade union activity. One wonders if the Members on the other side were ever in this Parliament as Members of a government with the power to amend legislation. It is simply amazing that when certain arguments were put forward by distinguished on this side, then in the Opposition, the then Government did

nothing, but comes back seven years later to lambaste Members on this side with not putting certain amendments. The Member for Tobago West also—[*Member for Tobago West re-enters the Chamber*—my good Friend the Member for Tobago West, I am so glad you have returned. Where are you going? Stay and listen! The Member for Tobago West—you know, it is a type of “tabanca”. There are different forms of “tabanca”, and I sometimes believe that the Member for Tobago West has the most violent form of tabanca known in local parlance as “tarange.”

**Dr. Rowley:** “Fofooroo.”

**Hon. C. Imbert:** “Fofooroo” and “ufombay” are less violent forms of tabanca, but “tarange” is the most violent form.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Would the Member please spell that for the *Hansard* Reporter?

**Hon. C. Imbert:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, with your permission, I will assist the *Hansard* reporter to spell the words in due course. The Member for Tobago West manifests a most violent form of “tabanca”—a Government “tabanca”—when that Member comes into this House. The pain of no longer being in Government is so evident in her utterances. The pain of the fact that so many sectors in the society—trade unions, intellectuals, workers’ organizations, interest groups, women’s groups, NGOs, activists—attacked the former NAR administration in 1988 and they are all quiet now terribly upsets her.

In the contribution of the Member for Tobago West, she spends most of her time complaining that persons like Asha Kambon, Merle Hodge, Faith Wiltshire, Hazel Brown, Dennis Pantin, Dr. Selwyn Ryan and other academics who lambasted the former administration in 1988 are all quiet now. Why is that? Is it not funny that virtually every sector of the society—working class, middle class, upper class, workers, employers—is quiet? Why is that?

The reason is, they support the People’s National Movement Government and that is the problem that the Member for Tobago West is having. The hon. Member is upset that so many and so diverse a spectrum of interest groups in the society are in support of the policies of this People’s National Movement Government, but I can understand that.

I can also understand the stress of the Member for Tobago East as well, when during that tenure 1986 to 1991, virtually every sector of the society took up arms—verbal arms, that is—and fought to remove that administration from office. Every sector of the society came together and democratically elected another

*Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Bill*  
[HON. C. IMBERT]

*Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

government, but now in 1995, they are all supporting the People's National Movement. Surprising! I can understand how upsetting it is for the Member for Tobago East. Even Tobago is supporting the People's National Movement now, so I can understand how upsetting it is.

The Member for Caroni East's contribution was bereft of any analysis of the local situation. What is the relevance of an EPZ in Bangladesh, Turkey, Pakistan, China, Egypt, Mauritius, Barbados, Jamaica? What is the relevance of that, when no research has been done by the Member for Caroni East and the Members on the opposite side about EPZs or free trade zones in Trinidad and Tobago? What is the point of saying all this when the Members on the other side have not enlightened themselves on what is happening in Trinidad and Tobago? It is an irrelevant argument, totally out of context, has no meaning in this debate in this honourable House today—very unfortunate.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Minister of Trade and Industry and Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. Kenneth Valley):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it is an appropriate time to take the adjournment. In moving the adjournment, I want to inform hon. Members that the Government plans to complete the debate on the EPZs, to take the Senate amendments to both the Companies Bill and the Securities Industry Bill as well as to complete the two minor bills on the Order Paper—the Bill to amend the Institute of Marine Affairs as well as the Petroleum Taxes Bill—on Friday at the next sitting.

**Hon. Member:** When will we be coming back, next week?

**Hon. K. Valley:** We have a Motion on the adjournment to do on Friday. Whatever time, we will do that Motion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to Friday, October 6, 1995 at 1.30 p.m.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** There will be two Motions on the adjournment for Friday. There is another one on the record.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*House adjourned accordingly.*

*Adjourned at 6.02 p.m.*

## WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

**Road Improvement Fund  
(Award of Contracts)**

*The following question was asked by Mr. R. L. Maharaj (Couva South):*

- 168.** (a) Would the hon. Minister of Works and Transport and Minister of Local Government please state the names of the companies and/or firms which have been awarded contracts in respect of projects under and/or in respect of the Road Improvement Fund?
- (b) Could the Minister state whether officers of his ministry and/or their spouses or relatives have shares and/or interests in these companies? If they do, could he give the names of the officials, the names of the spouses or relatives, the nature of the family relationships and the names of the companies?
- (c) Would the Minister give the particulars of these contracts, which particulars are to include the names of the contractors, the contract price of each contract, and the place the contract was performed?

*The following reply was circulated to Members of the House:*

- (a) The names of the companies and/or firms that have been awarded contracts under the Road Improvement Fund are listed in Appendix 1 of this report.
- (b) These matters are presently under investigation and the appropriate responses will be given when the findings have been received.
- (c) Name of Rental Company:

Auto Rentals

Rental Information:

Name of Hirer: Ministry of Works (Highways Division)

Address: Port Authority Building

Dock Road,

Port of Spain.

The following ten (10) vehicles were rented under the Road Improvement Fund for the period February 1, 1995 to August 31, 1995.

*Written Answers to Questions*

*Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

Make/Model	Unit Price/Month	Quantity
2.cc Hyundai Sonata	\$5,300 (plus vat)	2
1.6cc Hyundai Elantra	\$3,950 (Plus vat)	7
1.3cc 4WD Suzuki Samurai	\$3,100 (plus vat)	1
TOTAL		

Six motor vehicles are now being rented for use by the districts for a period of six (6) months beginning September 1, 1995.

Reason for Rental

It affords the districts reliable transportation service which enhances efficiency on projects in terms of quality control and supervision.

**Road Improvement Fund  
(Rental of Vehicles)**

*The following question was asked by Mr. R. L. Maharaj (Couva South):*

- 169.** (a) Could the hon. Minister of Works and Transport and Minister of Local Government state whether the Road Improvement Fund has been used by his ministry for vehicles to be rented for officials of his ministry?
- (b) If the answer is in the affirmative, could the Minister state whether the officers who used these vehicles also collected travelling allowances as public officers?
- (c) Could the Minister give particulars of the rental agreements, giving the names of these companies and/or firms with which these agreements were entered, the sums of moneys paid for each rental and the reason and/or reasons for the rentals?

*The following reply was circulated to Members of the House:*

- (a) Yes, vehicles were rented by the Highways Division for use by various districts. This was done to ensure effective and efficient monitoring and quality control of the various projects.
- (b) The vehicles were not used exclusively by any particular officer since officers were required to perform duties under the Road Improvement Fund Programme and the Highways Maintenance Programme which required the use of their own vehicles, as well. Those officers who were required to use their own vehicles for the performance of their



duties, were paid travelling allowance in accordance with the Travelling Allowance Regulations Chapter 23:50 of the Laws of Trinidad and Tobago.

**MINISTRY OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT  
HIGHWAYS DIVISION  
ROAD IMPROVEMENT FUND PROGRAMME  
LIST OF CONTRACTORS 1994—1995**

District	Caroni
NAME OF CONTRACTORS	NAME OF CONTRACTORS
Coosal's Construction Co. Ltd.	Rampersad Moonal Ltd.
Seereeram Brothers	Antelope construction Co. Ltd.
Jusamco Pavers	P.C.C.L. Construction Ltd.
Dipcon	Lutchmeesingh Transport
G.H. Construction	Bolan Narace
P. R. Contracting	Bhagelu
David John	Plant and Equipment Parts and Service Ltd.
Hayden Persad	A.B.C.O.
Rohan Saisbhan	Trinidad Asphalt Pavers
Samodee Contracting Ltd.	David Solomon General Contractor
Centre City Transport	Traffic Control Contracts Service
A Persad Ramdial	Kaleidoscope Paints Ltd.
Penta Paints Ltd.	Berger Paints Ltd.
Sissons Paints	Charlie Dwarika
J. Lomas Construction Co. Ltd.	R. Sattar
Central Concrete Products	Trincon
Concrete Jungle	Nazir Ali
Kamalijit Singh	G.D.'s Investment
Syne Contracting and Industry 1988 Ltd.	R.A. Mohammed

District	Caroni
NAME OF CONTRACTORS	NAME OF CONTRACTORS
Motilal Ramhit	D.M. Construction
Trinidad Timber Ltd.	Roopnarine Hardware Judith Chai
Mt. Hope Sawmill Sarran	Northern Hardware
Sampath	F.T. FarFan
Tracmac	Perevia and Company
Moses and sons	N.P.
T.C.L.	Auto Rentals Limited
Thomas Peake	

District	Victoria East
NAME OF CONTRACTORS	NAME OF CONTRACTORS
Geddes Grant	ACME Service Staton
Rohan Saisbhan	Neal & Massy Motors
K & H Contractors Ltd.	Central Precision
National Petroleum Marketing Co. Ltd.	Trinidad Hose Co. Ltd.
Tazmool Hosein & Sons	Deo's Radiator & Gas Tank Service
Trinidad Cement Ltd.	Awardy's Hardware and General Supplies
G. H. Construction Ltd.	Champion Expenditing Service Ltd.
Geo Technology Ltd.	C & I Dave's Auto
H. Sigoolam & Sons	Lenny Sumadhu Ltd.
Jusamco Pavers Ltd.	Heavy Equipment Sales and Services
T & H. Construction Ltd.	Zainool Aligour
Manohar Seebalack Hardware	Carib Asphalt Pavers Ltd.
Imraj Brother Muffler Service	Coosal's Quarry Ltd.
Stollmeyers Ltd.	C.S.K.
Ashram Persad	Carosel Gas Station
	Enam Auto & Industrial Supplies

District	Victoria East
NAME OF CONTRACTORS	NAME OF CONTRACTORS
Sooknanan and Sons Sawmill	Tracmac Engineering
Rasheed Sattar	Junior Alexander Upholster
Checks Motor Supplies	Tyre Clinic 200 Ltd.
Balroops Tyre Service	Auto Rentals Limited
Laughlin and De Gannes	

District	St. Andrew/St. David
NAME OF CONTRACTORS	NAME OF CONTRACTORS
Paharry Hardware	Deo's Radiator Works
Laughlin and De Gannes	Cameroon Marketing
Neal and Massy Motors	Hansraj Bissram
Centre City Transport	Balroop's Tyre Service
Holder Brothers Co. Ltd.	Judith Chai Trading
Kaleidoscope Paints Ltd.	William H. Scott Ltd.
Automotive Components	Tracmac Engineering
Plenti Parts Ltd.	R.H. Mohammed Sawmill
Trinidad Cement Ltd.	Sookhai Diesel Service
Plant and Equipment Parts	Rajk Singh
Berger Paints Ltd.	J. N. Harrinanan and Co. Ltd.
Vulcan Mufflers Ltd.	Harewood Radiator Services
Andray's Service Station	T & T National Petroleum Marketing Co. Ltd.
Coosal's Construction Co. Ltd.	Trinto Gas Ltd.
Daves Auto Supplies	Amar Agro Supplies
Mc Eneaney's Business Machine Ltd.	Grell Taurel Ltd.
D. Rampersad & Co. Ltd.	Vinoor Mahadeo
Weldequip Limited	C.S.K.
Penta Paints Ltd.	Auto Rentals Limited

District	Victoria West
NAME OF CONTRACTORS	NAME OF CONTRACTORS
Borde Communication	Jusamco Pavers Ltd.
Carib Asphalt Pavers Ltd.	T & T. N.P. Marketing Co. Ltd.
Balroops Tyre Services	Tyre Clinic
Carrousel Service Station	Automative Components Ltd.
Electrosign Ltd.	Tracmac Engineering
Trinidad Tractor Ltd.	Construction Marketeers Service Ltd.
Hi Tech Fluid Power Ltd.	Berger Paints Ltd.
Lenny Sumadh Ltd.	H. Permanand Machine Shop
Amar Auto Supplies Ltd.	Neal and Massy Motors Ltd.
Boysie S. Khan & Sons	Rohan Saisbhan
Tazmool Hosein & Sons Ltd.	M. Seebalack Hardware
Awardy Hardware & General Sup.	Holdings Brothers Co. Ltd.
C.S.K.	G.D.S. Investments
Rahamut Service Station	L & W Engineering Equipment Ltd.
Trinidad Cement Ltd.	A. Moses & Sons Ltd.
Rogers Auto Paint Supplies	Rasheed Sattar
Salamats Service Station	Harmony Hall Service Station
Laughlin & De Gannes	Champion Expediting Service
Metal X	Roopnarine L. Singh
Centre City Transport Co. Ltd.	Raymond Sammy
Penta Paints Ltd.	Singh's Radiator Service Ltd.
E.S.W.I.L.	Imraj Brothers Muffler
Central Precision Eng. Reb. Ltd.	Hardware & Oilfield
West Bend Sales Ltd.	Tuff Bond Ltd.
Syne Contractors	Eagle Shirt Factory
Plant & Equipment Parts Service Ltd.	Nathu Co
Auto Rentals Limited	

District	St. Patrick
NAME OF CONTRACTORS	NAME OF CONTRACTORS
Carib Asphalt Pavers Ltd.	T & T National Petroleum
Marketing Co. Ltd.	Ali Meahjohn
Rahamuts Service Station	Balroops Tyre Service
Awardy Hardware & General Supplies	Stollmeyer Ltd.
K & H Contracting Ltd.	Automotive Components
Rohan Saisbhan	Samodee Contracting Ltd.
Borde Communicaiton	Metal Engineering
Hosein Auto Supplies	A. Moses & Sons Ltd.
Reesal Hardware Ltd.	Cedros Fishing Co-op Society Ltd.
Kaleidoscope Paints Ltd.	Ayoung Chee Hardware
Trinidad Cement Ltd.	Seebalack Hardware
Diptees Hardware	Roopnarine L. Singh
Junior Sammy	Trinidad Auger Piles
Sissons Paints	Jusamco Pavers
Trinidad Timbers	Caribbean Tyres Ltd.
Raghunath Singh Co. Ltd.	Pres-T-Con Ltd.
Amar Auto Supplies	Hi Tech Fluid
Boysie S. Khan	Sookdeo Calpu
Changoor Exp. Ltd.	Roger Automotive Paint Shop
Lenny Sumach	G.G.I.
Knights Investments Ltd.	Point Fortin Hardware Ltd.
G.D.S. Investments Ltd.	Laughlin & De Gannes
Champion Expediting Ltd.	Mickey's Muffler Service
SDA Investment Ltd.	Tyre Clinic 2000 Ltd.
Holdings Brothers Co. Ltd.	Edoo's Welding
Grell Taurel	Lutchmeesingh's Transport
	Caribbean Steel Mill Ltd.

*Written Answers to Questions**Wednesday, October 04, 1995*

District	St. Patrick
NAME OF CONTRACTORS	NAME OF CONTRACTORS
Santa Flora Motor Supplies	Cameron Marketing Company
Clirol Marketing	Neal & Massy Motors
Auto Rentals Ltd.	Oilfield & Marine Sales Services
G.H. Construction Ltd.	C.A.B. Contractors
Trinidad Hose C. Ltd.	
Auto Rentals Limited	

District	St. George West
NAME OF CONTRACTORS	NAME OF CONTRACTORS
A-Z Supplies Ltd.	
A. Moses & Sons	
Alphonso Lukc	
Amar Agos. Ltd.	
Amar Auto Supplies	
Amar Motor Corp.	
Asph. Road Surfacing Co. Ltd.	
Asphalt Road Surfacing Co.	
Auto & Industrial Radiators Ltd.	
Auto Rentals Limited Automotive Components	
Awardy Hardware Ltd.	
Balroop's Tyre Service Ltd.	
Beautification Works Ltd.	
Berger Paints Ltd.	
Borde Communication	
C. Rich Paint Supplies	
Cameron Marketing Co. Ltd.	

District	St. George West
NAME OF CONTRACTORS	NAME OF CONTRACTORS
Caribbean Telecom Ltd.	Hilti Agostini Fastening System
Caribbean Tyre Co. Ltd.	Holder Bros. Ltd.
Center City Transport	Ian Ramdeen Transport
Central Concrete Products, Ltd.	Industrial Rubber Products
Century 21 Janatorial, Services, Ltd.	Interchange Engineering Ltd.
Chan & Owen Equipment Ltd.	J. Chai Trading Co. Ltd.
Cool Aire Ltd.	J. Fab Paint Supplies
Coosal's Construction Co. Ltd.	John Penny Service Station
D'Abadie Discount Hardware	Jusamco Pavers Ltd.
D's Car Boutique	Jusamco Readymix Ltd.
Da Silva Autobody Ltd.	Kaleidoscope Paints Ltd.
Davidson Amott & Co. Ltd.	Kolarsingh Components
Davidson Amott & Co. Ltd.	Laughlin & De Gannes
E. Bancruft Meyer Ltd.	Life Wear Mufflers Ltd.
Earth Movers Ltd.	Life Wear Muffler Centre
F.T. Farfan & Sons Ltd.	M.T.S.
Fidel Gonzales Serv. Stat.	Mannool's Upholstering
Fidel Gonzalez	Marine & Industrial Supplies Ltd.
Fleet Pavers Ltd.	Merlin Genuine Spare Parts
Fujiko Caribbean Ltd.	Metal-X-Engineering
G.D.S. Instalments Ltd.	Ministry of Agriculture
G.H. Construction Co. Ltd.	Moonan Eng. Construct. Co. Ltd.
Geo. Technologies Ltd.	Moores Auto Machine Shop
Grell Taurel Ltd.	Moses & Sons Ltd.
Hardmar Industrial Sales & Service	N.P. Marketing Co. Ltd.
Harold Griffith	National Shoe Mfg. Co. Ltd.
	Neal & Massy Motors Ltd.

District	St. George West
NAME OF CONTRACTORS	NAME OF CONTRACTORS
Northern H/ware & Bldg. Supply Co.	Trinidad Cement Ltd.
Pappy's Auto Mart Shop	Trinidad Hose Co. Ltd.
Pappy's Central Auto Mach. Shop	Trinidad Valve Fitting Co. Ltd.
Parc Disposal Ltd.	Trinto Gas Ltd.
Penta Paints Ltd.	Trintogas Ltd.
Pillai's Tools Co. Ltd.	Trinitrace Ltd.
Plant & Equip. Parts Ser. Ltd.	Tyre Clinic Ltd.
Plant & Equip. Parts Ser. Ltd.	W.H. Scott Ltd.
Plentiparts Ltd.	Wilton James Transport
Rajkumarsingh Serv. Stat.	Z. Mustapha & Accessories Ltd.
Rasheed Sattar	
Readymix (W.I.) Ltd.	
Red Force Exca.	
Romain's Hardware Ltd.	
Rupert Chandler	
San Morets	
Seereeram Bros. Ltd.	
Sissons Paints Ltd.	
Thomas Peake Ltd.	
Trac. Max Engineering	
Tracmac Eng. Ltd.	
Traffic Control Contracting Co. Ltd.	
Trinidad Asphalt Pavers	
Trinidad Cement Ltd.	