

*Leave of Absence**Thursday, July 31, 1997***HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES***Thursday, July 31, 1997*

The House met at 2.30 p.m.

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

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I wish to advise that I have received communication from five Members of this House who have asked to be excused from today's sitting. They are the Member for Diego Martin East (Mr. Colm Imbert) who has asked to be excused from July 26 to August 4, 1997 because he is out of the country; the Member for Diego Martin West (Dr. Keith Rowley) who has asked to be excused from today until August 21, 1997; the Member for San Fernando West (Mr. Barendra Sinanan); the Member for La Brea (Mr. Hedwige Bereaux); and the Member the Arouca South (Mrs. Camille Robinson-Regis). They are all excused from the sitting.

I also wish to advise hon. Members that I have received communication from the Chairman of the Elections and Boundaries Commission, in which he has sent to me the printed report on the Parliamentary by-elections held on May 5, 1997 in the electoral district of Tobago East. This shall be made available to members and will be put on the table.

Thank you.

PAPERS LAID

1. Financial statement of the Trinidad Nitrogen Company Limited for the year ended December 31, 1996. [*The Attorney General (Hon. Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj)*]
2. Report of the Auditor General on the public accounts of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for the year ended December 31, 1996 and on other Selected Recorded Activities. [*Hon. R. L. Maharaj*]
To be referred to the Public Accounts Committee
3. Financial statements of the Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (Petrotrin) for the year ended September 30, 1996. [*Hon. R. L. Maharaj*]
Papers 1 and 3 to be referred to the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The following questions stood on the Order Paper in the name of Dr. Keith Rowley (Diego Martin West):

Qualified Panel**(Programme Co-ordinator for Agricultural Sector Loan)**

- 58.** With reference to the qualified panel which was established to interview and determine the relative suitability of applicants for the contract post of Programme Co-ordinator for the Agricultural Sector Loan, could the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources indicate:
- (a) whether any meeting of the panel was held subsequent to the written submission wherein it was recommended that the job be offered to persons ranked 1-3, in that order;
 - (b) that date and the venue of such meeting;
 - (c) who convened the meeting and state which members of the authorized panel attended;
 - (d) whether he received any report recommending changes to the original report?

Resignation Date**(General Manager of Agricultural Development Bank)**

- 59.** (a) Could the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources state the effective date of resignation of the last General Manager of the Agricultural Development Bank?
- (b) Could the Minister further state whether a replacement, acting or otherwise, has been appointed?
- (c) If the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, could the Minister identify the officer and outline the selection process which was adopted?

Qualified Panel**(Contract Officers in Trade Monitoring Unit)**

- 60.** (a) Could the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources indicate whether a qualified panel of interviewers conducted interviews for the position of Contract Officers in the Trade Monitoring Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources?

- (b) Could the Minister identify the applicants who were short-listed as well as their rankings and scores?
- (c) Could the Minister indicate whether all hirings were done according to the suitability rankings as recommended by the qualified panel of interviewers?
- (d) If the answer to (c) is negative, could the Minister indicate how it varied from the recommendations and why?

The Attorney General (Hon. Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj): Mr. Speaker, by agreement subject to your indulgence, questions Nos. 58, 59 and 60 would be deferred. It seems to me that both sides of the House were asking for a week, but it would not be convenient for the Opposition for a week. Having regard to the plans we have for Parliament, we ask you to put this for October 3, 1997.

Questions, by leave, deferred.

ARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

The Attorney General (Hon. Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House now resolve itself into Finance Committee to consider the matters relating to the 1997 accounts.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: I wish to advise that because the House is going into Finance Committee, it is necessary for the public gallery to be cleared. Members of the public would be free to return immediately after the Finance Committee meeting ends.

I thank you.

2.38 p.m.: *House resolved itself into Finance Committee.*

2.55 p.m.: *House resumed.*

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Minister of Finance and Minister of Tourism (Sen. The Hon. Brian Kuei Tung): Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise that the Finance Committee has met and has considered matters related to the 1997 accounts, and that the Finance Committee will report to the House on Monday, August 4, 1997.

CIPRIANI LABOUR COLLEGE (AMDT.) BILL

[Second Day]

*Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question [July 25, 1997]:**That the Bill be now read a second time.**Question again proposed.*

Mr. Eric Williams (*Port of Spain South*): Mr. Speaker, I thank you for recognizing me. On the last day that the House met, Friday, July 25, 1997, I was, like many Members of this august Chamber, sitting here as quietly as I usually do, sometimes praying, sometimes looking on—not asleep like some other Members. I saw a simple Bill to change the name of an institution in this society, the Cipriani Labour College. I was a little interested because I thought it a simple Bill and, as a matter of fact, the hon. Minister of Labour and Co-operatives, the hon. Harry Partap, the Member for Nariva, began innocuously enough by saying, and I quote:

"A simple piece of legislation designed to give recognition, in addition to the work being done at the Cipriani Labour College."

I thought that was the end of that.

Then, the hon. Member went on to indulge himself, and in so doing—I respectfully submit—insult the intelligence of the membership of this House by speaking of a number of trivialities. He sought to politicize this matter. In fact, he also sought to suggest that someone, to wit, previous PNM administrations, were insulting to the national community, particularly the labour community by not changing the name of the institution. Mr. Speaker, I think he may have deviated from his text—I noticed also that the regular chairman of the caucus of the Members on the other side was not present, so it is possible that his text may not have been properly edited. *[Laughter]*

There were some facts in between the hon. Minister's presentation. Quite rightly, he pointed out that the college was opened in 1966 and that the main thrust was in the field of labour and industrial relations. Despite all of his attempts to denigrate previous PNM administrations, one ought to be balanced, even-handed and say that in 1966, it was, in fact, a PNM institution which opened the Cipriani Labour College. It did so in recognition and, by the way, in partnership with the labour movement to increase the level of knowledge and scholarship of those involved in the labour industry.

The hon. Minister pointed out that in 1972 the curriculum was expanded to include the integration of education and training in co-operatives. That is a fact. It seems to me that the hon. Minister attempted to involve you, Mr. Speaker, in the debate by saying that your good self, Sir, would certainly have changed the name. I think that my children call that buttering up. It was not necessary in a simple piece of legislation like this. I do not know if there is some need for the hon. Minister to make brownie points with you, but certainly none was made with this House. In fact, his contribution only served to raise the ire of quite a number of Members on this side. One noticed that the hon. Member for Couva South could not contain himself with laughter at the time—Couva North, sorry, I am corrected. One noticed that there was general disruption in the decorum in the House. You know there was a two-headed creature, North and South.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister went on and raised a number of questions. For instance, he spoke of several requests to have the name changed and he said that it was all PNM administrations. In fact, he refers to a request made in 1989—and this is as an aside because we do not have our normal source of asides in this House today. In 1989, I do not believe that the PNM was in government but, even so, the substance of the matter is that Co-operative Studies has been an established course on the curriculum at the Cipriani Labour College. In fact, this reminds me, the discourse that the Member engaged in appeared to be comparable to adding the sprinkling to the icing which was already on a very solid pound cake. That is all it amounted to, a bit of fluff, a name change. What is in a name, Mr. Speaker?

3.05 p.m.

A rose by any other name, Sir, is just as sweet. Let us deal with the substance of the matter. Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister went on to ask all kinds of questions about who was insulting to whom and that nationals were insulted. He was just castigating the PNM. I do not understand, why on a matter as simple as this the hon. Minister would so indulge himself?

In fact, when he speaks about Government insulting the intelligence of people in general and the labour community, one has to ask oneself, what is the track record of the government of which he is a part? In the 20 months that this Government has been in power, a number of my constituents have come—I have lost count—to tell me of various ways in which—maybe it is that they have had the wrong perception, I would grant that—they feel insulted by some of the apparently inane decisions made by this Government.

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During the last budget debate in this honourable House we observed the spectacle of the business of licensing and the inspection of vehicles that was pulled back. We are in a situation where we no longer license vehicles on the road and there is a fair amount of confusion about how one can tell if a defective vehicle is on the road.

In fact we were told that there would be a new system of inspection at private garages which would be certified. We were assured that there would be no problem as we went along, but lo and behold I see on page 6 of today's *Daily Express* that the Ministry of Works is launching a defective vehicles drive. A number of people have asked me if the licensing programme was in place, as we normally had, and this Government had dealt with the substance of the topic of vehicular traffic on the road, we would still have to indulge ourselves in this additional expenditure.

Mr. Speaker, I also remember in the *Public Sector Investment Programme* (PSIP), page 19 refers, among other things, to:

"(a) the dredging of the St. Ann's river outfall which is expected to have a significant impact on the drainage of down town Port of Spain;"

It seemed to be a simple matter because since colonial days we have always known that we have had to dredge the river. In fact, there were plans that were about to be put in place to do a number of things with the whole drainage system in the country.

The St. Ann's river outpour happens to be in my constituency of Port of Spain South. Mr. Speaker, imagine the ire of some of my constituents—a picture speaks a thousand words—in today's *Express* on the front page, it says:

"South Quay floods"

It is not the first one since this announcement in the PSIP.

The hon. Minister came to this House and described an institution that is not a controversial one that has a curriculum with quite a bit of substance to it, which is an educational institution in this country and was making much ado about nothing but a name change.

Mr. Bereaux: He has nothing to do.

Mr. E. Williams: It seems that one sees a thread where a matter that is of substance is dealt with in a trivial manner and a bit of fluff used for political

mileage is put on it, obfuscating the whole purpose of the Motion before the House and it is a simple matter.

Mr. Speaker, when this debate became public quite a number of people said to me that the hon. Minister is saying that the labour movement is insulted but they were insulted as well and feel aggrieved. In fact, quite a number of my elderly constituents complained about the closure of the Woodbrook Health Centre. They are saying that this Government is dealing, as its highest priority, with changing the name of the Cipriani Labour College but at the same time it is closing down a health centre in the middle of an area, based on a rationale of dollars and cents. An elderly lady about 85 years said to me that this seemed as though it was done by one of them "fellas" with a new MBA degree. It seems as though it did not think of the people, the social conscience which involves the people.

Not all MBAs would indulge in that sort of behaviour, but when one looks only at dollars and cents and not at the effect on people, this is the result. The senior citizens, particularly, who live in the Woodbrook area felt insulted when they compared the closure of their health centre with the name change of the Cipriani Labour College because the health centre services both the Woodbrook and the Newtown areas and most of the people who go there are senior citizens and they are being told that they now have to go to another facility in St. James, which is already overcrowded and small, and would involve them having to spend their pension money.

At this time we must point out that the payment of pension is not at the level that was suggested in the manifesto of those who are now in Government. What about the elderly lady who is blind, who because she has grown up and lived in the Woodbrook area, knows the streets by heart and can get from her home to the health centre because she knows the area?

When you look at it substantively, this particular health centre services the Tranquillity, St. Theresa, Newtown Boys' and Girls' R.C, St. Crispin's and Carenage primary schools. The medical and dental clinics service not only the schools, but civil servants from nearby ministries such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources. They work in Port of Spain and many of them do not live in Port of Spain and it is convenient to take maybe an hour off, to have their needs taken care of rather than a whole day, which speaks to productivity. The point is, in the minds of many citizens, a matter as serious as that, when compared with the parliamentary time being taken up by a name change, they have said to me, "Mr. Williams 'yuh' have to talk about it because we feel insulted."

3.15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I really would have liked to allow the whole issue to pass because there is a personal side to my interest with the Cipriani Labour College. My late father who was known to quite a number of people in this Chamber, we spent the best one hour of my life together on his hospital bed just prior to the surgery from which he died. Mr. Speaker, if you talk about quality time, that was quality time for me.

Dr. Griffith: Because he was a quality man.

Mr. E. Williams: And he would be so ashamed of you right now. That to me was very dear.

During that hour we discussed his aspiration to attend Cipriani Labour College to continue his studies in the area of co-operatives because at the time, he was the president of one of the credit unions to which he belonged, in particular, Tranquillity Credit Union. He was interested, even at the age of 64, in continuing his studies. To hear the hon. Minister come to this House and trivialize an institution such as that offends me.

Mr. Speaker, it would seem that this particular Minister is causing offence in a number of places of late, whether he does the right thing or the wrong thing. It seems he is quite consistent. I happened to purchase Sunday's *TnT Mirror* of August 1, 1997. On the front page in red, "Partap roughed up at public meeting". Mr. Speaker, inside and outside of this House this Minister seems to delight in being roughed up. The report in this particular paper suggests that the hon. Minister was about to do the right thing but yet still in a constituency meeting in Chaguanas, it is reported that the hon. Minister was roughed up for doing the right thing. Maybe he did it wrong but he was trying to do the right thing.

Mr. Speaker, what was he trying to do? He was trying to tell many of the constituents of my very good Friend from Chaguanas, that the Government was right in removing them from the Nariva Swamp where they engaged in the livelihood of rice farming. The constituents of my good Friend roughed up my other good Friend, the Member for Nariva and I do not understand that. It became clear because according to the report, it is hearsay to the extent that it is published in a newspaper and I have not heard of any litigation or rebuttal to date. In fact, I understand that the Minister went to Tobago shortly after, probably to recuperate in the lovely sister isle. They described him as scurrying and trembling. Imagine, in a constituency of which his friend is the Member. Mr. Speaker, all I can say is that

the hon. Minister seemed to have been doing the right thing at that time, unlike in my respectful view, what he was attempting to do in this House last week in the manner in which he piloted this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, what is also disturbing to me is that according to this report—and I hope it would be rebutted because I do not like to see when my friends are reported as saying these things—it says, and I quote:

“Ramsaran...”

I believe it is referring to the hon. Member for Chaguanas.

“...addressed the meeting after Partap left.”

And I believe it is the hon. Member for Nariva who is being referred to here.

“He succeeded in pacifying the farmers.

He then reportedly admitted that the government's decision to move them out of the swamp was a wrong one.

One jubilant resident, who attended the meeting, told *TnT Mirror*: ‘The minister also said that he was assured by the Prime Minister that the farmers would soon be able to return to the Nariva Swamp to plant rice.

He said he was 99 per cent sure the farmers would be returning to the swamp.’

Ramsaran also reportedly told the meeting he and ministerial colleague, Ganga Singh...”

and I believe it is the hon. Member for Caroni East.

“...had regularly raised the rice farmers’ plight at Cabinet meetings.

To the extent, he said, that innuendoes were directed at them.”

Mr. Speaker, it is my sincere hope because Members on the other side are honourable.

Mr. Manning: Expected to be honourable.

Mr. E. Williams: We all in this House are called honourable and, in fact, I have had dealings with some Members opposite. Those particular dealings, unlike other reports I have heard, have been conducted in an honourable manner. Therefore, I have no major beef or argument about it but I would hope to see this particular report rebutted in the shortest time possible.

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Mr. Speaker, again, I have no problem ultimately with this Bill, an Act to amend the Cipriani Labour College Act, but the parliamentary time that was taken by the hon. Minister to pilot this Bill and the things that he said, remind me of a story from my very faint memory of some Roman history. It was reported that there was a particular Roman emperor by the name of Nero who was into a number of eclectic activities. Apparently Rome caught afire and while burning, it is said that Nero played his fiddle.

In light of some of the increasing industrial activity, particularly by doctors at our major health facilities; in light of some rumblings one continues to hear in the teaching fraternity notwithstanding the fact that they have just barely come out of their condition of being called criminals and have only moved a few rungs up the ladder from the bottom of the intellectual pile, according to Members from the other side, it seems to me that the hon. Minister indulged himself in fiddling by bringing this particular Bill to the House in this manner while Rome is burning.

3.25 p.m.

I must say that I support the name change. A rose by any other name, I must repeat myself, is just as sweet.

Mr. Speaker, allow me through you to congratulate the hon. Member for Siparia for her resplendent regalia. [*Desk thumping*] It is a significant compliment, Madam, and it comes “ex chesto”. [*Desk thumping*]

Let us hear in the Minister’s wrapping up that this Government thinks so highly of the staff at the Cipriani Labour College who have financed their own computer laboratory. Let us hear this Minister say that this Government is even considering using the reported \$550 million signature bonus from the recent deep water petroleum competitive bid round. Let us hear that the Government thinks so highly of the labour industry that it is considering using some of these funds to enhance the computer facility. Let us hear, for instance, that the Government is using some of this bid round money to, maybe, put the institution on the Internet.

Let us hear, for instance, that the window dressing as it were—because window dressing similar to a name change has gone on opposite at the proposed site of the national library. Let us hear that the only people who benefited were not the people who were fed the pumpkins that were removed from the site of that reported swimming pool. Let us hear that the site would be turned into what it is meant to be—an institution which will educate and feed the minds and not feed those few people who were able to benefit from the pumpkins that were recently

removed. Let us hear of matters of substance that would build this society. [*Desk thumping*] Let us not fiddle with parliamentary time by making much ado about nothing, by changing the name of an institution.

Mr. Speaker, it was suggested even by Members on the other side that, for bringing this Bill in this particular manner, the hon. Minister should change the first initial of his name to “H” instead of “P” and add a “D” somewhere in the middle. I, however, would not subscribe to that sort of suggestion.

The name change is of no real consequence and the programme would go on. In fact, we hope that the programme would be enhanced, expanded and modernized, so that we would get on with that, and that we would concentrate on removing the rumblings that we hear in the labour movement in the society.

I thank you.

The Minister of Labour and Co-operatives (Hon. Harry Partap): Mr. Speaker, I thank Members on both sides of the House who participated in the debate on this Bill to amend the Cipriani Labour College Act, Chap. 39:51. The Bill seeks to have included in the name of the college, “Co-operative Studies”.

I did not realize that this simple amendment would have generated so much hot air from Members on the other side. [*Laughter*]. It is unfortunate that those opposite introduced all kinds of extraneous matters to what was basically a Bill to change the name of the college.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition and Member for San Fernando East, the hon. Member for Toco/Manzanilla—I am not seeing him here this afternoon—and the hon. Member for Port of Spain South, joined the debate from that side.

Mr. Speaker, both the Leader of the Opposition and Member for Port of Spain South took a lot of valuable parliamentary time but did not speak on the Bill. Therefore, I will not waste any time on their contributions. The Member for Port of Spain South referred to a newspaper article in the *TNT Mirror*. I want to tell him that he must not believe everything he reads in those newspapers. Too often they are laced with lies, half truths and innuendoes.

Mr. Manning: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. Member for Nariva for giving way. Have you made that statement in your capacity as a journalist?

Hon. H. Partap: Mr. Speaker, since the matter was raised on the floor of this House I want to tell the Member opposite that what happened at Monroe Road was an exercise in democracy, and there was no truth to what was reported in the

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newspaper, absolutely no truth. In fact, the writer of that article was not there. I know him personally. He was not there and, therefore, he would have taken his information from a third and fourth source and that is a very dangerous thing to do when you are a journalist.

I believe the decent thing Mr. Millette should have done was to call me or the hon. Member for Chaguanas to verify whether that took place. This is why the newspapers are losing respect in the society. People no longer believe them. [*Desk thumping*]

During my time, we had to check and double check before we published, but I do not know, it seems as though they no longer have any decency in the newspapers. It seems so. Not all—some of the newspapers—and I am really sad this afternoon that that report could have come out on the front page of a weekly newspaper and no effort was made to contact either the Member for Chaguanas or myself. [*Interruption*] Only if it has something to do with this, I would give way.

Mr. Hinds: Would you like to explain which of the newspapers, in your view, are decent and which are not?

Hon. H. Partap: You would not draw me into that kind of argument. I am talking about the story that was published today. It is on the front page of the *TNT Mirror*. The reporter did not check his facts and I think that is a cardinal sin when it comes to newspapers reporting and journalism. Now, if the society is under the impression that most of what we read in the pages of the newspapers are lies, half truths and innuendoes they—the newspapers—have brought it on themselves.

Mr. Speaker, I will now deal with some of the issues raised by the hon. Member for Toco/Manzanilla. He is not here this afternoon and I know why he is not here. He cannot stand the truth. He spoke of an area of which he knows very little and he should be careful next time.

3.35 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Toco/Manzanilla is my very good friend, in fact, our constituencies border each other. I will tell him now that he has to be careful, in fact, he has a chance to come on this side because the Toco/Manzanilla constituency and the Nariva constituency are now so integrated that I fear if he does not come on this side that he is certain to lose that seat the next time around. So he has a chance to come if he wants to save himself.

The Member for Toco/Manzanilla questioned the importance of the Bill and so did the Member for Port of Spain South. They gave the impression that simple

measures that could create the climate for change are not important. I was under no pretension when I presented this Bill. I said it was a simple amendment. But it was an amendment necessary to give recognition to the work done by the college. Mr. Speaker, very often the simple, and what seems insignificant, things are the very things that will bring ease and comfort to people. It is because the PNM failed to do many simple things that they are occupying the seats on that side of the House. *[Desk thumping]* We are doing our duty. If they have failed to do their own that is their business. We have no intention of following their example.

Mr. Speaker, I was surprised that the Member for Toco/Manzanilla should have raised the question of the co-operative sector and particularly the credit union movement. I make the point that those opposite have lost the moral authority to talk about the co-operative sector or about credit unions. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, successive PNM governments owe this country an apology for aiding and abetting the mismanagement of the co-operative sector, particularly credit unions. If I had my way I would hold successive PNM governments, from 1956—1986 and from 1991—1995, totally responsible for the losses which thousands of credit unions and co-operative members have sustained over the period when the PNM governments were in power. Mr. Speaker, the PNM governments stood silently by and refused to raise a finger to stop the mismanagement and financial abuse that was taking place in this sector. I see the Member for San Fernando East biting his nails, quite true, I know he is worried. So, what we are left with in 1997 are some credit unions in deep financial straits. Some are being stabilized—we have taken the initiative—and will hopefully be nursed back to financial health, while others will have to be liquidated and interred.

I am not at all surprised by the PNM's attitude toward the mismanagement in the credit unions. Mr. Speaker, I refer to the Trinidad and Tobago Credit Unions Stabilisation Fund 1996 Annual Report, at page 4, which lists the PNM credit union among those whose liquidation was in an advanced stage in 1996. That was last year and, if my memory serves me right, I think by now it has been interred leaving hundreds of shareholders and depositors in tears.

Miss Nicholson: Grieving.

Hon. H. Partap: Yes, Member for Tobago West, grieving.

Miss Nicholson: They should not be sitting there.

Hon. H. Partap: Mr. Speaker, the PNM's own credit union was forced into liquidation. Therefore, I am not surprised that they failed to provide the necessary

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leadership to the credit unions of the country. What a sorry bunch they are across there. Imagine, we now have the Member for Toco/Manzanilla giving advice on how to run credit unions and co-operatives. Can we take his advice seriously? All they know about is managing credit unions into the ground. That is all they know. Mr. Speaker, I find it amusing, therefore, that those opposite can dare to lecture to us on this side on how to empower people. Their record shows that, if there was a lack of anything, prior to November 1995 in our country there was the lack of the empowerment of people.

Mr. Speaker, it was under the PNM that the Co-operative Development Bank began its slide downhill. We inherited that problem and we are dealing with it as best as we can. As unfortunate as the issue may be, we will not sweep it under the carpet and hope that it will stay there and be forgotten. Mr. Speaker, the fact that the Co-operative Development Bank had to be put into liquidation is an indictment on the PNM. The tears of scores of little people who put their money in that institution should be on the conscience of those opposite. That alone is reason enough that they should never be allowed to sit on this side again.

Mr. Speaker, I want to correct the impression given that the college is at a standstill. In fact, Sir, the college's board of directors and the administration headed by the former director, Dr. Roy Thomas, have developed a strategic plan 1997—2001, I have it here. Mr. Speaker, that plan speaks of the update of courses, the introduction of new programmes, a review of the syllabus, the regularisation of accreditation of diplomas, the evaluation, rationalisation and the review of short courses, the reassessment of research paper requirements, and a host of other things that are necessary if the college is to have an impact on the society, the society's needs, the needs of the trade union movement and the co-operatives and other organizations.

Mr. Speaker, the college is viewed as the foremost labour college in the Caribbean and is now perceived by several organizations as central to their thrust. I want this evening to thank publicly the outgoing director, Dr. Roy Thomas, and the Chairman of the Board, Mr. Malcom London, for their leadership at the college. It is their joint effort with the staff and board members that the college stands tall among its peers in the Caribbean.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to tell this House this afternoon that as from August 04, 1997, Dr. Roosevelt Williams will succeed Dr. Roy Thomas as the new

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director of the college. While I welcome Dr. Williams, I pay public tribute to Dr. Thomas for his leadership, his vision, and his commitment to the college during his tenure.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I beg to move.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a second time.

3.45 p.m.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole House

House in committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

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

House resumed.

Bill reported, without amendment; read the third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

The Attorney General (Hon. Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to Monday, August 4, 1997, at 1.30 p.m. when we would do, as we announced, the report on the Finance Committee, together with the Finance (Supplementation and Variation of Appropriation) Bill, 1997, which would be introduced on Monday and we would attempt to do all the stages of the Bill on that day.

There are two short Bills thereafter: the Pounds (Amdt.) Bill and the Summary Courts (Amdt.) Bill, which I am sure the Opposition would ensure that we debate.

Question put and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 3.50 p.m.