

Leave of Absence

Friday, May 28, 1999

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 28, 1999

The House met at 1.32 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 the Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West who has asked to be excused up to June 25, 1999 and the leave of absence he seeks is granted.

I have also received communication from the Member for Tobago West, who because of illness has asked to be excused from today's sitting, and from the Minister of Foreign Affairs who is out of the jurisdiction on official business.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Visit to People's Republic of China

52. Mr. Patrick Manning (*San Fernando East*) asked the hon. Minister of Trade & Industry and Consumer Affairs and Minister of Tourism:

- (a) Would the Minister indicate whether or not he recently paid an official visit to the People's Republic of China?
- (b) If the answer is in the affirmative, would the Minister indicate:
 - i. the dates he was out of the country;
 - ii. whether he officially visited any other country during his absence abroad and if so, could he list those countries and give the purpose of his visit;
 - iii. the total cost of this visit abroad;
 - iv. under what allocations was the total cost of this trip borne;
 - v. whether the Prime Minister and the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago sanctioned the cost and purpose of this trip?

The Minister of Trade & Industry and Consumer Affairs and Minister of Tourism (Hon. Mervyn Assam): Mr. Speaker, the answer to the first part of the question is yes.

- (b) i I left Trinidad and Tobago on March 17 and returned on April 2, 1999.
- ii Hong Kong. The visit to Hong Kong was aimed at exploring trade and investment opportunities of that country.
- iii A return ticket from Port of Spain/London was supplied by BWIA. The Government of the People's Republic of China met all expenses related to the visit inside China, including meals, hotel, ground transportation and airfare to the various cities visited and I took up the other expenses.
- iv Does not apply.
- v The visit was approved by Cabinet in Minute No. 523 of March 4, 1999.

Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation
(Paved roads)

- 60.** Mr. Jarette Narine (*Arouca North*) asked the hon. Minister of Local Government.
1. Would the Minister of Local Government indicate the names and locations of the roads paved in the Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation by the Ministry of Local Government during the financial years 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1998/1999?
 2. Would the Minister also indicate the following:
 - i. the name(s) of the contractor(s) who paved the roads;
 - ii. whether the contracts were awarded by the Central Tenders Board;
 - iii. the cost of each road paved;
 - iv. whether the Ministry had the approval of the Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation to carry out these projects;
 - v. under which allocation at the Ministry of Local Government were the funds identified to make payments for the said contracts;
 - vi. the source of his authority for the Ministry of Local Government to undertake road paving in Regional Corporations?

The Minister of Local Government (Hon. Dhanraj Singh): Mr. Speaker, in response to question 60, the Ministry of Local Government did not implement any

paving of roads in the Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation for financial year 1996, 1997, 1998, and 1998/1999. However, it did collaborate with the Corporation with respect to the paving of the following roads as follows:

1996

| NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Fletcher Road | Caparo |
| Ramsaroop Trace | Caparo |
| Lime Head Road | Chandernagore |
| Soledad Road | Claxton Bay |
| Forres Park Trace | Claxton Bay |
| St. Johns Road | Claxton Bay |
| Welcome Road | Cunupia |
| Freeport Village Road | Freeport |
| Thompson Road | Gasparillo |
| Jankie Trace | Las Lomas |
| Ramoo Trace | Las Lomas # 2 |
| Ford Trace | Longdenville |
| Mt. Pleasant Road | Springvale |
| Caratal Road Section III | Tortuga |

1997

| NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|---|-----------------|
| Bankroft Trace | Arena |
| La Cuesa Road | Arena |
| Roopsingh Road | Chandernagore |
| Road leading to Korea Village Community Centre | Chandernagore |
| Basta Hall Road | Couva |

Oral Answers to Questions
[HON.D. SINGH]

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| | |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| Exchange Village Street | Couva |
| Perseverance Village Street | Couva |
| Balmain Village Street | Couva |
| Smith Street | Couva |
| Esperanza Road | Couva |
| Calcutta Road # 3 | Freeport |
| Calcutta Settlement # 1 | Freeport |
| Calcutta Settlement Road # 2 | Freeport |
| Parforce Road | Gasparillo |
| Hunger March Trace | Gasparillo |
| Medine Street | Gasparillo |
| Ferdinand Street | Gasparillo |
| Bay Road | Orange Valley |
| Dandarge/Hosein Trace | Piparo |
| Mt. Pleasant Road | Spring Vale |
| Manodath Trace | St. Helena |
| Harkoo Trace | St. Helena |
| Sandhill Trace | Tabaquite |
| Caratal Road | Tortuga |

1998

| NAME OF ROADS | LOCATION |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Bankroft Road | Arena |
| East Boundary Street | California |
| Derrick Road | Chandernagore |
| Ghany Street—North | Chandernagore |
| Mungal Trace | Chandernagore |
| Joyce Road | Chandernagore |

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| | |
|---|---------------|
| Korea Village | Chandernagore |
| Bagna Trace | Chandernagore |
| Chin Chin Village Street | Chandernagore |
| Soledad Road (Sandhill Road to Cedar Hill Road) | Claxton Bay |
| Soledad Road (Mosque Road to Cedar Hill Road) | Claxton Bay |
| Forres Park Road | Claxton Bay |
| Forres Park Place | Claxton Bay |
| Soledad Road | Claxton Bay |
| Lower Couva Road | Couva |
| Sonny Ladoo Trace | Couva |
| Ganga Trace | Couva |
| Indian Trail Road | Couva |
| Arena Cemetery Street | Freeport |
| Nelson Road | Freeport |
| Gosine Street | Freeport |
| Rennard Street | Freeport |
| Robert Street | Freeport |
| Bootan Street | Freeport |
| Ramnarine Street | Freeport |
| Rajbally Street | Freeport |
| Robert Avenue | Freeport |
| Calcutta # 3 | Freeport |
| Caroni Arena Road | Freeport |
| Mc Leod Road | Freeport |
| Allen Street | Gasparillo |

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| | |
|--------------------|------------|
| Bandoo Trace | Gasparillo |
| Johnson Street | Gasparillo |
| Laloo Trace | Gasparillo |
| Hermitage Road | Gasparillo |
| Hunger March Trace | Gasparillo |
| Ramdhanie Trace | Gasparillo |
| Bandoo Trace | Gasparillo |
| Bhagwansingh Trace | Gasparillo |
| Dolly Street | Gasparillo |
| Sookoo Trace South | Gasparillo |
| Lumsden Street | Gasparillo |
| Las Lomas # 3 | Las Lomas |
| Powdharie Road | Preysal |
| Melanie Gardens | Preysal |
| Ridge Road | San Pedro |
| Mt. Pleasant | Springvale |
| Carolina Road | Springvale |
| Springland Road | Springvale |
| Ramoo Trace | St Helena |

October 1998—April 1999

| NAME OF ROADS | LOCATION |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| La Cuesa Road | Arena |
| Basta Hall Road | Couva |
| Exchange Road | Couva |
| Grant Street | Couva |
| Grant Street Extension | Couva |
| Mc Bean Road | Couva |

Oral Answers to Questions

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| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| Limefruit Trace | Freeport |
| Mt. Pleasant Road | Springvale |

The names of the contractors who paved the roads are Coosal's Construction Company Limited and JUSAMCO Pavers Limited.

The contracts were awarded in accordance with the existing principles and procedures which I met when I became a Minister. These existing principles and procedures guided previous Ministers of Local Governments in the award of similar contracts. The contracts in accordance with the principles and procedures were not awarded by the Central Tenders Board.

The cost of each road paved is as follows:

1996

| NAME OF ROADS | COST |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Lime Head Road | \$13,450.00 |
| Fletcher Road | \$23,736.00 |
| Caratal Road Section III | \$23, 736.00 |
| Ramoo Trace | \$28,681.00 |
| St. Johns Road | \$40,250.00 |
| Jankie Trace | \$45,098.00 |
| Mt. Pleasant Road | \$45,494.00 |
| Welcome Road | \$45,494.00 |
| Freeport Village Road | \$46,483.00 |
| Lime Head Road | \$49,450.00 |
| Forres Park Trace | \$55,384.00 |
| Soledad Road | \$59,340.00 |
| Ford Trace | \$59,340.00 |
| Ramsaroop Trace | 108,790.00 |
| Soledad Road | 152,306.00 |
| Welcome Road | 321,820.00 |

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Thompson Road 330,326.00

1997

| NAME OF ROADS | COST |
|---|-------------|
| Smith Street | \$8,357.00 |
| Roopsingh Trace | \$12,263.00 |
| Perseverance Village Street | \$15,438.00 |
| Calcutta Settlement Road #2 | \$22,787.00 |
| Manodath Trace | \$23,736.00 |
| Harkoo Trace | \$23,736.00 |
| Road leading to Korea Village Community Centre | \$24,222.00 |
| Road leading to Korea Village Community Centre | \$24,700.00 |
| Road leading to Korea Village Community Centre | \$24,700.00 |
| Road leading to Korea Village Community Centre | \$24,700.00 |
| Hunger March Trace | \$24,702.00 |
| Medine Street | \$24,702.00 |
| Balmain Village Street | \$35,604.00 |
| Perseverance Village Street | \$41,933.00 |
| Mt. Pleasant Road | \$48,461.00 |
| Calcutta Settlement #1 | \$54,138.00 |
| Smith Street | \$54,550.00 |
| Sandhill Trace | \$55,384.00 |
| Ferdinand Street | \$57,226.00 |
| Basta Hall Road | \$63,098.00 |
| Bankroft Trace | \$67,252.00 |

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| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Roopsingh Trace | \$69,823.00 |
| Esperanza Road | \$71,208.00 |
| Parforce Road | \$73,186.00 |
| La Cuesa Road | \$77,142.00 |
| Exchange Village Street | \$78,131.00 |
| Caratal Road | \$79,120.00 |
| Esperanza Road | 103,251.00 |
| Bay Road | 125,603.00 |
| Calcutta Road #3 | 153,358.00 |
| Calcutta Settlement Road #2 | 182,177.00 |
| Dandarge/Hosine Trace | 386,105.00 |

1998

| NAME OF ROADS | COST |
|----------------------|-------------|
| Powdharie Road | \$9,674.00 |
| Soledad Road | \$16,468.00 |
| Johnson Trace | \$20,585.00 |
| Mungal Trace | \$20,996.00 |
| Arena Cemetery Road | \$23,055.00 |
| Nelson Road | \$23,055.00 |
| Dolly Street | \$26,760.00 |
| Lumsden Street | \$26,760.00 |
| Ganga Trace | \$30,877.00 |
| Ghany Street—North | \$32,936.00 |
| Allen Street | \$34,171.00 |
| Bandoo Trace | \$34,994.00 |
| Lower Couva Road | \$37,055.00 |
| Melanie Gardens | \$48,168.00 |

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|--|-------------|
| Bhagwansngh Trace | \$48,374.00 |
| Melanie Gardens | \$50,433.00 |
| Powdharie Road | \$52,697.00 |
| Derrick Road | \$53,521.00 |
| Mc. Leod Road | \$54,138.00 |
| Ramoo Trace | \$59,696.00 |
| Gosine Street | \$66,240.00 |
| Ridge Road | \$66,695.00 |
| Forest Park Trace | \$72,253.00 |
| Robert Street | \$72,422.00 |
| Bootan Street | \$72,864.00 |
| Forres Park Road | \$74,106.00 |
| East Boundary Street | \$78,223.00 |
| Bagna Trace | \$82,340.00 |
| Bandoo Trace | \$82,340.00 |
| Rajbally Street | \$85,670.00 |
| Hunger March Trace | \$85,672.00 |
| Chin Chin Village Street | \$86,457.00 |
| Soledad Road (Mosque Road to Cedar Hill Road) | \$88,320.00 |
| Laloo Trace | \$89,956.00 |
| Ramdhanie Trace | \$97,152.00 |
| 1.45 p.m. | |
| NAME OF ROAD | COST |
| Korea Village | \$97,778 |
| Soledad Road | \$98,808 |
| Las Lomas #3 | \$102,923 |

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|--|-----------|
| Sookhoo Trace South | \$114,638 |
| Rennard Street | \$114,816 |
| Robert Avenue | \$121,881 |
| Ramnarine Street | \$125,856 |
| Las Lomas #3 | \$153,358 |
| Springland Road | \$165,297 |
| Soledad Road (Sandhill Road to Cedar Hill Road) | \$200,928 |
| Sonny Ladoo Trace | \$215,524 |
| Calcutta #3 | \$241,873 |
| Caroni Arena Road | \$261,429 |
| Carolina Road | \$267,605 |
| Joyce Road | \$319,067 |
| Bankroft Road | \$337,824 |
| Indian Trail Road | \$413,758 |
| Mt. Pleasant | \$430,226 |
| Hermitage Road | \$769,467 |
| Grant Street | \$60,499 |
| Grant Street Extension | \$37,977 |
| Mc Bean Road | \$99,360 |
| Mt. Pleasant Road | \$804,595 |
| Limefruit Trace | \$222,124 |
| La Cuesa Road | \$220,800 |
| Exchange Road | \$220,800 |
| Basta Hall Road | \$377,126 |

With regard to part (iv) of the answer, Mr. Speaker, as was stated in my first paragraph above, the Ministry of Local Government did not implement any

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projects for the Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation. Notwithstanding, the Ministry, by virtue of its role and relations, is not required to seek approval from the Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation for local government matters since the Ministry of Local Government is the final player for approval of these projects.

In answer to part (v); the funding which was identified in collaboration with the Corporation to carry out the above-mentioned projects were from the Road Improvement Fund, the Development Programme, Recurrent Programme and Unspent Balances.

The answer to part (vi) of the question, Mr. Speaker, is that the Minister of Local Government's authority for authorizing the Ministry of Local Government to act in any matter, including collaboration with any Corporation to implement projects, emanates from, among other things, his presidential appointment as the Minister of Local Government, the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act No. 21 of 1990 and the amended Collection of Taxes Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**San Juan/Laventille Regional Corporation
Road Paving Contract Information**

61. Mr. Martin Joseph (*St. Ann's East*) asked the Minister of Local Government:

1. Would the Minister of Local Government indicate the names and locations of the roads paved in the San Juan/Laventille Corporation by the Ministry of Local Government during the financial years, 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1998/1999?
2. Would the Minister also indicate the following:
 - i. the name(s) of the contractor(s) who paved the roads;
 - ii. whether the contracts were awarded by the Central Tenders Board;
 - iii. the cost of each road paved;
 - iv. whether the Ministry had the approval of the San Juan/Laventille Corporation to carry out these projects;
 - v. under which allocation at the Ministry of Local Government

were the funds identified to make payments for the said contracts;

- vi. the source of his authority for the Ministry of Local Government to undertake road paving in Regional Corporations?

The Minister of Local Government (Hon. Dhanraj Singh): Mr. Speaker, my reply to question No. 61 part 1, is that the Ministry of Local Government did not implement any paving of roads in the San Juan/Laventille Regional Corporation for the financial years 1996, 1997, 1998 and part of this year. However, it did collaborate with the Corporation with respect to the paving of the following roads.

1996

| NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| John Dhulam Street | Aranguetz |
| William Street | Aranguetz |
| St. Francois Valley Road | Belmont |
| Breezy Hill | Cascade |
| Hilltop Drive | Champs Fleurs |
| Chandy Lane | El Socorro |
| Eastern Quarries | Laventille |
| Beetham Gardens Phase IV 23rd Street | Laventille |
| Chrysanthemum Drive | Morvant |
| Caledonia Extension Road #2 | Morvant |
| Hazel Street | San Juan |
| Sunshine Avenue | San Juan |
| Moore Avenue | Santa Cruz |

1997

| NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Aranguetz Branch Road | Aranguetz |
| Eighth Avenue North | Barataria |
| Fifth Avenue | Barataria |

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|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Kitchen Avenue | Barataria |
| Lower St. Barb's Road | Belmont |
| St. Francois Valley Road | Belmont |
| Spring Bank Avenue | Cascade |
| Quarry Drive | Champs Fleurs |
| Seegoolam Street | El Socorro |
| Cyrus Trace | El Socorro |
| Laventille Road West | Laventille |
| Trou Macaque Road | Laventille |
| Prizgar Lands | Laventille |
| Beechan Cocoa | Maryland |
| Pelican Extension Road | Morvant |
| Cipriani Avenue | Morvant |
| Plover Gardens | Morvant |
| Caledonia Road #2 | Morvant |
| John Street | Off Pelican Street Morvant |
| Maloney Street | Petit Bourg |
| Coronation Street | San Juan |
| Neverson Street | San Juan |
| Persad Lane | San Juan |
| Santa Cruz Old Road | San Juan |
| Shende Street Extension | San Juan |
| Chanka Trace | San Juan |
| El Socorro Extension #2 | San Juan |
| La Canoa Road | Santa Cruz |
| Dookhan Hill | Santa Cruz |

1998

| NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Queen Street | Aranguez |
| Beryl Mc Burnie Street | Barataria |
| Ramlochan Street | Barataria |
| Third Avenue | Barataria |
| Locust Hill | Barataria |
| Leyan Hill | Belmont |
| Vegas | Caledonia |
| Dan Kelly Road | Laventille |
| Henry Boulevard | Laventille |
| Mentor Alley | Laventille |
| Petunia Avenue | Morvant |
| Plover Gardens | Morvant |
| Second Caledonia Road Extension | Morvant |
| Mt. Lambert Circular Road | Mt. Lambert |
| Moses Avenue | Off Saddle Road |
| Seventh Day Adventist School Road | Pelican Extension Morvant |
| Hollis Street | Petit Bourg |
| Bhagoutie Trace | San Juan |
| Francis Road | San Juan |
| Shakir Trace | San Juan |
| Petit Curucaye Road | Santa Cruz |
| Upper Maraj Trace | Santa Cruz |
| Coblentz Road | St. Ann's |
| Fisher Avenue | St. Ann's |
| Jereton Street | St. Ann's |

October 1998 to April 1999

| NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Third Street | Barataria |
| La Fortune Road | Laventille |
| 2nd Private Road | Mt. D'or |
| Hilltop Lane | Mt. D'or |
| Kingston Avenue | Santa Cruz |
| Moraldo Street | Santa Cruz |

Mr. Speaker, the names of the contractors who paved these roads are Coosals Construction Company Limited, JUSAMCO Pavers Limited and Mootilal Ramhit and Sons. The contracts were awarded in accordance with existing principles and procedures which I met when I became a Minister. These existing principles and procedures were abided by previous Ministers of Local Government in the award of similar contracts. The contracts, in accordance with these principles and procedures, were not awarded by the Central Tenders Board. With regard to the contract awarded to Mootilal Ramhit and Sons, this was made through the Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) Award.

Mr. Speaker, when you compare this list of roads with what was done under the PNM's term in office and if you look at what was done in the Tunapuna Regional Corporation for the year 1993, only \$43,000.00 was allocated for road paving in that year. So in the heart of the reign of the PNM they only felt it fit to provide \$45,000.00 to one of their main corporations to pave roads. A similar position can be said of other corporations at that time where it seemed that the emphasis was on other things except preparing for infrastructure that would make people's lives much better.

Mr. Speaker, the cost of each of these roads is as follows:

| NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| Eastern Quarries | \$31,229.00 |
| Hazel Street | \$38,513.00 |
| Beetham Gardens Phase IV 23rd Street | \$43,044.00 |
| Breezy Hill Avenue | \$43,310.00 |

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| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| John Dhulam Street | \$43,950.00 |
| Moore Avenue | \$45,310.00 |
| Caledonia Extension Road #2 | \$46,442.00 |
| Chrysanthemum Drive | \$47,575.00 |
| Sunshine Avenue | \$55,278.00 |
| William Street | \$62,980.00 |
| Hilltop Drive | \$62,980.00 |
| St. Francois Valley Road | \$65,472.00 |
| Chandy Lane | \$82,690.00 |

1997

| NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| John Street | \$9,038 |
| Spring Bank Avenue | \$22,540 |
| Shende Street Extension | \$25,000 |
| Plover Gardens | \$27,025 |
| Kitchen Avenue | \$28,175 |
| St. Francois Valley Road | \$32,232 |
| Cyrus Trace | \$37,191 |
| Maloney Street | \$37,536 |
| Seegolam Street | \$37,536 |
| Dookhan Hill | \$39,445 |
| Eighth Avenue North | \$44,160 |
| Pelican Extension Road | \$44,160 |
| Fifth Avenue | \$48,911 |
| Neverson Street | \$50,264 |
| La Canoa Road | \$51,616 |

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| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Trou Macaque Road | \$56,083 |
| Laventille Road West | \$56,494 |
| Dunkhan Hill | \$59,505 |
| Cipriani Avenue | \$71,902 |
| Coronation Street | \$77,059 |
| Chanka Trace | \$83,398 |
| Lower St. Barb's Road | \$88,320 |
| Beechan Cocoa | \$89,258 |
| Persad Lane | \$90,160 |
| Fifth Avenue | \$96,710 |
| Santa Cruz Old Road | \$101,430 |
| Prizgar Lands | \$107,741 |
| Caledonia Road #2 | \$109,775 |
| El Socorro Extension #2 | \$125,097 |
| Quarry Drive | \$189,786 |
| Aranguéz Branch Road | \$226,301 |

October 1998 to April 1999

| NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Shakir Trace | \$8,280 |
| Henry Boulevard | \$11,115 |
| Seventh Day Adventist School Road | \$29,527 |
| Plover Gardens | \$36,064 |
| Hollis Street | \$38,318 |
| Mt. Lambert Circular Road | \$38,318 |
| Petunia Avenue | \$39,670 |
| Francis Road | \$39,670 |

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| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Upper Maraj Trace | \$39,671 |
| Moses Avenue | \$42,149 |
| Ramlochan Street | \$48,686 |
| Queen Street | \$48,686 |
| Fisher Avenue | \$49,127 |
| Locust Hill | \$49,588 |
| Second Caledonia Road Extension | \$50,940 |
| Mentor Alley | \$51,842 |
| Jereton Street | \$52,292 |
| Leyan Hill | \$58,829 |
| Dan Kelly Road | \$67,045 |
| Beryl Mc Burnie Street | \$67,620 |
| Third Avenue | \$82,271 |
| Petit Curucaye Road | \$91,963 |
| Coblentz Road | \$94,668 |
| Bhagoutie Trace | \$119,912 |
| Vegas | \$191,590 |
| Hilltop Lane | \$36,701 |
| Kingston Avenue | \$39,419 |
| 2nd Private Road | \$48,481 |
| Moraldo Street | \$55,731 |
| Third Street | \$86,995 |
| La Fortune Road | \$91,299 |

In answer to part (iv) of the question, as was stated in my first paragraph above, the Ministry of Local Government did not implement any projects in the San Juan/Laventille Regional Corporation. Notwithstanding, the Ministry, by virtue of its role and relations, is not required to seek approval from the San

Oral Answers to Questions
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Juan/Laventille Regional Corporation for Local Government matters since the Ministry of Local Government is the final player for approval of projects.

2.00 p.m.

The funding which was identified in collaboration with the Corporation to carry out the above-mentioned road works was from the Road Improvement Fund and Development Programme.

The Minister of Local Government's authority for authorizing the Ministry of Local Government to act in any matters including collaboration with any corporation to implement projects emanates from, among other things, his presidential appointment as the Minister of Local Government, the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act, No. 21 of 1990, and the amended Collection of Taxes Act.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation
(Roads Paved)**

62. Mr. Edward Hart (*Tunapuna*) asked the hon. Minister of Local Government:

1. Would the Minister of Local Government indicate the names and locations of the roads paved in the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation by the Ministry of Local Government during the financial years 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1998/1999?
2. Would the Minister also indicate the following:
 - i. the name(s) of the contractor(s) who paved the roads;
 - ii. whether the contracts were awarded by the Central Tenders Board;
 - iii. the cost of each road paved;
 - iv. whether the Ministry had the approval of the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation to carry out these projects;
 - v. under which allocation at the Ministry of Local Government were the funds identified to make payments for the said contracts;
 - vi. the source of his authority for the Ministry of Local Government to undertake road paving in Regional Corporations?

The Minister of Local Government (Hon. Dhanraj Singh): Mr. Speaker, the list of roads is so exhaustive and when you compare this to the one road that Tunapuna paved in 1993 for \$45,000 [*Desk thumping*] I think the Member for Tunapuna should—

Mr. Speaker: There is a time limit for the asking and answering of questions, so may I just enquire of the hon. Member whether he will insist on it being given *viva voce*, or whether it would suffice if this information which is, obviously, very lengthy, could be supplied to the Member in writing? You could insist on it being read out.

Mr. Hart: I will accept it in writing, Mr. Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: Okay. In accordance with the Standing Orders, we will make arrangements for it to be circulated to all Members.

Vide end of sitting for written answer.

Siparia Regional Corporation (Roads Paved)

The following question stood on the Order Paper in the name of Mr. Hedwige Beraux:

- 63.** 1. Would the Minister of Local Government indicate the names and locations of the roads paved in the Siparia Regional Corporation by the Ministry of Local Government during the financial years 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1998/1999?
2. Would the Minister also indicate the following:
- i. the name(s) of the contractor(s) who paved the roads;
 - ii. whether the contracts were awarded by the Central Tenders Board;
 - iii. the cost of each road paved;
 - iv. whether the Ministry had the approval of the Siparia Regional Corporation to carry out these projects;
 - v. under which allocation at the Ministry of Local Government were the funds identified to make payments for the said contracts;
 - vi. the source of his authority for the Ministry of Local Government to undertake road paving in Regional Corporations?

Mr. Kenneth Valley (*Diego Martin Central*): The Member is not here. In the circumstances, I suggest that we take that answer in writing also.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister would give the answer to that question in writing, also.

Vide end of sitting for written answer.

**Chaguanas Market
(Proposed Commencement of Construction Date)**

64. Mr. Jarette Narine (*Arouca North*) asked the Minister of Local Government:

- (a) Would the Minister indicate the proposed date for the commencement of construction of the Chaguanas market?
- (b) Would the Minister also indicate whether:
 - i. the Town and Country Planning Division and the Chaguanas Borough Corporation had approved the plans for the new market;
 - ii. a contract has been awarded and if so, whether the award was made by the Central Tenders Board;
 - iii. if the answer to (ii) is in the affirmative, could the Minister provide:
 - (a) the names of the contractor;
 - (b) the estimated cost of construction of the market?

The Minister of Local Government (Hon. Dhanraj Singh): Mr. Speaker, as you know, election is in the air, hence all these questions concerning local government matters.

Mr. Sudama: It is in our interest to show what we did in the areas.

Hon. D. Singh: Mr. Speaker, the construction of foundation and site work commenced on February 15, 1999 through the Corporation, that is, the Chaguanas Corporation Unemployment Relief Programme.

Final approval is being awaited from the Town and Country Planning Division for plans which have been developed from that Division—planning guidelines issued for the Chaguanas market.

No contracts have been awarded.

Since (ii) above is in the negative, that is, no contracts have been awarded, parts (a) and (b) are not applicable.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

**INNCOGEN
(UNSATISFACTORY AGREEMENT)
[FIFTH DAY]**

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question [December 11, 1998]:

Be It Resolved that this honourable House condemn the unsatisfactory manner in which the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Company (TTEC) entered into an Agreement with the firm "InnCogen" for the supply of electricity by InnCogen to TTEC; and

Be It Further Resolved that this Agreement be voided and that the choice of the provider of the electricity requirement of TTEC be made through the system of public tender. [*Mr. Kenneth Valley*]

Question again proposed.

The Attorney General (Hon. Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to intervene in this debate in light of the fact that this Motion is a motion which is critical of the Government and it reflects adversely, or it is calculated to bring discredit upon the Government or an officer of the Government.

When one looks at this Motion and when one examines it and one sees what has been produced in this honourable House to support this Motion, one cannot help but conclude that the Motion, if it was a motion in a court of law, would have been declared frivolous and vexatious, and an abuse of the process.

Having regard to the fact that it is a Motion in Parliament and it is not supported by any facts to support the Motion, I would say that this is a frivolous motion; it is an abuse of the process of Parliament. Let us examine it to see whether my contention is correct.

The Motion says:

Be It Resolved that this honourable House condemn the unsatisfactory manner in which the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Company (TTEC) entered into an

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Agreement with the firm “InnCogen” for the supply of electricity by InnCogen to TTEC; and

Be It Further Resolved that this Agreement be voided and that the choice of the provider of the electricity requirement of TTEC be made through the system of public tender.

Let us examine to see what was put by the mover of this Motion, the hon. Member for Diego Martin Central, in order to support this Motion.

He started off, on December 11, 1998, by saying that it was:

“...the first time there is an issue surrounding corruption that points to the highest level of governmental authority in this land.”

So, he was alleging corruption. I have read his contribution and I could find no way, no part of his contribution, being supported by any allegations or facts of corruption. It had the bare allegation of corruption but it was not supported by any fact.

As a matter of fact, at the end of his contribution, he seemed to have forgotten what he said at the beginning of the contribution and this, in effect, demonstrated that he did not have any evidence of corruption. This is the same hon. Member who, at the beginning of his contribution, said that was corruption that is why it should be voided.

At the end of his contribution, at 3.20 p.m., he said and I quote:

“When, for the first time, there is the perception of corruption surrounding the office of the Prime Minister...perhaps there is a logical explanation, I do not know—all we want to do is to hear the facts.”

Here it is, he has brought a Motion, the Opposition would know that Private Members’ Day is a day when they have an opportunity to bring motions to be debated in order to show the population that the Government is corrupt; the Government is abusing its powers; the Government is not performing its function properly; the Government is not serving the country; and here is a motion filed by Opposition and the Motion starts off with a contract entered into between a public authority representing the people, and another authority, but that contract should be voided, should be put to an end.

He said that, because of corruption surrounding the highest office, and then at the end of his contribution, he said:

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“...perhaps there is a logical explanation, I do not know—all we want to do is to hear the facts.”

Well, if he wanted to hear the facts, he could have asked a question. Why is it he came here and admitted that there was no corruption, but there was a perception, so this is *mauvais langue*.

Mr. Speaker, I have looked, because it is my duty as Attorney General, to look at facts. The hon. Member, in his contribution, made a serious statement about the Attorney General and I have to deal with it. At 3.20 p.m., he made reference to a previous debate in this House and he said:

“In participating in that debate, the Attorney General at the time, Mr. Richardson, made the point that the Attorney General in a government has certain responsibilities and that no government, no Prime Minister, can direct him with respect to his actions. He mentioned in passing, that Mr. Robinson had acted as Attorney General for a short period and he should have taken action. I thought that was rather instructive for debate today. I just want to quote a bit of what the Attorney General was saying. It says here:

‘...I have already pointed out, Cabinet cannot direct an Attorney General as to what action is expected of him when it comes to criminal laws of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago or any democratic state.’

I want to repeat that for the benefit of the Member for Couva South. If there is one person in this Parliament whom we expect to act in these matters, is the Attorney General. [*Desk thumping*] He just cannot sit and stay quiet and allow this level of corruption to be running through the country.”

Well, Mr. Speaker, it is my duty, the holder of the office of Attorney General, I agree if there is evidence of corruption, he ought not to sit by. If he sits by and does nothing about it, he is guilty of misconduct in public office. But, I looked at, not only the contribution of the Member for Diego Martin Central, but all the contributions made on the other side and I see no basis, nothing at all, to support it.

As a matter of fact, we know that the law in this country provides that if there is corruption in the tendering procedures or any other matter, under our Constitution, we have a Director of Public Prosecutions and the Director of Public Prosecutions is an independent person and if, for example, the PNM has any evidence of corruption; if they distrust sending it to the Attorney General, they could send it to the DPP.

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Let me read from the Prevention of Corruption Act, which says at section 7:

“Where, in any proceedings against a person for an offence under this Act, it is proved that any money, gift, or other consideration has been paid or given to or received by an agent by or from a person, or his representative, holding or seeking to obtain a contract from the State or any Government department or public body, the money, gift or consideration shall be deemed to have been paid or given and received corruptly, as such inducement or reward as is mentioned in this Act, unless the contrary is proved.”

2.15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, if it is felt that there is need to get evidence; under section 9 of the Act, the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) can apply to a judge. I am saying this to show that there is no evidence of corruption. There are no facts supporting corruption. What has happened in this Motion is that they are asking the Parliament, as lawmakers to take steps to void a contract when the mover of the Motion produced no evidence. None whatsoever!

As a matter of fact, I looked again. If it is that they say that they did not want to produce to the Parliament evidence of breach of the Criminal Law, I looked again to see what other law. Because, he is saying—and as part of his contribution he said—that the tendering procedures were bad. In his Motion he is saying that there should be public tender. Well, I looked at the Central Tenders Board Act to see whether any of the rules in that Act were broken. I found none. In a debate that lasted for months—one Friday a month—none of the contributions showed that any section of the law was breached in any way.

Mr. Valley: If you could just give way. Did you look also at T&TEC’s tendering procedure and the rules? And could you answer why is it that public tendering procedure, as outlined by T&TEC’s rules, was not used; and why was this power purchase agreement given in the circumstances?

Hon. R. L. Maharaj: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Diego Martin Central had the opportunity of speaking to support his Motion. The facts that he put here, he did not—as a matter of fact, the Minister of Public Utilities answered those allegations. He went into all the technical aspects. As a matter of fact, the Minister of Public Utilities dealt with it and he said that there is competitive bidding, there is tendering; and there are different avenues open.

The Minister of Planning and Development gave instances in the past when Government had to do transactions like these, and there is no requirement or law

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that it had to be under the Central Tenders Board Act. If it is that he is making an allegation of corruption—well then, I would have thought that if corruption is going to be the basis of voiding the contract, it should be supported. In normal terms, it should be struck off, if you cannot support it, if it was in another area.

The Central Tenders Board—there has been no allegation and there is no support of any breach. May I show how the hon. Member for Diego Martin Central, seems to have had a hunch. He felt that maybe there was some sort of corruption in this matter and, therefore, he filed a Motion. It maybe that he should have filed a question. He then went on to say, almost to the end of his contribution—This is the gist now:

“Why did he find it necessary to instruct T&TEC to delink the two plants from the Power Purchase Agreement?”.

This is his case.

“Why was that necessary? Why did he find it is necessary to provide an eight-year tax holiday to InnCogen? Just tell me why? Why did he fail to use the well-established public tendering procedure...?”

Mr. Speaker, where is the law which says that you have a tendering procedure and you have to use that, and this is the procedure that you use in the particular case. If it is that they feel strongly that this is corrupt then what should they do? They did not say that they have sent it to the police or they have sent it to the DPP. If it is corrupt that is what can happen. The law provides that there can be prosecution for corruption.

Let us see how the Minister of Public Utilities answered this. The Minister of Public Utilities on the same date said:

“Mr. Deputy Speaker, I refer to a World Bank document on the Trinidad and Tobago power sector entitled *Preliminary Evaluation on the basis for a Sector Strategy* dated November, 1992 which stated as follows:

‘At the sectoral level, the Government has decided to attract private sector participation as a long-term strategy for the sector within which a competitive environment would be maintained. The aim is to stimulate efficiency through the pressure of potential and actual competition.’

So this is what the World Bank is saying in terms of a policy perspective as of November, 1992.’

He was referring to the history of this matter. He said:

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“Mr. Deputy Speaker, from a further policy perspective, we were also advised by the Adam Smith Institute—the consultants hired by the previous administration in 1993—of the dangers of monopoly powers of one generator of electricity. The consultants seriously questioned the wisdom of permitting PowerGen to invest in, or bid for new generation capacity. The consultants further suggested that for reasons of increasing competition and reducing dependence on one supplier, other suppliers be allowed to provide additional capacity. So the World Bank in 1992, and Adam Smith in 1993.”

Mr. Speaker, he then quoted from the *Medium Term Policy Framework 1998—2000*. He quoted as follows:

“New generation expansion of the system will be done utilizing the Co-generation/Independent Power Producer’s (IDP) approach.”

The hon. Minister of Public Utilities went on to say:

“Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are three processes that could be used for the implementation of the policy position, (1) competitive bidding, (2) competitive negotiations, or (3) direct negotiations.”

Mr. Speaker, nobody, no Member on the other side took issue with this statement. The hon. Minister of Public Utilities was saying quite clearly: these are the three procedures. No Member took that and showed that it is wrong. The hon. Minister of Public Utilities went on to say:

“Mr. Deputy Speaker, the direct negotiation for the procurement of power purchase agreements from power producers have been used and is common in several countries and states including Indonesia, the Philippines, twelve states in the United States of America, and the most recent examples of direct negotiation with power producers and creation of power purchase agreements is in the United Kingdom and the Australian state of Victoria.”

On what basis could it seriously be contended that there was corruption or breach of any procedure. In the absence of anything to be produced one cannot conclude that there was any breach of procedure.

If one looks at the negotiating team one sees—from what the hon. Minister of Public Utilities said—that you had experts negotiating, politicians were not negotiating. On one side T&TEC—you had the International Finance Corporation; and Black and Veatch which is an expert firm in this field.

Mr. Speaker, let us look at it; where has the Opposition produced any evidence to show that these agreements should be voided? I would, in a short while, deal with if an agreement has to be voided, what one has to prove. I would not go into details as to what one has to prove but I would go into some of the principles that one has to prove.

2.25 p.m.

There will be no attempt to show that there is any basis that gives rise to having any of these agreements voided. Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Planning also dealt with this matter, and notwithstanding what he said, there was no response for this. As a matter of fact, the Minister of Planning and Development said on March 26, 1999 at 2.53 p.m.:

"Therefore, if they want public tender, then we should have gone out and put out a tender to all firms in the world who want to invest in glass, ethanol, paper board, paper and electricity to come and provide comparative offers to the Trinidad and Tobago Government. Is that the way they wish any Government to proceed with respect to dealing with investment? It is so stupid, silly and unrealistic for them to ask that question!

So, Mr. Speaker, when the Government gets an offer of investment, it looks at it. It analyzes the offer through its agencies to assess the feasibility of the offer and to look at the benefits that would accrue to the country as a result of that. It was not a case of abstracting the generation component from the package and proceeding on a competitive basis on just the generation aspect and leaving the other aspect of this proposal which was before the Government, aside."

Mr. Speaker, what were the benefits that were to accrue when the Government looked at it and analyzed this offer? What were the benefits which were to accrue to Trinidad and Tobago in this package which was an offer from Innercob industries? First, there would have been enhanced reliability of electricity supply, because here we would have had increased additional capacity installed. And, therefore, one would have had enhanced reliability, because there would have been another source of power supply and as a result, T&TEC would have been able to maximize its reliability at lower cost, through access from power both from PowerGen and InnCogen."

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Planning and Development went on to say:

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"The advantage also was that InnCogen was introducing the newest technology, 1998, whereas PowerGen was operating with 1985 technology..."

All these matters, when the Opposition said that on the face of it the benefits were not for Trinidad and Tobago so that there must be a presumption that they were acting contrary to the people of Trinidad and Tobago! All those matters were not dealt with and were not answered.

Mr. Speaker, what was the mover of the Motion left with when he had to conclude the Motion, when he had to end, when he had to wind up? He said:

"Although the Member for Tobago East dealt with the issue of corruption he was seeing this debate touching on corruption at the highest political office in the land. I contend, however, that as far as I am aware it is the first time in Trinidad and Tobago that we have a situation without explanation."

After he said that the Member went on to say:

"I am saying there is a perception. I am not saying that there is corruption or the Prime Minister is corrupt. I would be the last person to say that. I am saying there is a perception, and unless the Prime Minister—and he still has the opportunity because since this touches on him—he can offer an explanation."

He said that, notwithstanding the fact, that all the speakers on this side gave explanations. As a matter of fact, one of the contributions made by a Member of the Opposition was to the effect that there was no openness, when the facts showed that this thing was being advertised. The Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission was advertising it on the newspapers and it was on the radio. As a matter of fact, there was a statement in Parliament [*Interruption*]

Mr. Valley: Advertising what?

Hon. R. L. Maharaj: Particulars of these matters. Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Diego Martin Central, the mover of this Motion, the person who said, "I am producing evidence to you, which you must take action for corruption, but you must also take action to void this agreement," after he said all that in closing he said, "Mr. Speaker, I am simply restating the issues, I am saying that unless there is some logical explanation, and, Mr. Speaker, let me say why it is important," and he continued. He asked for a logical explanation. But if somebody comes with a Motion and is asking for the contract to be voided, it is not a matter of an explanation, but a matter that he produce facts to show why the contract should be voided.

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The hon. Member for Diego Martin Central even quoted Latin. He said:

"On the principle of *non est factum* the contract should be voided."

I thought it best to, therefore, just say in this debate what are some of the legal principles which would cause a contract to be voided. The first principle is that if there is a mistake. A mistake could be a mutual mistake which occurs where both parties have contracted under some misapprehension of some fact lying at the root of the contract, some mutual mistake. The Member did not allege a mutual mistake.

The other kind of mistake is a unilateral mistake, which occurs when only one of the contracting parties is mistaken. In these types of cases there is, in fact, no genuine agreement between the parties, and the law, therefore, does not require the contract to be in existence because the mistake has been so fundamental that there has been no agreement.

The next mistake is *non est factum*, that is what the hon. Member for Diego Martin said. If a party has been misled into signing a contract that is essentially different from that which he intended to sign, he can *plead non est factum* in an action against him. In most cases the mistake is induced by fraud, the plea is available so long as the person signing the document has made a fundamental mistake as to the character or effect of the document. Mr. Speaker, if two parties are signing a contract and they do not know what they are signing, for example, if a blind man, a deaf or dumb person signs a contract and does not know or understand what he or she is signing, that is *non est factum*. That does not apply where the parties know what they have signed, they have lawyers and it was read over to them.

Mr. Speaker, what happened is that the Member had no Motion, he had nothing to come with, and while he was talking somebody in the back said *non est factum*, so he said *non est factum*, and that formed a basis for a motion to void the contract.

The other principle in which a contract can be voided is if there is misrepresentation by one party against another as to the terms of the contract and it can be proved that the party acted to his detriment. The other ground is illegality and public policy. You have to prove that the contract violates some law, either a common law or a statute law. He has not quoted any statute. For example, if one enters into a contract and it relates to prostitution, and prostitution is unlawful,

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that is a contract which cannot be enforced. It is void on the grounds of public policy. That illegality is as to performance, there is no fraud, nobody has alleged fraud, or stated any fraud. Fraud is where the object of the contract is the perpetration of a fraud, that is to say, if the contract is to perpetrate fraud.

Then there is another principle, if you can show that a contract is for the sale of public offices, concealment of crime or restraint of trade, and the other head is if the contract has been frustrated. I have looked at the *Hansard* of this debate, and I find no basis for there being any allegations that this contract should be voided. It is my duty to Parliament to indicate that there is no legal basis on what has been produced here, for the contract to be voided. In the further resolution, it says that the agreement be voided and the choice of the provider of the electricity requirement of T&TEC be made through the system of public tender. Again, I have looked and have seen no basis for there to be support on that issue.

Throughout this debate, the Opposition was giving the impression that the Government was corrupt and not doing anything about corruption. The whole thrust of the contributions made by the Opposition was to say that this was all part and parcel of a corrupt Government. Again, in relation to those matters that were mentioned, there has been nothing on the record to prove any allegations, there were just mere allegations. I am saying this because I feel sure that if any objective person looks at these proceedings, one would not help but come to the conclusion that there were proceedings just to throw mud without any support.

Mr. Speaker, it is probably a very sad day that we can have a system in which—because one really cannot cater for all these matters—the Opposition would take a very serious occasion like this in respect of a Private Member's Motion, make an allegation and would not support it by any facts whatsoever.

I want to take the opportunity in respect of what they have said, however, to indicate that it is not correct to give the impression that the Government either condones corruption or is not doing anything about it. [*Interruption*] [*Member makes loud noise*] Is that an animal? I do not know if it is an animal sound. Mr. Speaker, the Government has shown that it has come to this House and said to the Opposition that we would want their help to deal with corruption. All the Governments in the world have had this problem with official corruption. As a matter of fact, corruption in the world seems to be a growth industry. At the recent Commonwealth Law Ministers' Conference here, the record showed that corruption in the world is a growth industry. It was decided that governments have

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to find ways and means of making the parliamentary system more accountable, so that governments would be more accountable.

When the Government comes to this Parliament with matters like that, they did the same thing they had done when in Opposition. We came to Parliament and we said that the people of Trinidad and Tobago needed to have a machinery whereby their Members of Parliament would be able to use the Parliament to call for books and files in order to see whether corruption is being committed in any of the state enterprises. The Opposition said they were not supporting that. It is on the record!

We came to this Parliament and said that there is a system in Trinidad and Tobago where ministers are there, but they do not do all the work in the ministries, where state corporations are under ministers. You have a system whereby if there is an allegation of corruption, the ministers do not have the coercive power to get the files and documents in order to get the information. We said that the police would not act unless there is reasonable cause, because that is the law. We said that we wanted to have a committee system whereby the committee of Parliament, both Opposition, Independent and Government, would be able to call for the files right away; call the permanent secretary, the state boards, or the directors to find out if there is corruption, and if there are facts to send it to the police and the Director of Public Prosecutions. The Opposition said it did not want that.

The Opposition has the brass-face to say that the Government is not interested in doing anything about corruption. Mr. Speaker, it is on record that this Government has introduced measures for debate—and I would not go into it now—to reform the laws of Trinidad and Tobago in order to give the Integrity Commission teeth to investigate Members of Parliament, ministers and other public officials, but yet the Opposition is saying the Government is not interested in doing anything about corruption.

Mr. Speaker, what does the Opposition want? The Opposition is contented to say: “Well listen, you all are in Government, if we believe you are corrupt what we are going to do is to bring Motions, and every opportunity we get we are going to say you are corrupt, whether there are facts to support it or not”. That is because they want to abuse Parliament and the free speech in Parliament.

I would like to use this opportunity to appeal to the Opposition, that when we behave like that we do not suffer, the people suffer and, therefore, they have a

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serious responsibility to the people of this country whom they represent. The powers they have are powers to be exercised for the people of Trinidad and Tobago. The school children who are sitting there are the future of Trinidad and Tobago, we have a duty to do things for their benefit.

When the Opposition gets up in Parliament and raises a Motion like this—which is very good if they raise it—but they raise it and they do not support it, it undermines and subverts the purpose of the Parliament. It undermines democracy, and it is an injustice to the people, not only the people they represent, but the people of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*].

Mr. Speaker, I would ask them to let us use this Motion as something to forge a new future. Let us use it so that we would be able to recognize what faults we have made, and let us commit and recommit ourselves to truly serve the people of Trinidad and Tobago. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

*Question put.**The House divided:* Ayes 10 Noes 18

AYES

Valley, K.

Manning, P.

Rowley, Dr. K.

Imbert, C.

Narine, J.

Hart, E.

Joseph, M

Sinanan, B.

Boynes, R.

Williams, E.

NOES

Maharaj, Hon. R.L.

Persad-Bissessar, Hon. K

Lasse, Dr. The Hon. V.

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Griffith, Dr. The Hon. R.

Humphrey, Hon. J.

Sudama, Hon. T.

Rafeeq, Dr. The Hon. H.

Khan, Dr. F.

Assam, Hon. M.

Job, Dr. The Hon. M.

Singh, Hon. G.

Nanan, Dr. The Hon. A.

Partap, Hon. H.

Mohammed, Dr. The Hon. R.

Singh, Hon. D.

Ramsaran, Hon. M.

Sharma, C.

Ali, R.

Motion negatived.

**STATE AGENCIES
(UNSATISFACTORY AWARD OF CONTRACTS)**

Mr. Colm Imbert (*Diego Martin East*): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the following Motion:

Whereas within the last three years serious concerns have been publicly expressed by the Joint Consultative Council of the Construction Industry, Contractors, Consultants, Trade Unions, the Print and Electronic Media, Newspaper Columnists, Transparency International, Non-Governmental Organisations, Local and Foreign Companies, among several other groups and individuals in the society at large about the manner in which the Government and the State Agencies have awarded contracts and engaged personnel:

Be it resolved that the House condemn this Government and the State Agencies for the unsatisfactory manner in which they have awarded contracts and engaged personnel within the last three years.

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Mr. Speaker, after hearing the nonsense uttered by the Attorney General over the last hour, one can only conclude [*Interruption*].

Mr. Speaker: In this House Members are sufficiently intelligent and ingenious to use words which are not insulting of other Members. I am sure the hon. Member for Diego Martin East, regardless of how he feels, could always be in a position to do that. Let us not use that word. Let us not refer to a contribution of any hon. Member as nonsense.

Mr. C. Imbert: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After having heard the baseless, mindless and completely unfounded justification by the Attorney General of the corrupt InnCogen contract, one can only assume that he was laying the stage for this Motion. Perhaps, he is working for us; perhaps the Attorney General has joined this side, because I can only presume that it was his intention to lay the stage for this Motion, and so forth, in mind.

Before I deal with the InnCogen matter, which is one of the issues I wish to address, I need to sensitize persons to what I believe this Government is doing, and what it intends to do with regard to the award of contracts and the engagement of personnel.

2.50 p.m.

I need to go to the dictionary. On page 310 of the Collin's Concise Dictionary there is the word "crony", and for the benefit of the Members of this House, a crony is "a friend or companion of long duration". It is interesting that the next word in this dictionary is "crook", but we would not go into that. [*Laughter*] Let us now go to page 465 for the definition of the word favouritism which means: "The practice of giving special treatment to a person or group".

Finally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the definition of the word "nepotism", and for the benefit of Members on the other side who obviously do not know or pretend not to know—because I am sure the Minister of Trade and Industry and Consumer Affairs and the Minister of Tourism knows the meaning of the word "nepotism"—it means: "Favouritism shown to relatives or close friends by those with power". I could not have put it better myself. That is what this entire Government is all about. It is about cronyism, favouritism and nepotism!

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, within the last three years this Government has defined, very precisely, the meaning of those three words in the award of contracts. The

most recent award that we have heard about is the award of Chacachacare Island to Donald Trump to run a casino. Of course they can deny it was not so. They can deny that the Prime Minister was on television on Wednesday night—we would not talk about his condition on that night—talking about the award of Chacachacare Island to Donald Trump to run a casino!

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I always wondered. They do not want us to talk. We heard the Attorney General with his pretentious plea that we have a responsibility in this Parliament. Let me tell them something. I have a responsibility as an elected Member to expose Government corruption! That is my responsibility and I will not shirk my responsibility! [*Desk thumping*] They can carry on all they want and say we must not come here and expose Government corruption, but that is my responsibility to let the people know about Government corruption because they want to cover it up!

Let us go back to this Chacachacare Island and Mr. Trump. We really have to wonder what really went on with that Miss Universe contract. I thought to myself about what was in it for Mr. Trump. What was he going to get for doing this favour that we have been led to believe has been done to Trinidad and Tobago? There were so many rumours about lands at Chaguaramas for hotel development, casinos and so forth, but I was not surprised.

When I look at the justification given for \$81 million in contracts awarded by this Government for that one night stand in Chagaramas; when I see the chairman of the UNC got the contract to provide cosmetics to the Miss Universe delegates; and the treasurer of the UNC got the contract to run the restaurant at the Convention Centre, I wondered, what was the tendering procedure? Was this sent out or advertized in the newspapers? How did the treasurer of the UNC get the contract for the restaurant at the Convention Centre, and how the chairman of the UNC got the exclusive contract to provide cosmetics for the Miss Universe pageant, and all the free publicity and free advertizement that went with that? How did he get that?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there was this ridiculous assertion that the viewing audience for that event that took place on Wednesday—I have seen it in the newspapers—was 2.5 billion. I have seen it coming from the Government and the promoters of the pageant. It is an absurdity in an effort to justify the squandermania and corruption that has taken place in Trinidad and Tobago over the last three months on that one night stand. They tried to justify the \$81 million

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that went into the pockets of party supporters, UNC financiers and high-ranking UNC officials.

Dr. Rowley: *[Inaudible]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member for Diego Martin West, do not ever say that again.

Dr. Rowley: Say what?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: You asked if I am “afraid of Assam”. Do not ever say that.

Dr. Rowley: I want to find out!

Mr. C. Imbert: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the false justification for that \$81 million corruption was that there would be 2.5 billion people watching the show. Now, any little school child will know that 2.5 billion is half of the world's population. I was ashamed. These smooth-talking foreigners came here and fooled Trinidadians and they just lapped it up.

Less than 10 per cent of the population of any given country in the world, barring the host station, has any interest in the Miss Universe Pageant. As a matter of fact, I was in another country on Wednesday and I did my own survey. I found out that 95 per cent of the persons in that country were not aware that the Miss Universe Pageant was taking place on that day, and of the 5 per cent who knew, less than half had any interest in watching the show.

Mr. Partap: Tell us which country!

Mr. C. Imbert: Ask any 10 persons in Trinidad where the Miss Universe Pageant was held in 1998 and nine of them will not be able to say that it was Hawaii. When we look at different time zones, the pageant was held between the hours of 8.00 and 11.00 Eastern Standard Time. So, are they saying that 2.5 billion people would wake up at 3 o'clock in the morning or play hooky from work at 11 o'clock in the morning, leaving their work to go home and watch Miss Universe on cable television? Half of them do not even get CBS!

If one is scientific about this whole thing and looks at time zones, interest in the pageant and the fact that a large percentage of the world did not have access to the television broadcast, one would see that maybe one per cent of that figure actually watched the show. No more than 20 million persons in the entire world watched that show, but we in Trinidad and Tobago are stupid. The smooth-talking

foreigner came and told us that 2.5 billion people would be watching this show and we just lapped it up.

I see the Member for Tobago East laughing. He knows what I am speaking about. He knows about the time zones and the fact that this show is not of any great significance in many countries of the world. He knows that it was a fraction of persons who actually watched that show. We see the way in which this Government operates. It concocts an imaginary smokescreen every time it has to engage in the facilitation of corruption. That is what they do. So, they fool people and tell them that thousands of tourists would be coming to Trinidad and Tobago to visit while the show is in progress. I heard an amusing story. Some persons on the radio were heckling the Minister of Trade & Industry and Consumer Affairs and the Minister of Tourism. They said, "Where are they? They must be home by Assam, because we are not seeing them!" *[Laughter]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they take us for fools! The thing at the Savannah "buss". The poor people had to put out \$1500, yet they did not get \$5.00 in sales, and they are talking about refunds and all sorts of nonsense. If 200 tourists came here in the last week, that is plenty, and I am not accepting any bogus statistics given to me by the Minister of Trade & Industry and Consumer Affairs and the Minister of Tourism.

This is how this Government operates. The Prime Minister goes and plays golf with Donald Trump and next thing we know, \$81 million of poor people's money goes into the pockets of UNC supporters and financiers and Donald Trump. The next thing we hear is that he got Chacachacare Island to run a casino, and they are talking about how they have to facilitate the licence.

They know that casino gambling is illegal, but it has been one of the driving motivations of the Minister of Finance and others who like to gamble that we legalize casino gambling in Trinidad and Tobago. They have what we call in Trinidad and Tobago "long brain". They are going to use this Miss Universe. The objective is casino gambling. That is what it is! It is not Miss Universe! It is casino gambling!

So, they concocted this whole thing, the Prime Minister starts playing golf with Trump who is a friend of Paladino—the fella who got the InnCogen corrupt contract—and next thing we hear, we are favoured to receive the contract for Miss Universe. Next, we hear that \$81 million goes into the pockets of the UNC supporters, then we hear about Chacachacare Island, and then they are going to facilitate a licence for this Trump individual.

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I am not vex with Trump. He is an astute businessman and knows what he is doing. He takes them hook line and sinker to the cleaners. He knows what he is doing, with members of the UNC involved. I am certain we will hear about it. We will hear about the shareholders in that Casino in Chacachacare and the business partners of Mr. Trump in that Casino.

Years and years—government after government has resisted from Eric Williams' time casino gambling in Trinidad and Tobago because of the criminal association of organized crime with casino gambling. The mafia, mob and syndicate and that is what they want to bring to this Trinidad and Tobago, through the back door saying that that is the investment that is going to flow out of the Miss Universe pageant [*Desk thumping*]. That is what they wanted all the time. They had no interest in Miss Universe, it is casino gambling on Chacachacare Island; that is what the investors and the boys wanted—a partner to open a casino with them and they have to find a reason.

Dr. Rowley: And who paid for it?

Mr. C. Imbert: And who paid for it? Eighty-one million dollars of taxpayers' money and they are giving away Chacachacare Island to the mob, mafia and syndicate.

For the first time in Trinidad and Tobago now, hitmen will be landing in the airport because the crime lord from Chicago playing in the casino in Chacachacare and the crime lord from Philadelphia decides that he wants to bump him off—so two assassins land like one sees on television and the next thing somebody gets killed in Chacachacare Island. These things happen. [*Interruption*] That is why Dr. Eric Williams, Chambers, Robinson and Manning were opposed to casino gambling because it is associated with organized crime; and you could say what you want—you could jump high or jump low, it is associated with organized crime. Go ahead! I know what you all are doing.

Let us go back now and look at what has happened in Trinidad and Tobago over the last three years. [*Interruption*].—Mr. Deputy Speaker, I mashed their corn and exposed them. That is what they want, casino gambling. Anyhow let me get on with the motion. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, could you quiet down the House please? When one looks at what the Attorney General had to say, that no allegation of corruption was brought in this House in the InnCogen matter—that is what he is saying.

Now, there is a situation where a company or an investor tells you that he is coming here to build four manufacturing plants: glass, ethanol or whatever it is, okay; so this investor is coming to invest in the production of certain products. Nothing is wrong with that. So the investor comes to the Government and say: “look I want to establish four plants for the manufacturing of the following products, would you facilitate me?” The Government says no problem. Nothing is wrong with that on the face of it. Then suddenly the investment in four manufacturing plants is manipulated and changes colour like a chameleon into a sole selective contract for the generation of electricity. So it started off perfectly innocent as four manufacturing plants and ends up as a corrupt contract award facilitated by the UNC to the house guest of the Prime Minister. Do you want evidence?

The recipient of this contract is a personal friend of the Prime Minister for the last 20 years; he is the chief financier for the UNC in New York. These are published facts, okay. He got Caroni lands at 10 per cent of the normal premium. He received a 30-year take or pay contract with a government guarantee without public tendering with a eight-year tax holiday.

When you go back to what the Attorney General was telling us, no rules of the Central Tenders Board were breached and there was no abuse of process. What are they doing? Cabinets have always had the authority to award contracts but cabinets have been very careful about how they use that authority, but this Government has decided because it has the authority to award contracts, it will do so in a way that will favour their friends, family and supporters. So what Cabinet did in the InnCogen matter, recognizing that it is not illegal for a sitting Government to give a contract to their partner—that is what they did, it is immoral! They are using Cabinet’s authority to give contracts to their friends and cronies, hitting us in our faces and telling us it is not illegal and there is no breach of tender rules.

When the tender rules were established it was never contemplated that any Government would come to power in this country that would say: “there is no law against giving lucrative contracts to my friends and family without public tender and, therefore, I am going to apply my authority.” This is what they have been doing from day one.

So the Cabinet directs that there be no public tendering for the InnCogen contract and, the Cabinet directs that Narine Singh, the Prime Minister’s friend get

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a 30-year take or pay contract with an eight-year tax holiday on which he will make about \$700 million, and the Cabinet directs that the house guest of the Prime Minister be given a government guarantee for a contract that does not go out for public tender.

Dr. Rowley: One hundred and fifty million US dollars.

Mr. C. Imbert: One hundred and fifty million dollars. The Cabinet directs—this is what you would do, give it to “x” and give it to “y”, and Cabinets have always had this power but hardly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, has this been used in the manner in which this Government is taking it to a fine science.

It is the same thing with the Cherokee jeeps contract. Cabinet directs that Mr. Galbaransingh and Miss Seepersad, both close friends of the Minister of Finance, will get a contract for Cherokee jeeps without public tender and that is why I brought this dictionary with the definition of “Nepotism”. It is using one’s authority to give contracts to friends and family by those in power and this is what this government has been doing for the last three and a half years. The Cherokee jeep matter is a case in point—no public tendering; they direct the state agency that you must get the Cherokee jeeps with these radios, no other jeep could work—a Mitsubishi, Toyota or Land Rover—with this Motorola radio. There is some kind of special technology in this Cherokee jeep and, therefore, because Mr. Galbaransingh is the owner of the Cherokee agency you will give him the contract, and they did it. Then they are boldfaced enough to come—like the Attorney General came today—to stand up and tell people that is not illegal. They have the power to give Galbaransingh a sole selective contract, so they gave him and if you do not like it, take them to court. This is the pattern of this UNC Government.

Let us get the cosmetics—that is why Unanan Persad got the Restaurant and the brother of the chairman of the UNC got a job at WASA for which he was not qualified because this is what this Government is all about. They use and abuse their authority to give things to their friends and family.

3.15 p.m.

That is why the man whose name is on the signature of the Royal Castle licence outside every Royal Castle outlet, one Mr. Patron is put on the boardS of WASA and the next thing you hear he has a company supplying pipes to WASA and he did not declare his interest. This is what this administration is all about. They use their authority to give people’s money to their friends and family.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, look at the Soodhoo Affair it is a new concept which this administration is trying to instil in Trinidad and Tobago as normal behaviour. Earlier in the day, we heard the Minister of Finance—one of the chief architects of this new philosophy—say that there is nothing wrong with giving UNC people contracts, and if you want to deal with these matters you must put a bond in the court and so forth. The same individual tells you, you must not come in this Parliament and allege anything against him, a bond must be put, and he wants to remove parliamentary privileges.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if one looks at the behaviour of this administration in the way it does things. There is the InnCogen matter and as soon as that contract is consummated, high officials of T&TEC are driving brand new 500 SEL Mercedes Benz. What are people supposed to believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker? A man gets a contract, he is the Prime Minister's friend, he is the house guest, he is going to earn hundreds of millions of dollars for nothing and the next thing you see some of the officials who are involved in the same negotiations about which the Attorney General spoke, driving brand new 500 SEL Mercedes Benz. When you ask what is going on you cannot get answers. We are not supposed to talk about these things in this Parliament. You heard the Attorney General today say that we have a responsibility not to deal with these matters. We must not talk about corruption. That is what he said. We must not come here and expose Government's corruption.

Like the rice racket. If one looks at the National Flour Mills published accounts, they have set aside \$28 million in losses for goods lost in transit. It is there. This is not fantasy, this is reality. The evidence is in the National Flour Mills published accounts circulated to the public, to shareholders; \$28 million of public funds put aside because the Government has a substantial shareholding of 51 per cent in National Flour Mills, so that is \$28 million of public funds down the drain set aside because of a corrupt rice contract. That is just one shipment. The famous second shipment of rice which is supposed to be somewhere in South America cannot reach Trinidad and Tobago. They do not want us to remind the population of these things. They paid for the rice in advance. That is what cronyism, favouritism, and nepotism is all about.

When one looked at the way in which that purchase was effected, one saw highly irregular procedures where the supplier of the rice was paid in advance before the rice even reached the docks, far less get on the ship and sail ostensibly on its way to Trinidad and Tobago. So the people in India got their \$30—\$40

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million of Trinidad and Tobago taxpayers' money. The man who organized the whole matter has migrated to England, the man in the Embassy that organized it was sent home, and we taxpayers in Trinidad and Tobago have to absorb that \$30 million loss in that rotten rice racket at National Flour Mills. All cronyism. And when you look through the whole thread, this one is that one partner, that one is this one's son, that one is that one's nephew. There is a link in everything.

The UNC has this habit when you catch them with their pants down, when you catch them thieving, do you know what their response is? The other people do it, so we could do it too. It is like on a construction site—*[Interruption]*

As you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Member for St. Joseph has this habit, every time I am saying unpleasant things, he interrupts by shouting and jumping up and so forth, but I will not be deterred. It is like someone told me, on a construction site they caught a fella driving out with 10 bags of cement, they held him and asked if he is thieving the cement. He said, "Yes, Sir." Why? Well everybody else is doing it, so I am doing it too. This is the UNC. Everybody else doing it so I am doing it too. Just like the little thief they caught with the 10 bags of cement, that is their justification. They allege that in the past there was corruption and, therefore, it is all right now for them to be corrupt. That is the response of the UNC. All yuh thief in the past, so we thieving now. It is we time to thief now, that is the war cry of the UNC.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, *[Interruption]* —It is actually 20 and I am very proud of it. Look at the airport contract and the manipulation of procedures and the whole trail of deceit and intrigue in that airport contract. It starts out with a team of highly experienced and professional public servants ranking the Galbaransingh tender last and in fact, I am saying it should not even qualify for consideration. So you have experienced, educated and highly trained professionals in the public service on a public service committee to evaluate tenders saying: You see that one, that one is coming last. So they say fine, you all are giving trouble, we will appoint another committee, so they pelt way the tender evaluation from these public servants who have no axe to grind, they are just doing their job, and they appoint a new tenders committee made up of their cronies and the next thing who was last is now first. Who could not qualify on financial grounds, now have the highest rating on financial grounds, who could not qualify because they had no equipment are getting top marks because he has all the equipment and so forth. That is what took place on the airport contract. One character is a big financier of the party so he must get a return on his investment. They put it through the system

in the normal way, it did not work, they say all right, they will give it to you some how so they contrive this committee of cronies and say you were last you are now first, take that.

But of course, in the meantime, the Contractors Association and the other persons in the construction industry are making noise so everybody is aware of the racket that is going on so public awareness is raised. There is a hue and cry, there is exposure of the fact that Galbaransingh's contract was last and now it is mysteriously first. The Government, sufficiently embarrassed, appoints a retired judge to investigate the matter. The judge goes through his investigation, he establishes that there was corruption and collusion and the nepotism comes back into play. The contractor selected the consultants, Galbaransingh selects Birk Hillman, Galbaransingh, chairman of TIDCO, selects Birk Hillman consultants. Having done that, Birk Hillman Consultants select Galbaransingh as contractor. It is done in front your face and the retired judge says, obvious collusion. You pick me, I pick you.

He prepares his report, and the Prime Minister comes here full of sound and fury beating his chest talking about the resolute determination of his Government is to stamp out corruption and he declares if the contract is corrupt, it must be terminated. Let the chips fall where they may, but of course, the boys are working in the background because there is this culture of cronyism, favouritism and nepotism that they want to take root in Trinidad and Tobago so any time one of them gets a corrupt contract they will understand that is one of the boys, that is why we are giving it to him. That is the culture that the UNC wants to inculcate in Trinidad and Tobago.

So the boys start to work on the Prime Minister, they start to terrorise him. How could you say those things about Galbaransingh? What is that? He is a good boy. You have to give him back that contract. So they are working on him, and of course, I am sure a few proposals were made to him and he was told what would happen if he did not comply. The next thing, they come to Parliament they use the majority, take the *Hansard* carry it to court, win on a technicality which had nothing to do with the merits of the case because it is established beyond a doubt that there is corruption and collusion, but they used a technicality to say they have to abandon this report. A technicality! But the pressure is still there from the public.

The public is still saying that you cannot give that man that contract without public tender and the same Attorney General who talks about evidence, I have in

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my possession notes of a meeting held at his office, chaired by him to discuss the airport contract and in those notes of that meeting, the Attorney General declares that the contract is null and void and for proper transparency, it must go out for public tender. That is the evidence which I have. Let him deny that meeting ever took place, let him deny that he declared the airport contract null and void. At least at some point in time, the Attorney General indicates the contract as illegal and it must go for public tender, but the boys are working in the background. They are working, because they know if this goes out for public tender, Galbaransingh would not get the contract.

3.30 p.m.

The same Bayley made a presentation to the Airports Authority in the 1992—1995 period as the promoter of Birk Hillman. “Yuh t’ink it easy?” Bayley brought Birk Hillman here and made a presentation to The Airports Authority. So after the Deyalsingh Inquiry messed up everything they said, “Ah, this Bayley fella is chairman of NIPDEC and he and Birk Hillman are together, so leh we give it to NIPDEC”. Therefore, they gave it to NIPDEC.

Then, honest people within the NIPDEC system said, “You see this contract, that better go for public tender, eh”. Honest people within the NIPDEC system said, “This contract better go in accordance with our tender procedures and better go out for public tender”. But the boys “eh” like that because they know if that happens Galbaransingh will not get the contract. So they manipulated the Cabinet again and we saw all kinds of curious Cabinet notes appearing. The next thing we heard, “Cabinet instructs NIPDEC to award the contract to Galbaransingh without public tender”. I bring it back to this whole point made by the Attorney General that they have not broken any law. Of course, there is need to deal with the law with respect to this matter, because no one would believe that a Cabinet would behave in this brass-faced manner.

So Cabinet instructs NIPDEC, Bayley, to give the contract to Galbaransingh, Galbaransingh gets the contract and that is the end of that. They tell you, “If you do not like it, lump it”. The same hon. Member for Couva North who came here and told us, “Let the chips fall where they may, I am going to stamp out corruption”, when they “manners” him, when they pressurize him and God knows what else, “boil dong like bhaji”, “put he tail between he leg” and say, “All yuh do whatever you want”, and then comes back to the Parliament a year later and says, “If all yuh do not like it lump it”.

This is what is going on in this country, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It was not just Galbaransingh, it was Ferguson too; Ferguson and the infamous Calmaquip Corporation. You know, they had already awarded a contract, I think it was for air traffic control or something like that, to this Calmaquip Company which Mr. Ferguson introduced to Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Sudama: Under PNM.

Mr. C. Imbert: “Nah, doh try dat.” Under Ferguson. You see, Mr. Deputy Speaker—*[Interruption]*—yes, under Ferguson, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You see, they think people are stupid. It is the same Ferguson who was in Mount Hope and who brought Calmaquip here under the NAR. Do not try that nonsense with me. He was chairman under NAR. He was chairman of the Mount Hope Authority under the NAR and he brought Calmaquip here and the first racket he tried, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was the prison contract where—*[Interruption]*—it is all right. That is the same Romano. “Yuh t’ink it easy” with these people? You know, one hand is here, left hand in right hand, you know, hand in back pocket, hand in front pocket, a little web of master manipulators.

Ferguson, the third financier of the UNC, associates himself with Calmaquip, a company already exposed in Trinidad and Tobago as a company that would boldly double the price of government equipment. I remember that situation well with the equipment for the maximum security prison. I had in one hand the original signed contract for \$14 million from the original supplier and in my other hand the invoice from Calmaquip for \$28 million; \$14 million/\$28 million—I am watching it and I cannot believe that people could be so bold-faced, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You see, it was not just Galbaransingh in that airport contract, it was Calmaquip and Ferguson as well; a web of intrigue, cronyism, nepotism and favouritism. The gas station contract, I mean, we have heard rumours about that. *[Interruption]* Yes, well we heard about that; who facilitated whom to cross where. However, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know, a contract is awarded to the highest bidder six months behind schedule or whatever it is, three months behind schedule, the famous Soodhoo, the famous intellectual, highly-educated engineer/banker, doing a job that two masons and a carpenter could do, awarding a contract to the highest bidder and it is three months behind schedule.

This is what this Government is all about, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I understand Mr. Patron is back in WASA. I understand this Royal Castle boy is back in WASA.

Hon. Member: You are joking.

Mr. C. Imbert: That is what I have been told. I understand he is back. He is back. You see, these “fellas not easy, yuh know”. Look at the Whitehall situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. [*Interruption*] That is okay. That is fine with me. Look at the Whitehall situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A contract was awarded by Cabinet to MTS in 1995 for \$5 million to refurbish Whitehall. Work was in progress when the UNC came in. The UNC comes in, they say, “MTS, boy; eh, eh, eh, eh, eh. We cannot manipulate this contract with MTS there. MTS come out.” So they threw out MTS. Next thing we know, it goes from \$5 million to \$12 million to \$19 million to \$30 million, on an existing structure.

Do you know what you could build with \$30 million? That Unit Trust building that is being constructed downtown where they are soon to have a topping off ceremony, the cost of the first phase of that was \$30 million. They added some floors afterwards but the first cost of that Unit Trust building was \$30 million. That is what we could get for \$30 million; but they put two coat “ah” paint, put some tiles on “de” floor, put some chandeliers in “de” air and send a bill for \$30 million for Whitehall. It is no wonder, Mr. Deputy Speaker—you know, the other day—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, the speaking time of the Member for Diego Martin East has expired.

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

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. C. Imbert: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You know, it is interesting to hear the Attorney General mumbling over there. He is the one who declared the airport contract to be illegal. He is the one who said it must go out to public tender and when they “manners” him and we asked a question here, “What advice did you give the Cabinet”, he hides behind the cloak of, “Oh, that is client/attorney privilege, secrecy, I cannot tell you”. He cannot say because he is going to have to admit that he advised the Government that the airport contract was illegal. He does not have the courage, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to come into this Parliament and say, “You see me, I clean. I tell them it illegal but they vote against me and they do it”. He does not have the courage to do that; that same Attorney General right there.

Hon. Member: Then he will have to leave the Cabinet.

Mr. C. Imbert: Of course he would have to resign the following day. Coming back to Whitehall, I was looking at this situation. As I said, two coat “ah” paint, two fancy railings, some stained glass, two, three pieces “ah” coloured glass, chandeliers and tiles—\$30 million. And when we look into how those contracts were awarded, what tendering procedure was used to award all of those contracts at Whitehall, we will find a can of worms. It is no wonder—[*Interruption*]. No, I want to say it.

Before I come to that, the other day I saw a fella driving down the road in a brand new BMW. I said, “Wait nah, I know that fella”, and I recognized him as one of the subcontractors on the Whitehall contract. He used to drive a Nissan Sunny about 18 months ago, you know. He was hand to mouth. He could not even pay his bills. I know the person. He could not pay his mortgage or his bills. He was hand to mouth, driving a Nissan Sunny and owing the bank. Now he is driving a brand new BMW-5 series. “Yuh t’ink it easy with these fellas”, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

When I see the Chairman of T&TEC driving a Mercedes Benz just after the InnCogen contract and then I see this fella driving a new BMW, I say, “Yes man, these people good”. What they do is violate every tender procedure existing, use all kinds of authority, twist it up, turn it upside down so that they do not have to invite quotes in the proper manner. They have people coming in and saying, “Oh, \$100,000.00 for that piece of glass there—yes, that is a good price. Pay that”. That is what went on with the Whitehall project and also the Miss Universe matter.

There was a fella down there, I understand the man who made the chairs never made a chair in his life—one of these UNC boys—or if he did he must have made two galvanize chairs. Next thing—[*Interruption*]—yes, they elected him chairman. They said, “Doh mind you never make a chair in your life; doh mind you have no factory; doh mind you have no experience; doh mind you have no finance; here, you are the chairman. Build 3000 chairs for us and just name your price. Tell us the price”. So my boy “only happy too bad”. He got this contract for 3000 chairs and he never built a chair in his life. He went to one of the other persons who was denied the possibility and said, “Build these chairs for me”, and that is what happened.

Every one of those contracts, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you look into it you are going to see something like that. Out of that \$81 million—well, Trump got \$20 million so that leaves—\$25. Okay, Trump got \$25 million.

[MR. SPEAKER] *in the Chair*

Mr. C. Imbert: Out of the other \$60-odd million, if you look into that and you look at the prices that were paid and the manner in which this thing was done, it will be shocking, Mr. Speaker. It will be shocking and we will establish the facts in due course. We will establish what took place at that Miss Universe gravy train in Chaguaramas.

Let me just remind the Parliament of yet another piece of nepotism and cronyism and that is the Maritime Winsure \$52 million giveaway of taxpayers' money given to a company run by a crony of the Minister of Finance. That is how they operate. When they put their money into the UNC in the 1995 period, I understand each one put \$1 million or whatever it was. So a fella said, "Well, I putting \$1 million, I want back \$100 million, eh". So this one said, "I want Trade". That one said, "I want Finance". The next one said, "I want Energy". So they tied up the whole economy. One is Minister of Finance, one is Chairman of the Energy Corporation, one is Chairman of TIDCO and then the games began and the games continue, Mr. Speaker.

Coming back to this Miss Universe issue, when I saw that the contestants stayed at Grafton Hotel I was not surprised. When I saw the hoteliers in Tobago complaining that nobody even visited their hotel to establish whether they could house any of the contestants, I was not surprised because the boys have to get back, Mr. Speaker. [*Interruption*]

The Prime Minister could say what he wants. This is what inside of here is for, to expose UNC corruption. That is what parliamentary privilege is all about and I will say it over and over and over again and you could jump high, jump low, you are not going to stop me. Anyway, when I saw that all of the contestants were staying at the Grafton Hotel I was not surprised, Mr. Speaker. That is just to facilitate one of the boys again. You see, we recently saw again two more contracts awarded at the airport for almost \$200 million—the boys again, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact, the boys are hitting almost \$400 million now in contracts at the Airports Authority.

Let us talk about that Airports Authority a bit. The Member for Diego Martin West exposed the disgraceful behaviour of a UNC crony, the Chairman of the Airports Authority, for manipulating accounts at the Airports Authority so that debts owed to the Authority by his company disappeared from the books. They are taking away the hangar facilities for other competitors telling them to deal with

the Chairman. This situation was exposed in this Parliament by the Member for Diego Martin West leading to a situation where members of the Airports Authority board demanded the resignation of that UNC crony they put in charge of that state authority.

Then the boys started to do their business again, because the Chairman of the Airports Authority cannot be moved, otherwise they would not get through with what they want to do. So we hear all kinds of reports, of begging the members of the board to reconsider, asking this one, “Do not make so much noise, nah. Let our man of business stay as chairman of the Airports Authority”. Then inducements and all sorts of things are taking—*[Interruption]*

Mr. Speaker: I think that this is a motion in which, of course, one could be at large on lots of things but I think that we need to concentrate on what one is complaining about, which is the award of contracts and the engaging of personnel, right. In fact, both parts of it deal with that and there may be other things that one may talk about at other times, but I think that you should focus on those things, the award of contracts these people are talking about and that you are saying is unfair. So please, could we narrow it down to the issue?

Mr. C. Imbert: Certainly, Mr. Speaker. I was talking about the engagement of persons by the UNC to hold positions in state enterprises, the manner in which these people were engaged to do so and the behaviour of these persons after they were engaged to hold positions and so forth. Let us go back now. We cannot forget the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources. We cannot forget the fact that a personal friend of the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources was the sixth ranked person on a list of applicants for a post to run a programme in the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources and through the intervention of persons in that Ministry that person was mysteriously chosen, although he ranked sixth, and put first, Mr. Speaker.

3.45 p.m.

The point I am developing is, what the UNC is doing in the award of contracts and in the engagement of personnel is institutionalizing “cronyism”, favouritism and nepotism in Trinidad and Tobago. As I said, the definition of “nepotism” is giving favours to friends and family by those with power.

We saw somebody who worked on the Minister’s campaign; we saw somebody who is a friend of the Minister coming sixth in the ranking being placed, suddenly, first—a perfect example of “cronyism”.

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Since you have brought me back to the meat of the Motion, Mr. Speaker, I cannot but give more examples of this type of “cronyism” and nepotism in the award of contracts and the engagement of personnel.

There was a situation in the Ministry of Local Government where the father of the Minister of Local Government was tendering for contracts, was not the lowest bidder; was, in fact, one of the higher bidders—the father of the Minister of Local Government, tendering for contracts in that Ministry and in state enterprises controlled by that Ministry—and the next thing we see were recommendations coming through for the particular company to be given contracts.

It is only because of exposure by the media, because the media has done its work well. A member of the media was investigating that matter and managed to get the information before the contracts were actually given out and exposed it in the press, and the Minister and his family, obviously embarrassed, withdrew. But, if a member of the media had not been after that, I am certain that those contracts would have been awarded which, in my view, would have been improper and immoral and, again, that would have set a precedent in Trinidad and Tobago.

I have to thank the media for all it has done in its investigative reporting in determining facts that people want to keep secret, things that people would not want us to know. They would not want us to know that the brother of the Chairman of the UNC is not qualified for the post he holds at WASA; that international agencies objected, saying that the man was not qualified, and asking why they were insisting that he be put in that position. But, he is the brother of the Chairman of the UNC.

So, with the culture of “cronyism”, corruption, favouritism and nepotism that this UNC administration is facilitating in Trinidad and Tobago through this ingenious device of using its authority as a Cabinet to instruct state enterprises and to instruct ministries to award immoral contracts—this is what they are doing. We heard it out of the mouth of the Attorney General. “Tell us which law we have broken; tell us which contract procedure we have violated.” That is what he said. He was laying the ground for a new culture in Trinidad and Tobago.

As we go into the election season, they will need and want to spend this slush fund they have created at NIPDEC with these obscene NIS contributions where businesses now have to pay two and three times what they were paying in the past; individuals have to pay two and three times what they were paying in NIS contributions; and they will not get the benefits for 10—15 years. An extra \$500

million coming into the system through NIPDEC. Wait. As the election comes, Mr. Speaker, you will see NIPDEC taking that \$500 million with the Chairman as the partner of the Minister of Finance and the next one getting his \$15,000 stipend for liaising with the General Manager. You are going to see what they are going to do with that money. Because they are trying to make people in Trinidad and Tobago believe that there is nothing wrong with favouring your friends and family when it comes to using taxpayers' money to fill your pockets.

I mean, look at the situation of Caroni (1975) Limited. The Dhanpur rice mill never worked properly. I wonder if it is working properly yet. We paid out \$26 million for some second-hand piece of junk about which some "fellas" came here to fool everybody. When it was checked, there are all sorts of relationships; all sorts of family linkages; all sorts of childhood acquaintances and so forth. The people of Caroni (1975) Limited cannot even be paid their salary; the workers cannot get paid their wages. But they squandered \$26 million on a second-hand piece of junk without proper tendering and without any sort of proper analysis.

This is why I have brought this Motion here today. Because I am dealing today principally with the question of award of contracts. But there is something else very serious going on in Trinidad and Tobago today and that is the engagement or disengagement of personnel.

We saw it at NIPDEC. They brought legislation here to eliminate the post of Deputy Director. They decided they did not want the post of Deputy Director at the National Insurance Board. So, in order to deal with a personnel matter, or perhaps to engage the person they wanted, by legislation they removed the post of Deputy Director of the National Insurance Board and there is someone in the post right now.

This is the same place where they fired one of the auditors because they said that he was the one who squealed and released the information on the stipend given to the Chief Executive Officer—the \$15,000 stipend given to the CEO per month for liaising with the General Manager—and he was the one who embarrassed the Minister of Finance and made the Minister of Finance look as if he was quite untruthful. So they said, "You see you, you are the one. You are the one who released the information." They sent all sorts of memoranda inside NIPDEC that they were so disappointed that persons in the organization were leaking sensitive information to the media and outside the company, issuing threats and warnings that if any more information was leaked out of the company, there would be dire consequences.

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This is a state enterprise where the people's money is involved and there are officials of that company threatening employees. Essentially, this is what they are saying, that if you catch us engaged in racket, if you catch us "tiefing", you must not give out that information to the press, or you must not give out that information to Opposition politicians; you must keep it to yourselves. That is essentially the culture that this UNC administration is inculcating in Trinidad and Tobago through intimidation and through all sorts of means; if you catch us "tiefing", do not tell anybody.

Coming back to that airport contract. I saw a letter from an engineer at NIPDEC who resigned on moral grounds and said that in all conscience, he could not remain within that organization and implement the Cabinet directive to award the contract for the airport to Galbaransingh. He resigned. I know the fellow, in particular, a very religious fellow. He decided, because of his religious convictions, that there was no way he was going to be part of any team at NIPDEC implementing the Cabinet instruction to award that illegal contract to Galbaransingh, so he resigned. I say full marks to him.

What has been their response after that? Another public spirited individual sends out information to show the corruption within that organization and the next thing, memos—if we catch you doing that, you are fired. This is what this administration is all about, Mr. Speaker.

As time goes by, more and more will come out in the wash because what has been happening over the last three and a half years is that in the first interval of the reign of terror of the UNC, the three boys had to get back their investment. So in 1996 and 1997, the three boys had to get back the million dollars they each put in, a hundredfold. Now, they have more or less received what they were supposed to get, each got their \$100 million, so now the rest of persons are clamouring, "How you could give them and not give me." So that is why you see new people coming out now. That is how this Narinesingh fellow is popping up because the boys get already so new people have to get now, because it is not just the three boys who financed the UNC; it is many people; so, they get, "It is my turn."

That is why the Treasurer of the UNC could be so boldfaced to be writing what he writes in the newspaper on a weekly basis, saying that there is more evidence of corruption and, all of a sudden, we hear through the grapevine that he mysteriously received the concession for the restaurant at the Convention Centre. I understand that running a little rum shop or parlour somewhere in Central

Trinidad is his experience, but all of a sudden, he is designated as the most equipped and experienced person to run the restaurant at the Convention Centre. Because it is their time now.

That is why you keep reading in the newspapers that people are opposed to this immorality, are opposed to this corruption and are opposed to this abuse of power. That is why every few weeks or so, it resurfaces, because it is in the public consciousness. As much as the UNC would like it to go away; as much as they would like people not to talk about the airport; not to talk about the National Flour Mills; not to talk about the National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited; not to talk about InnCogen; not to talk about the Cherokee Jeeps; not to talk about WASA; not to talk about Miss Universe; not to talk about Whitehall; not to talk about T&TEC; not to talk about the National Gas Company and so forth. They do not want us to talk about these things, you notice that every few weeks, it surfaces again. Because it is in the public consciousness.

This Government, in three short years, has managed to persuade the population of Trinidad and Tobago that it is corrupt. It has taken three years to persuade the population that it is corrupt. It has taken three years to convince the population that it does not give a damn what anybody says about its corrupt activities, and it has taken three years to convince the population that it is going to continue to feed on the gravy train coming out of the Ministry of Finance and so forth; it is going to continue to give contracts to friends, family and supporters at two, three and four times the going rate.

4.00 p.m.

It is going to continue to breach every procedure in the book. Put their family into positions in state enterprises. Put their friends in positions in ministries where they do not deserve it—did not qualify, they do not have the experience, they do not have the ability. That, it has already convinced this population, because that is what it is going to do.

The Prime Minister is most guilty because he started off giving the impression that he was going to be serious about dealing with corrupt members of his party. He started off giving the nation the impression that he intended to do something about the rampant corruption that has prevailed in Trinidad and Tobago since the ascension of the UNC to Government. He started off giving the impression that he intended to do something about it. He started off that way. But, he has shown that he is weak. He has shown that he does not have the belly to deal with errant

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ministers and errant, greedy, corrupt supporters of his party. He has shown—and I could only assume—that in some way he has compromised. He just does not have the guts to deal with the corrupt people with whom he surrounds himself.

He will go down in history as a weak Prime Minister who had the opportunity and the ability to deal with the corrupt manner in which his Government awards contracts and employs people. He had the ability and the opportunity to do so. But, he was too busy playing golf and giving away Chacachacare Island and giving away casinos to his partner; too busy carrying on in functions all over Trinidad and Tobago, to serve the interest of the people of Trinidad and Tobago. He has given up. That is what has happened in Trinidad and Tobago. The person who has the authority, under the Constitution, to deal with corruption within the Government system—the Prime Minister—has given up. For the rest of his term he is going to be on a permanent joy ride. If it is not posing with Miss Universe beauties; it is posing on the golf course or flashing at cocktail parties and so forth. That is what he is going to do for the rest of his term. He has decided it is too difficult to control the renegades within his party and the corruption within the government system. He is just going to have a good time for the rest of his term as Prime Minister. That is why I have brought this Motion here today. Because it is my duty as a Member of the Opposition not to allow myself to be silenced by the bandits that surround the UNC Party. It is my duty not to allow myself to be silenced by them. It is my duty to expose every act of corruption of this Government.

I simply do not care what device they use to prevent me from exposing UNC corruption. I do not care. Do your best. I will not stop. I will continue to expose UNC racket and corruption in this Parliament for all of the time that it is my privilege to serve in this Parliament—which I can assure you, will be for many years to come. I thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

Seconded by Dr. Keith Rowley.

Question proposed.

The Minister of Housing and Settlements (Mr. John Humphrey): Mr. Speaker, at our caucus, I had volunteered to respond to this private Motion, believing that the Member for Diego Martin East was expressing a concern about Government's procurement practices. I had thought that when I offered to respond to the hon. Member, that we would have debated the Central Tenders Board Act of 1961, colonial and post colonial procurement practices and how those

approaches compared with the modern efficient fast-tracking approach used by developed countries. So, I went and did some home-work.

The Member for Diego Martin East, instead of debating his own Motion, regurgitated all the unfounded allegations that had been repeated over and over again. I will not descend to the level of the Member for Diego Martin East, who seems to profess himself as being an expert in cronyism, in nepotism, in favouritism and in corruption. He is a world leading expert in these things. He was Minister of Works and Transport for four years. Is that when he gained his expertise, I ask?

Mr. Speaker, I will not attempt to answer that question. What I will do is address the substantive part of the Member's Motion. You tried to guide him but he was unable to be guided by the Chair. The substantive part of his Motion is, and I quote:

“The manner in which Government and the state agencies have awarded contracts and engaged personnel...”

Now, he has not touched on the awarding of contracts or the engaging of personnel in any serious way: all bacchanal, all hearsay, all unfounded allegations. We have heard them all before. In fact, anyone who takes the trouble to go into *Hansard* will find them all repeated for the last three years.

Mr. Speaker, between 1991 and 1995, the then Government under the Prime Ministership of the Member for San Fernando East, dealt with a system of Government's procurement. The Member for Diego Martin East was a Minister in that Cabinet and he participated in the exercise.

Mr. Speaker, I will read at some length the findings of a Cabinet committee appointed by Prime Minister Patrick Manning; the Member for San Fernando East. What I would start with—I would quote Cabinet Minute PM(93) 452, dated December 09, 1993. This is a report of the Committee to examine and make recommendations with respect to a review of the legislation related to tendering, and in particular to the establishment of appropriate guidelines for the procurement of goods and services.

Now, at this point, I refer to the committee. I believe that the Member for Diego Martin East was a member of that Cabinet committee. I think if he demonstrated the kinds of qualities that he has demonstrated for three years in the Opposition in this House, the then Prime Minister could never have had enough

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confidence and faith in him to make him a minister; unless, of course, there was a Ministry of Comedy. If there was a Ministry of Comedy, you make him the chief clown.

Mr. Speaker, this is a lengthy report, I am not going to read the entire thing.

4.10 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I am just going to read sections of the report. It is a report of the interministerial team:

"to examine and make recommendations with respect to a review of Legislation relating to tendering and, in particular, to the establishment of appropriate guidelines for the procurement of goods and services..."

Let me go through this report and share with hon. Members what, in fact, was found by the Cabinet committee that was appointed by the then Prime Minister to look into the whole procurement process of the state.

Paragraph 2.7 reads as follows:

"Efficient procurement systems play a pivotal role at all stages of the project cycle. Delays in procuring project inputs are often compounded into further delays and increased project costs. Sensitivity of project success to time thus makes management of the procurement process a central concern of efforts to improve the quality of public sector investment programming."

Nobody could argue with that, Mr. Speaker.

Paragraph 3.1 dealt with "The Problem", and this is what the committee said. This report was accepted by the then Cabinet. I would quote from the Minute what the decisions of the Cabinet were at the time.

"...it is no surprise that technology transfer and other potential beneficial spin-offs of the procurement process have eluded our best efforts. It is no surprise also that various suppliers of goods and services to the public sector have sought to take advantage of the 'open door to claims'..."

And we know a particular contractor who has done that with tremendous effect and has made more money with claims coming out of the court than in profits from projects that he executed. [*Interruption*]

Paragraph 3.2 states:

"Over-centralisation increases response times and breeds lethargy, undermines initiative and corrodes institutional memory, which itself has come under serious threat in more recent times from the combined effects of retirement and natural attrition... Career paths in procurement are non-existent and consequently valuable experience is lost to the system as a result of transfers and/or promotions to positions outside of the field. In this environment of uncertainty the practice of 'buck passing' could easily go unchallenged... Concerns with efficiency seem to have been sacrificed in favour of the preoccupation with establishing and maintaining checks and balances over the actions of public service managers. The Carrington Committee, in commenting on this issue noted that 'the legal provisions created a rigid system for inviting and evaluating tenders, but had nothing to do with either getting value for public funds, or in the process, utilising in-house technical knowledge.'"

Mr. Speaker, the section heading "Past Initiatives", paragraph 4.0:

"4.1 Changes to our procurement system over the last thirty (30) years have been undertaken on an ad-hoc basis with the major focus being the amendment of the relevant legislation in response to specific exigencies. The more recent amendments to address the role of NIPDEC in Government projects and the special needs of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force and the Protective Services are clear examples of this approach. Indeed, the Carrington Committee in its First Report traced this 'adhococracy' to the original establishment of the Central Tenders Board as evidenced by its comment that 'the substantive legislation was the product of an ad-hoc approach to the question of procurement of goods and services.'"

Mr. Speaker, when you speak to the Member for Diego Martin East privately, he does not express the nonsense that he expresses in this Parliament, and I make no apologies for saying that.

Hon. Members: Shame!

Hon. J. Humphrey: He agrees entirely with the findings of this report privately, but he is not in Government anymore.

Mr. Imbert: You must not tell untruths!

Hon. Humphrey: I go on to quote the current assignment from paragraph 5.1:

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"In this era of trade liberalisation and other policy initiatives aimed at reinforcing the role of market forces in the economy, Government, as perhaps the major purchaser of goods and services, must rethink its procurement strategy."

That was the conclusion of a committee of ministers of which the Member for Diego Martin East was the Minister of Works and Transport: that "Government must rethink its procurement strategy."

What was the summary of recommendations made by that committee of which the Member for Diego Martin East was a member? I would not be surprised if he was the chairman.

"7.1 All Ministries and Departments should be removed immediately from the purview of the Central Tenders Board in so far as the procurement of goods and services is concerned." [*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: Who said that?

That is the committee. The ministerial committee submitted its recommendations to the Cabinet under the Prime Ministership of the honourable Patrick Manning in 1993.

Mr. Imbert: Call the names of the members of the committee.

Hon. J. Humphrey: It continues:

"7.2 The procurement procedures approved for the Defence Force and the Protective Services should be adopted by Ministries and Departments with suitable amendments to meet their peculiar requirements." [*Interruption*]

Mr. Valley: Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to ask whether the hon. Member is prepared to lay that report on the Table. I want to contribute in this debate, and would really want—

Hon. J. Humphrey: You want me to lay this report on the table? Mr. Speaker, when I give you the Cabinet decisions you would see where they took a decision to lay this report in Parliament. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Valley: Mr. Speaker, I do not have a copy of the report. When I left my ministry, I left all the documents intact. I did not think that it was right to walk with any documents. The minister has it, if it is laid in the Parliament—I would like a copy to be made available to me to assist in participating in the debate. Is the Minister objecting to that?

Hon. J. Humphrey: Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to pass this copy to my friend, the Member for Diego Martin Central. I wish he would read more of it, because it is such a long report that I cannot use all my time to quote it, but I am quoting certain highlights.

The report continues:

"7.3 There should be mechanism for Ministries and Departments requiring the same type of manufactured items to pool their requirements in order to benefit from volume discounts."

That is a good recommendation.

"7.4 For the time being the engagement of consultancy services and the award of construction type/engineering projects should continue to be handled by the Central Tenders Board.

7.5 The Ministry of Works and Transport should be required to propose new arrangements for the award of construction type/engineering projects for the consideration of Cabinet.

7.6 The eventual repeal of the Central Tenders Board Ordinance and the establishment of an agency to oversee the procurement practices followed by Ministries and Departments and to report to Parliament annually.

7.7 Some of the staff of the Central Tenders Board should then be redeployed into the Ministries and Departments and so achieve the transfer of the expertise built up in that Division over the years. The remainder of the staff should constitute the core of the agency to be established to oversee the procurement practices employed by Ministries and Departments.

7.8 The opportunity should be taken to include in the on-going job evaluation exercise being undertaken in the Public Service the establishment of a career path in procurement and so prevent the loss of valuable experience through transfers and promotions to positions outside the field.

7.9 Training in basic procurement planning and management should be institutionalised and funds available under the IDB financed Multisectoral Preinvestment Programme which was recently negotiated and executed. Funds totalling US \$400,000 could be made available for a programme of institutional strengthening including the development of procurement

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procedure manuals, prequalification systems and a computerised data base of market information to which Ministries and Departments would have access."

I do not think Members would object to a single one of those recommendations made by that committee.

"7.10 The policy of giving local suppliers a 10% margin over foreign suppliers should be reintroduced and included in the procedures to be followed by Ministries and Departments.

7.11 In comparing competing bids for the supply of equipment packages, recognition should be taken of the extent to which the transfer of technology will be achieved in the various packages.

7.12 This Committee should continue to meet and should prepare a draft brief on the establishment of the agency which would oversee and report to Parliament on the observance of the approved procurement procedures by Ministries and Departments following their removal from the purview of the Central Tenders Board."

The final item is No. 7.13 which states:

"Subject to the approval of Cabinet the Central Tenders Board Ordinance should be amended to give effect to the recommendation at para 7.1 above."

Mr. Speaker, this Member for St. Augustine agrees with every single one of those recommendations, but as you can see, a then senior Member of that Government was not even aware that the Cabinet of which he was a Member had decided that it should have been laid in Parliament. It was never laid, but he wants me to lay it in Parliament. This was their report.

Let us look now at the decisions taken at that time by the Cabinet, under the Prime Ministership of Patrick Manning, the Member for San Fernando East.
[*Interruption*]

Hon. J. Humphrey: The Cabinet agreed, in principle:

- "(a) to the decentralization of the procurement activity in the Public Service, the Central Tenders Board Act No. 22 of 1961 to be amended to give effect thereto:
- (b) to the adoption by all Ministries/Departments of the procurement procedures outlined at Appendix A to the above-mentioned Report, with

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suitable amendments to meet the individual requirements of the respective Ministry/Department;

- (c) to the design and implementation of a system by which Ministries/Departments requiring the same type of manufactured items can group-purchase such items in order to benefit from volume discounts;
- (d) that the Minister of Works and Transport..."

who was then the Member for Diego Martin East—

"present for the consideration of Cabinet proposals for new arrangements for the award of construction/engineering type projects;"

Now, the Member for Diego Martin East in his private capacity is an engineer and is a developer, he is doing construction, and he has first-hand experience of the difficulties that all developers in the society face through the process of government procurement and approval. He has complained to me, I received those complaints honourably and we are doing something about them.

Mr. Imbert: "Why yuh does lie so! John yuh must not lie!"

Hon. J. Humphrey: These are the decisions of the Cabinet in which he was involved:

- "(e) to the re-introduction of the policy of providing local suppliers with a ten per cent (10%) margin over foreign suppliers, such policy to be included in the procurement procedures of Ministries/Departments (b) above refers);
- (f) to the establishment of an agency to oversee the procurement practices followed by Ministries/Departments and to report to Parliament on an annual basis"

Hon. Member: Hypocrites!

Hon. J. Humphrey: Mr. Speaker, we in the then Opposition were calling on them to be accountable to Parliament and to have parliamentary committees, and a committee on procurement could have been established. They never did anything about it:

- "(g) to the eventual repeal of the said Central Tenders Board Act when the Agency referred to at "f" above is established, core staff at the Central

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Tenders Board to be retained to constitute the agency to be established, and appropriate Central Tenders Board staff to be redeployed to Ministries/Departments.

- h) to the establishment of a career path in procurement to prevent the loss of valuable experience;
- i) to the institutionalization of training in basic procurement planning and management in the Public Service;
- j) that the committee referred to at (1) above continue to meet:
 - (i) to prepare a draft brief on the establishment of the agency referred to at (f) above
 - (ii) to draw-up an implementation schedule for the measures to be taken at (a), (b), (c) and (i) above, the Committee to report to Cabinet by January 31, 1994."

Now, exactly what was done.

Mr. Speaker, this country in Independence inherited a colonial process of procurement of goods and services. The legislation is dated 1961. Instead of repealing it and putting modern legislation in place to enable efficient, effective, honest, transparent and accountable practices, what has happened is that they have kept that legislation and in an ad hoc way, they amended it from time to time.

4.25 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, all of the corruption that this country is famous for occurred while the Central Tenders Board Act was in place. That was the law governing procurement. All of the corruption of the Caroni Racing Complex, of the procurement of wide-bodied aircraft of the national airline, of countless projects, the cost overruns that occurred and the mega projects that absorbed the bonanza that occurred through the price of oil from 1973—1983—an unprecedented windfall was enjoyed, and they wasted it in projects where the cost overruns exceeded, in some cases, 300, 400, and 500 per cent of the budgets they estimated. And they have the effrontery to stand up in this Parliament, meeting after meeting, to condemn this Government. Mr. Speaker, this Government has done more in three years than the PNM did in its entire existence. *[Desk thumping]*
[Interruption]

Mr. Valley: Mr. Speaker, if the Member will give way *[Interruption]*

Hon. J. Humphrey: No, I am not giving way. I only have three more minutes before tea.

Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a little time dealing with the modern method of delivering projects, but time will not permit unless we resume after the tea break. I want to deal with how the fast-tracking method works in the award of contracts, and to demonstrate that the method that they are insisting that this Government use, which is the method they used for all their years in existence, is not a good method. It offers, in fact, opportunities for corruption, and opportunities for private citizens, in their capacity as contractors, to virtually rip off the people of Trinidad and Tobago. I told you earlier, one particular contractor made more money in court settlement than he could ever have made in a project margin of the projects he was awarded by the PNM regime, for many, many years.

The fast-tracking method differs fundamentally from what we have inherited. Fast-tracking is devised for just that, for achieving fast delivery of construction projects. I just came back from Florida where there is evidence of this. I was driving on the same road to go to the Doctor at the hospital and coming back for a period of three weeks. In that period I saw sites that were just being prepared for construction and in three weeks a building is already up, covered with a roof and furnishings are going in. Over here the same thing will take 30 years.

Now, it obviously recommends itself, because of the efficiency that is involved. After the tea break—because I do not want to start and then be interrupted—I want to go in a little more detail in the fast-tracking method. I am going to use the airport project as the example of that method. *[Interruption]*.

ADJOURNMENT

The Attorney General (Hon. R. L. Maharaj): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. Member for St. Augustine and Minister of Housing and Settlements would agree with me. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to Friday June 4, at 1.30 p.m., when we will continue debate on the Freedom of Information Bill, and I hope that we could complete that on that date.

Question put and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 4.30 p.m.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The following question was asked by Mr. Edward Hart (Tunapuna):

**Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation
(Roads Paved)**

- 62.** 1. Would the Minister of Local Government indicate the names and locations of the roads paved in the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation by the Ministry of Local Government during the financial years 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1998/1999?
2. Would the Minister also indicate the following:
- i. the name(s) of the contractor(s) who paved the roads;
 - ii. whether the contracts were awarded by the Central Tenders Board;
 - iii. the cost of each road paved;
 - iv. whether the Ministry had the approval of the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation to carry out these projects;
 - v. under which allocation at the Ministry of Local Government were the funds identified to make payments for the said contracts;
 - vi. the source of his authority for the Ministry of Local Government to undertake road paving in Regional Corporations?

The following written reply to Question No. 62 was circulated to Members of the House:

The Minister of Local Government (Hon. Dhanraj Singh): The Ministry of Local Government did not implement any paving of roads in the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation during the financial years 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1998/1999. However, the Ministry did collaborate with the Corporation in respect of the paving of the following roads:

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1996

| NO. | NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|-----|--------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Curepe N.H.A. Road | Curepe |
| 2 | Blackbird Lane | La Horquetta |

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| NO. | NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| 3 | Trainline Road | Arima |
| 4 | Moore Trace | Bejucal |
| 5 | Warren Road Extension | Warren Village |
| 6 | Evans Street | Curepe |
| 7 | Upper 2nd Street | Tunapuna |
| 8 | Mohammed Street | Tunapuna |
| 9 | Piarco Old Road | D'Abadie |
| 10 | St. Michael Road | Tacarigua |
| 11 | Pasea Street | Off St. Augustine |
| 12 | Warbler Street | La Horquetta |
| 13 | Pinto Road | Arima |
| 14 | Frederick Street & Scott Street | Curepe |
| 15 | Gangadeen & Bhagoo Streets | Tunapuna |
| 16 | Maingot Road | Tunapuna |
| 17 | Pasea Street | Off Maingot Road |
| 18 | Marshall Trace | Warren Village |
| 19 | Bamboo Grove | Valsayn |
| 20 | Persad Street | El Dorado |
| 21 | Keskidee Crescent | Bon Air |
| 22 | Reid Lane | D'Abadie |

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1997

| NO. | NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Fairley Street | Tunapuna |
| 2 | Ross Trace | St. Helena |

Written Answers to Questions
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| NO. | NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|-----|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| 3 | Freeman Road | St. Augustine |
| 4 | Temple Street | Bamboo Village |
| 5 | Ali John Road | D'Abadie |
| 6 | Viceroy Crescent | Bon Air |
| 7 | Harriet Drive | Bon Air |
| 8 | An-Lac Crescent | Bon Air |
| 9 | Piarco Old Road | D'Abadie |
| 10 | Thavenot Street | Tacarigua |
| 11 | Race Course Road | Arima |
| 12 | Peytonville Main Road | Arima |
| 13 | Longden Street | St. Joseph |
| 14 | Adjodha Road | Warren Village |
| 15 | Bharat Street | Tunapuna |
| 16 | Dalipsingh Street | Tunapuna |
| 17 | Lower St. Vincent Street | Tunapuna |
| 18 | Boodoo Street | El Dorado |
| 19 | Bowen Street | Tunapuna |
| 20 | La Mango Road | Maracas |
| 21 | Road off Basie Street Extension | St. Augustine South |
| 22 | Ramjit Street Extension | El Dorado |
| 23 | Clarke Street | Tunapuna |
| 24 | Balata Trace | Off Maracas Royal Road |
| 25 | Braithwaite Street Extension | El Dorado |
| 26 | Lyndon Street | Curepe |

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| NO. | NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|-----|------------------------|------------|
| 27 | Frederick Settlement | Caroni |
| 28 | Factory Road | Oropune |
| 29 | Abercromby Street | St. Joseph |
| 30 | Bamboo Settlement | Valsayn |
| 31 | Herrera Trace | St. Helena |
| 32 | Mon Plasir Road | Cunupia |
| 33 | Hillside Terrace | Tunapuna |
| 34 | Beharry Trace | D'Abadie |
| 35 | Jackson Street | Curepe |
| 36 | Queen Elizabeth Street | Valsayn |
| 37 | Maraj Street | Tunapuna |
| 38 | Parima Road | Valsayn |
| 39 | Crown Street | Tacarigua |
| 40 | Buena Vista Street | St. Joseph |
| 41 | Wellington Street | St. Joseph |
| 42 | Abdool Lane | Curepe |

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER 1998

| NO. | NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|-----|--------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Balata Trace | Off Maracas Royal Road |

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD OCTOBER 1998 TO APRIL 1999

| NO. | NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|-----|--------------|-----------|
| 1 | Goya Road | El Dorado |
| 2 | Palm Road | Valsayn |

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| NO. | NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|-----|------------------------------|---------------------|
| 3 | Lukunie | Valsayn |
| 4 | Almond Avenue | Santa Rosa |
| 5 | Shaddock Circular Road | Santa Rosa |
| 6 | Mango Avenue | Santa Rosa Heights |
| 7 | Orange Grove Road | Orange Grove Estate |
| 8 | Orange Grove Estate Car Park | Orange Grove Estate |
| 9 | Narine Trace | Curepe |
| 10 | Hardial Avenue | St. Augustine South |
| 11 | Ramkissoon Trace | St. Augustine South |
| 12 | Pasea Road Extension | St. Augustine South |
| 13 | Ramgarib Street | Aranjuez |
| 14 | Ramgarib Street | Aranjuez |
| 15 | Pomgranate Circular | Santa Rosa Heights |
| 16 | Plumrose Avenue | Santa Rosa |
| 17 | Woodland Road | Valsayn |
| 18 | Pinto Road | Arima |

The names of the contractors who paved the roads are:

- Coosal's Construction Company Limited—the bonded contractor
- Bigal Investments
- Bartholomew's Quarry

The contracts were not required to be awarded by the Central Tenders Board, since all but five were not carried out by the bonded contractor, Coosal's Construction Company Limited. The remaining five were awarded to Bartholomew's Quarry, four; and Bigal Investments, one; through the Chief Executive Officer's awards.

The cost of each road paved is as follows:

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1996

| NO. | NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 | Curepe N.H. A. Road | \$72,627.10 |
| 2 | Blackbird Lane | \$62,790.00 |
| 3 | Trainline Road | \$53,920.54 |
| 4 | Moore Trace | \$37,674.00 |
| 5 | Warren Road Extension | \$25,743.00 |
| 6 | Evans Street | \$76,813.10 |
| 7 | Upper 2nd Street | \$25,743.90 |
| 8 | Mohammed Street | \$71,162.00 |
| 9 | Piarco Old Road | \$38,092.60 |
| 10 | St. Michael Road | \$48,139.00 |
| 11 | Pasea Street | \$48,932.50 |
| 12 | Warbler Street | \$45,741.25 |
| 13 | Pinto Road | \$55,953.25 |
| 14 | Frederick Street & Scott Street | \$48,932.50 |
| 15 | Gangadeen & Bhagoo Streets | \$49,358.00 |
| 16 | Maingot Road | \$49,358.00 |
| 17 | Pasea Street | \$49,358.00 |
| 18 | Marshall Trace | \$50,209.00 |
| 19 | Bamboo Grove | \$50,209.00 |
| 20 | Persad Street | \$49,358.00 |
| 21 | Keskidee Crescent | \$63,186.75 |
| 22 | Reid Lane | \$81,908.75 |

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1997

| NO. | NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 | Fairley Street | \$63,000.00 |
| 2 | Ross Trace | \$40,980.94 |
| 3 | Freeman Road | \$77,148.44 |
| 4 | Temple Street | \$51,897.66 |
| 5 | Ali John Road | \$27,431.41 |
| 6 | Viceroy Crescent | \$67,353.20 |
| 7 | Harriet Drive | \$12,977.75 |
| 8 | An-Lac Crescent | \$12,977.75 |
| 9 | Piarco Old Road | \$75,739.00 |
| 10 | Thavenot Street | \$49,782.35 |
| 11 | Race Course Road | \$38,972.12 |
| 12 | Peytonville Main Road | \$83,000.00 |
| 13 | Longden Street | \$55,740.50 |
| 14 | Adjodha Road | \$76,107.00 |
| 15 | Bharat Street | \$41,248.20 |
| 16 | Dalipsingh Street | \$19,000.00 |
| 17 | Lower St. Vincent Street | \$19,000.00 |
| 18 | Boodoo Street | \$25,254.00 |
| 19 | Bowen Street | \$37,881.00 |
| 20 | La Mango Road | \$31,988.00 |
| 21 | Road off Basie Street Extension | \$43,563.15 |
| 22 | Ramjit Street Extension | \$9,000.00 |
| 23 | Clarke Street | \$15,994.20 |

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| NO. | NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| 24 | Balata Trace | \$18,000.00 |
| 25 | Braithwaite Street Extension | \$63,976.80 |
| 26 | Lyndon Street | \$123,113.25 |
| 27 | Frederick Settlement | \$339,876.75 |
| 28 | Factory Road | \$115,747.50 |
| 29 | Abercromby Street | \$106,698.15 |
| 30 | Bamboo Settlement | \$121,029.80 |
| 31 | Herrera Trace | \$105,645.90 |
| 32 | Mon Plasir Road | \$136,161.15 |
| 33 | Hillside Terrace | \$14,731.50 |
| 34 | Beharry Trace | \$15,573.30 |
| 35 | Jackson Street | \$158,468.85 |
| 36 | Queen Elizabeth Street | \$243,490.65 |
| 37 | Maraj Street | \$168,360.00 |
| 38 | Parima Road | \$168,360.00 |
| 39 | Crown Street | \$95,754.75 |
| 40 | Buena Vista Street | \$22,097.25 |
| 41 | Wellington Street | \$76,182.90 |
| 42 | Abdool Lane | \$22,728.60 |

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER 1998

| NO. | NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|------------|---------------------|-------------|
| 1 | Balata Trace | \$43,255.00 |

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD OCTOBER 1998 TO APRIL 1999

| NO. | NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|-----|------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Goya Road | \$105,225.00 |
| 2 | Palm Road | \$123,639.18 |
| 3 | Lukunie | \$95,524.29 |
| 4 | Almond Avenue | \$49,674.25 |
| 5 | Shaddock Circular Road | \$122,061.00 |
| 6 | Mango Avenue | \$60,490.00 |
| 7 | Orange Grove Road | \$22,960.10 |
| 8 | Orange Grove Estate Car Park | \$178,882.50 |
| 9 | Narine Trace | \$292,543.90 |
| 10 | Hardial Avenue | \$239,466.08 |
| 11 | Ramkissoon Trace | \$94,702.85 |
| 12 | Pasea Road Extension | \$180,987.00 |
| 13 | Ramgarib Street | \$190,246.80 |
| 14 | Ramgarib Street | \$18,940.50 |
| 15 | Pomgranate Circular | \$164,151.00 |
| 16 | Plumrose Avenue | \$312,035.61 |
| 17 | Woodland Road | \$199,927.50 |
| 18 | Pinto Road | \$36,407.85 |

As was stated above, the Ministry of Local Government did not implement any projects for the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation. Notwithstanding, the Ministry, by virtue of its role and relations, is not required to seek approval from the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation for local government matters, since the Ministry of Local Government is the final player in the approval process for projects.

The funding which was identified by the Ministry in collaboration with the Corporation to carry out the above-mentioned projects came from the Development Programme, the Road Improvement Fund and Unspent Balances.

The source of the Minister of Local Government's authority for empowering the Ministry of Local Government to act in any matter, including collaborating with any Corporation to implement projects, emanates from, *inter alia*, his presidential appointment as the Minister of Local Government, the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act, No. 21 of 1990 and the amended Provisional Collection of Taxes Act.

The following question was asked by Mr. Hedwige Bereaux (La Brea):

**Siparia Regional Corporation
(Roads Paved)**

- 63.** 1. Would the Minister of Local Government indicate the names and locations of the roads paved in the Siparia Regional Corporation by the Ministry of Local Government during the financial years 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1998/1999?
2. Would the Minister also indicate the following:
- i. the name(s) of the contractor(s) who paved the roads;
 - ii. whether the contracts were awarded by the Central Tenders Board;
 - iii. the cost of each road paved;
 - iv. whether the Ministry had the approval of the Siparia Regional Corporation to carry out these projects;
 - v. under which allocation at the Ministry of Local Government were the funds identified to make payments for the said contracts;
 - vi. the source of his authority for the Ministry of Local Government to undertake road paving in Regional Corporations?

The following written reply to Question No. 63 was circulated to Members of the House:

The Minister of Local Government (Hon. Dhanraj Singh): The Ministry of Local Government did not implement any paving of roads in the Siparia Regional

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Corporation for the financial years 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1998/1999. However, it did collaborate with the Corporation with respect to the paving of the following roads:

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1996

| NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Boodoosingh Road | Off Southern Main Road, Rousillac |
| Neranthar Trace | Off Grants Road and Boodoosingh Road |
| Sirju Sadoo Trace | Off Saltmine Trace, Siparia Old Road |
| St. John Road | Off Old Southern Main Road |
| St. John Trace/Ackbar Trace | Off Siparia Road |
| St. Marie Street | Off 73mm Southern Main Road |
| Timital Trace | Off Siparia Old Road, Thick Village |
| Village Street Siparia: Hunte, De Gannes & Gonzales | Off S.S. Erin Road, De Gannes Village |

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1997

| NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|--|--|
| Ackbar Trace | Off Siparia Old Road |
| Berridge Trace | Off Southern Main Road |
| Doorbassa Trace | Off San Francique Road |
| Gheerahoo Trace | Off Delhi Road |
| Grants Extension Trace | Off Southern Main Road, Rousillac |
| Palo Seco Recreation Ground— Hard Surface Court | Wilson Road off Beach Camp Road, Palo Seco |
| Ralph Narine Trace | Off Southern Main Road |
| Ramcharan Trace | Off Tulsa Trace |
| Ramroopsingh Trace | Off San Francique Road |

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| NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| St. John Branch Trace | Off St. John Trace |
| St. John Road | Off Oropouche Main Road |
| St. John/Ackbar Trace | Off Siparia Old Road |
| Standard Road | Off Fyzabad Guapo Road |
| Sukal Trace | Off Pluck Road |
| Sundarsingh Trace | Off Southern Main Road, Rousillac |
| Syfoo Trace | Off 67mm Southern Main Road |
| Tennant Trace | Off Pluck Road |
| Tulsa Trace | Off San Francique Road |

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER 1998

| NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Ackbar Trace | Off Siparia Road |
| Berridge Trace | Off Southern Main Road |
| Grants Road | Off Southern Main Road, Rousillac |
| Grell & Gambal Street | Off S.S. Erin Road, Siparia |
| La Brea Trace | Off S.S. Erin Road (leading to Junior and Secondary School) |
| Los Iros Road | Off S.S. Erin Road, Erin |
| Maxi Taxi Stand, Irwin Park, Siparia | S.S. Erin Road, Siparia |
| Monteil Road | Off Southern Main Road |
| Mulchan Trace | Off Fyzabad Guapo Road |
| Pablito Trace | Off Grants Road, Rousillac |

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| NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|-------------------------|--|
| Partap Trace | Off Southern Main Road |
| Ramcharan Trace | Off Tulsa Trace |
| Ramroopsingh Trace | Off San Francique Road |
| Saney Trace | Off Coora Road, Siparia |
| Seukaran Trace | Off San Francique Road, Massahood Junction |
| St. John Branch Trace | Off St. John Trace |
| St. Marie & King Street | Off Southern Main Road 73mm |
| Timital Trace | Off Siparia Old Road, Thick Village |

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD OCTOBER 1998 TO APRIL 1999

| NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|-------------------|--|
| Syne Trace | Off S.S. Erin Road, Syne Village |
| Lilly Trace | Off S.S. Erin Road, De Gannes Village, Siparia |
| Hunte Street | Off S.S. Erin Road, De Gannes Village, Siparia |
| Saney Trace | Off Coora Road, Siparia |
| Timital Trace | Off Murray Trace, San Francique |
| Murray Trace | Off San Francique Road |
| Berridge Trace | Off Southern Main Road |
| Thompson Trace | Off Fyzabad Main Road |
| Ramlogan Avenue | Off Fyzabad Main Road |
| Jokhan Trace | Off San Francique Road |
| Maria David Trace | Off San Francique Road |

| NAME OF ROAD | LOCATION |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Pablito Trace | Off Grants Road, Rousillac |
| Boodoosingh Road | Off Southern Main Road, Rousillac |
| Delhi Road Recreation Ground— Hard Surface Court | Lutchman Drive off Delhi Road |

The name of the contractor who paved all the aforementioned roads is Carib Asphalt Pavers Limited.

The contracts were not required to be awarded by the Central Tenders Board since they were all carried out by the bonded contractor, Carib Asphalt Pavers Limited.

The cost of each road paved is as follows:

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1996

| NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|--|--------------|
| Boodoosingh Road | \$39,330.00 |
| Neranthar Trace | \$39,330.00 |
| Sirju Sadoo Trace | \$120,830.50 |
| St. John Road | \$296,682.75 |
| St. John Trace/Ackbar Trace | \$287,040.00 |
| St. Marie Street | \$27,724.00 |
| Timital Trace | \$314,640.00 |
| Village Street Siparia: Hunte, De Gannes & Gonzales | \$103,132.00 |

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1997

| NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|----------------|--------------|
| Ackbar Trace | \$57,408.00 |
| Berridge Trace | \$114,816.00 |

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| NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|--|--------------|
| Doorbassa Trace | \$95,082.00 |
| Gheerahoo Trace | \$29,406.00 |
| Grants Extension Trace | \$66,378.00 |
| Palo Seco Recreation Ground—Hard Surface Court | \$20,332.00 |
| Ralph Narine Trace | \$95,062.50 |
| Ramcharan Trace | \$109,434.00 |
| Ramroopsingh Trace | \$30,430.72 |
| St. John Branch Trace | \$57,408.00 |
| St. John Road | \$111,764.25 |
| St. John/Ackbar Trace | \$120,704.00 |
| Standard Road | \$136,792.50 |
| Sukal Trace | \$48,438.00 |
| Sundarsingh Trace | \$26,461.50 |
| Syfoo Trace | \$77,020.75 |
| Tennant Trace | \$105,456.00 |
| Tulsa Trace | \$220,235.92 |

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER 1998

| NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Ackbar Trace | \$75,440.00 |
| Berridge Trace | \$117,875.00 |
| Grants Road | \$499,790.00 |
| Grell & Gambal Street | \$61,295.00 |

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| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| La Brea Trace | \$80,155.00 |
| Los Iros Road | \$71,760.00 |
| Maxi Taxi Stand, Irwin Park, Siparia | \$47,607.50 |
| Monteil Road | \$74,360.00 |
| Mulchan Trace | \$32,516.25 |
| Pablito Trace | \$34,183.75 |
| Partap Trace | \$51,865.00 |
| Ramcharan Trace | \$83,799.75 |
| Ramroopsingh Trace | \$16,502.50 |
| Saney Trace | \$58,937.50 |
| Seukaran Trace | \$47,092.50 |
| St. John Branch Trace | \$60,116.25 |
| St. Marie & King Street | \$85,215.00 |
| Timal Trace | \$47,150.00 |

ROADS PAVED DURING THE PERIOD OCTOBER 1998 TO APRIL 1999

| NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|----------------|--------------|
| Syne Trace | \$15,323.75 |
| Lilly Trace | \$40,077.50 |
| Hunte Street | \$26,875.50 |
| Saney Trace | \$37,720.00 |
| Timal Trace | \$40,077.50 |
| Murray Trace | \$23,575.00 |
| Berridge Trace | \$146,165.00 |
| Thompson Trace | \$45,971.25 |

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| NAME OF ROAD | COST |
|---|-------------|
| Ramlogan Avenue | \$50,686.25 |
| Jokhan Trace | \$35,362.50 |
| Maria David Trace | \$16,502.50 |
| Pablito Trace | \$42,435.00 |
| Boodoosingh Road | \$42,435.00 |
| Delhi Road Recreation Ground—Hard Surface Court | \$25,932.50 |

As stated above, the Ministry of Local Government did not implement any projects for the Siparia Regional Corporation. Notwithstanding, the Ministry, by virtue of its role and relations, is not required to seek approval from the Siparia Regional Corporation for local government matters, since the Ministry of Local Government is the final player in the approval process for projects.

The funding for the projects was identified from the Development Programme, the Road Improvement Fund and Unspent Balances.

The Minister of Local Government's authority for empowering the Ministry of Local Government to act in any matter, including collaborating with any Municipal Corporation in order to implement projects emanates from, *inter alia*, his presidential appointment as the Minister of Local Government, the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act, No. 21 of 1990 and the amended Provisional Collection of Taxes Act.