

*Paper Laid**Friday, March 07, 2003***HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES***Friday, March 07, 2003*

The House met at 1.30 p.m.

**PRAYERS**[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]**PAPER LAID**

Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the financial statements of the Tobago House of Assembly for the period January 01, 1998 to September 30, 1998. [*The Minister of Health (Hon. Colm Imbert)*]

*To be referred to the Public Accounts Committee.*

**ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

**The Minister of Health (Hon. Colm Imbert):** Mr. Speaker, with your permission I wish to advise that the Government will be answering questions Nos. 32, 33, 21 and 34. [*Crosstalk*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Let us deal with those you are not answering.

**Hon. C. Imbert:** Certainly, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I wish to advise that the Government does not have answers available at this time for questions Nos. 24 and 47 for oral answer, and questions Nos. 22, 27 and 49 for written answer. I ask for a one-week deferral of these questions.

**Mr. Singh:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the last occasion—[*Interruption*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Before you get to that, the Order Paper seems to have only questions Nos. 24, 22, 33, 21, 34 and 47. [*Interruption*]

**Mr. G. Singh:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the last occasion questions Nos. 22, 32 and 33 were deferred for two weeks, that is after a three-week interval then an additional two weeks, five weeks; now the hon. Minister is asking for a further deferral of one week for questions Nos. 24 and 47. We on this side find that totally unacceptable.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I take the point, but the hon. Minister is having some difficulty. Hon. Minister, question No. 24 will be deferred for one week.

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I may. The Standing Orders do not provide for such a procedure. The Standing Orders provide that if there is a deferral of any question on the Order Paper, that the motion must be put to the

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House and the House must decide. Therefore, we move that motion, that questions Nos. 24 and the other two be answered today.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Which other two?

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar:** The questions that the Minister indicated that he does not wish to answer today.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** If you are suggesting, would you please—

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar:** Yes, questions Nos. 24 and 47. The question should be put, Sir.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Member for Diego Martin East, which are the other questions that you are not—

**Hon. C. Imbert:** The questions which are not available today, for which we would like a one-week deferral, are questions Nos. 24 and 47 for oral answer, and questions Nos. 22, 27 and 49 for written answer. Again, we request a one-week deferral for these questions. [*Crosstalk*]

**Mr. Singh:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the hon. Minister indicated that the written questions are available. I want to know if those questions are available in this House, at this point in time?

**Hon. C. Imbert:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, already one of the answers is on the Table and before the tea break all written answers will be circulated to Members. [*Crosstalk*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** All written answers. Hon. Members, the question is that questions Nos. 24 and 47 for oral answer and Nos. 22, 27 and 49 for written answers, be deferred for one week. [*Crosstalk*]

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar:** Why you all do not do your work; you had 21 days. Get your Ministers to do their work; they are not even here.

*Question put and agreed to.* [*Crosstalk*]

*The following questions stood on the Order Paper:*

**WASA Settlement  
(Legal Matters)**

**24.** Would the Minister of Public Utilities and the Environment indicate:

- (a) Whether any legal matters were settled by WASA during the period December 2001 to January 2003?

- (b) If so, could he state the terms and conditions of each settlement? [Mr. G. Singh]

**Agricultural Access Roads  
(Rehabilitation)**

47. Would the Minister of Local Government:
- (a) Tell this House how many agricultural access roads are scheduled for rehabilitation in fiscal year 2003?
- (b) Indicate the location of these roads and when the works will commence? [Mr. M. Ramsaran]

*Questions, by leave, deferred.*

**WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

*The following questions stood on the Order Paper:*

**Water and Sewerage Authority  
(Monthly Revenue/Expenditure)**

22. Would the Minister of Public Utilities and the Environment indicate the monthly revenue and expenditure of WASA from December 2001 to January 2003? [Mr. G. Singh]

**National Entrepreneurial  
Development Company  
(Loans)**

27. Would the Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development submit in writing a list of the names of persons who secured loans from the National Entrepreneurial Development Company (NEDCO) and state the amount of money loaned to each recipient? [Mr. H. Partap]

**Community Centres  
(Construction of)**

49. Would the Minister of Works and Transport:
- (a) Submit to this House the list of community centres and complexes to be built in fiscal year 2003?
- (b) Indicate the dates of commencement of construction and the cost of each such community facility to be built? [Mr. M. Ramsaran]

*Questions, by leave, deferred.*

## ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

**Piparo Rehabilitation Centre  
(Staff Vacancies)**

**32. Dr. Adesh Nanan** (*Tabaquite*) asked the Minister of Social Development:

Could the Minister kindly state:

- (a) The names, addresses and job responsibilities of all staff selected for the Piparo Rehabilitation Centre?
- (b) Indicate the recruitment process used to select the staff referred to in part (a) above, indicating the nature and dates of advertisements for the job positions, dates of interviews, ranking of applicants and reasons for selection of the persons chosen?
- (c) (i) Whether there are any staffing positions to be created or existing staff vacancies to be filled?  
(ii) The selection criteria to be used for the filling of vacancies?

**The Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Sen. The Hon. Christine Kangaloo):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the names and job description of the staff selected for the Piparo Rehabilitation Centre are as follows:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Job Description</b>
Ramnarace Dwarika	Programme Director
Garvin Cole	Clinical Director
Iyinka Nurse	Occupational Therapist
Winston Singh	Social Worker
Roselyn Ramsey	Administrative Manager
Harold Rennie	Therapeutic Counsellor
Russell Dillon	Therapeutic Counsellor
Clyde Thomas	Therapeutic Counsellor
Stephen Hansraj	Driver/Courier
Deolal Sundar	Night man
Oral John	Night man
Dianne Basdeo	Cook

Sintra Beharry	Cook
Shoba Balliram	Office Assistant
Merle Shireena Mohammed	Cleaner/Maid

I am advised that with respect to positions one to five, which I have just listed, which were approved by Cabinet decision dated April 19, 2000, advertisements were placed in the *Newsday* newspapers on May 21, 2000, July 16, 2000, and July 17, 2000, and interviews conducted on August 15 and 16, 2000. Again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my advice is that the persons filling the remaining positions Nos. 6 to 15, were hired with the concurrence of the then Minister, though the positions were not approved by Cabinet, with priority being given to applicants from the Piparo area. [*Crosstalk*]

In an effort to regularize the staffing structure for the centre, Cabinet on April 11, 2002, approved the undermentioned contract positions which were subsequently advertised in the *Express* newspaper of July 12, 2002. Applicants were shortlisted and interviews are ongoing. Persons who were performing duties assigned to these positions were invited to apply and be interviewed. The positions are:

- Therapeutic Community Counsellor
- Professional Assistant Nursing
- Driver/Courier
- Night Man
- Remedial Education Tutor
- Domestic Attendant
- Financial Assistant
- Cook and Office Assistant

It should be noted that the position of Occupational Therapist is also vacant and has been advertised in the *Express* newspaper on Wednesday 05, March 2003. Persons will be selected based on the following criteria: qualifications, work experience, knowledge of the job, interpersonal skills, physical and personality characteristics and overall suitability. Thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

**Dr. Nanan:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, question No. 32(a) asked for the names and addresses; I do not know if the Minister is going to circulate the answer with the addresses.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is that a supplementary question?

**Dr. Nanan:** Yes. [*Crosstalk*]

**Hon. C. Kangaloo:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the addresses of the persons employed were not given so as to protect the privacy of the persons. [*Desk thumping*] [*Crosstalk*]

**Churchill Roosevelt Highway Interchange  
(Status)**

**33. Mr. Ganga Singh** (*Caroni East*) asked the Minister of Works and Transport:

Would the Minister indicate the status of the interchange project at the junction of the Uriah Butler and Churchill-Roosevelt Highways?

**The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Franklin Khan):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, construction of the interchange at the intersection of the Uriah Butler and Churchill-Roosevelt Highways was one of the projects originally earmarked for funding under the IDB-assisted National Highways Programme at US \$120 million loan facility under the last administration.

In February 1998, the European Investment Bank (EIB) confirmed its interest in providing concessionary funding available under the Lomé IV Convention for co-financing the project with the IDB. A formal request for this loan financing from the EIB was made by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago by letter dated August 24, 1998. An assessment mission from the EIB visited Trinidad and Tobago in furtherance of this financing during the period October 19—23, 1998. In the face of this development, inexplicably on December 3, 1998, by Cabinet Minute No. 3182, the UNC government took a decision that the project be undertaken under the design/finance/construct arrangement which we all know is the most expensive form of project financing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the story continues. On February 23, 1999, the board of the European Investment Bank granted approval for a loan of TT \$140 million for financing of the project. An additional \$10 million would have been provided by the IDB for a total of TT \$150 million. This loan, which became available to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, was for a period of 20 years at an interest rate of 4.49 per cent; 20 years—4.5 per cent, and it was sweeter than that. It carried a moratorium or a grace period of five years before the commencement of payment. This is the closest you will ever get to free money. The hon. Member for St. Augustine must nod his head in agreement; 4.49 per cent, 20 years and a moratorium of five years.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you will hear this word very regularly in my contribution. However, inexplicably again, even while this loan funding was

available to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, on August 25, 1999, Cabinet Minute 1922 agreed that the project be undertaken by the Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago (UDeCOTT) and that the then Minister of Housing and Settlement submit for consideration of Cabinet further details and costing for the project. This resulted in the project being removed from the Ministry of Works and Transport where the technical expertise resided.

Having applied in 1998 for the EIB financing and having received that approval in February 1999, the following letter was written to the EIB in March 16, 2000. I read this letter into the record.

“Mr. T. Whitehouse

ACP-IV, Directorate for Operations outside the European Union

European Investment Bank

100 Boulevard Konrad Adenauer

Luxembourg-Kirchberg

Dear Mr. Whitehouse,

Re: East/West Corridor Expansion and Improvement Project—

Churchill Roosevelt/Uriah Butler Highway Interchange

I refer to your correspondence dated January 6<sup>th</sup> 2000 on the subject at caption, and wish to advise that the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) has taken a decision to undertake the construction of the Churchill Roosevelt/Uriah Butler Highway Interchange with financing from the local private sector. The Government, therefore, no longer wishes to pursue negotiations for the proposed loan which was approved by the Bank for February 23, 1999.

I wish to extend our appreciation of your interest in this Project, and trust that the Bank will in future support the continued development of Trinidad and Tobago. Any inconvenience which may have been caused is deeply regretted. Kindest regards.

Yours sincerely,

Sgd. Vincent Lasse

Minister in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development”

Subsequent to this action of rejecting the 4.49 per cent funding from the EIB, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago took a decision to finance the project

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with a loan of TT \$150 million at 11.4 per cent obtained through a local bond placement at Citibank. [*Crosstalk*]

**Hon. Member:** “Yuh” talk about kickback.

**Hon. F. Khan:** Hon. Members and residents of Trinidad and Tobago, listen carefully. The EIB/IDB funding available to the then government of Trinidad and Tobago for the \$150 million would have carried a total interest over the life of the loan of a mere \$59.8 million, resulting in a total cost to the country, capital and interest, of \$209.8 million. I wish I could get a loan like that.

The Citibank financing which the then government opted to use, carried an interest rate of 11.4 per cent, resulting in a total interest charge, interest alone, of \$320 million at a total repayment cost of TT \$508 million. [*Desk thumping*] [*Crosstalk*] What this means is that the then government, with superior options available to it, deliberately chose to pursue the project at an additional cost of TT \$300 million; wanton wastage.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is the catch; it is to be noted that for the government to access the \$150 million EIB loan the project would have had to be tendered under IDB rules of transparency and be competitive.

**Hon. Member:** You understand why?

**Hon. F. Khan:** They rejected free money, because they had to commit themselves to a transparent procurement process. [*Desk thumping*] It is interesting to note that on having sourced the funding from the local bank, the then government was free to direct the tender and award of contracts as it saw fit, because there were no tendering conditionalities to the Citibank bond. It is in this context that the following letter was written to UDeCOTT, because the project was taken from the Ministry of Works and Transport into UDeCOTT which fell under the Minister of Housing and Settlement.

I now read this letter into the record.

“Mr. Robert Tang Yuk

Chairman

UDeCOTT

44—58 Edward Street

Port of Spain.

Dear Chairman,

Re: Interchange Uriah Butler/Churchill Roosevelt Highways Intersection

I write to express my alarm and dismay at the way UDeCOTT has handled and continues to handle the construction of the above project. It seems that each time the project is put in forward gear by my intervention, UDeCOTT either puts it in neutral or in reverse!"

Check the language for a minister. [*Crosstalk*]

"It is appalling that no contract for design and construct of the interchange has yet been awarded.

Cabinet took the decision that the project would be undertaken by UDeCOTT on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1999 at a budgeted cost of \$150 million.

The decision was for UDeCOTT to award a design construct contract on a fast tracking basis. A cheque for \$150 million was paid to UDeCOTT several months ago."

And this is the sweet part.

"I hereby instruct UDeCOTT to award a design/build contract to Pres-T-Con on condition that items of the project be negotiated using the engineer's estimate as a starting point in the negotiations without any further delay." [*Crosstalk*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members!

**Hon. F. Khan:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, neither the Prime Minister nor the President can instruct anybody to award a contract, and in colonial days not even the Queen could instruct the governor to award a contract. [*Crosstalk*]

Let me read that part again:

"I hereby instruct UDeCOTT to award a design/build contract to Pres-T-Con on condition that items of the project be negotiated using the engineer's estimate as a starting point in the negotiations without any further delay. A similar award should be made to EIFFEL for its component of the project without delay."

EIFFEL contract was to build the arch to suspend the overpass. The letter ends:

"Yours sincerely,

John A. Humphrey

Minister of Integrated Planning and Development"

**Hon. Members:** Ahh! [*Crosstalk*]

**Hon. F. Khan:** Put another way, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the carnival spirit—  
[*Interruption*]

**Mrs. Persad-Bissessar:** What is the date of the letter?

**Hon. F. Khan:** The date of the letter is February 13, 2001. [*Laughter*] Put another way, the minister at the time, Mr. John Humphrey, instructed UDeCOTT to award a contract to Pres-T-Con “just so”. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the \$150 million has already accrued interest of approximately \$40 million, even as the project is still being designed. In January 1999, Cabinet gave approval for the interchange project based only on conceptual design at an estimated cost of \$150 million. What was contracted to be developed differed from what was approved by Cabinet. In July 2000, the Permanent Secretary of the then Ministry of Housing and Settlement, acting on behalf of the then government, entered into a contract with UDeCOTT as the main contractor to deliver the interchange.

The \$150 million Citibank loan was entrusted to UDeCOTT. Throughout the contract there were concerns held by both UDeCOTT and the Ministry of Works and Transport regarding the engineering design work being conducted by the consultant PCA Interplan Group, JV Ltd. PIJV, whom UDeCOTT had been directed to hire. In an effort to address these concerns UDeCOTT retained an international bridge and civil works specialist, Parsons Brinckerhoff Inc. of Tampa, Florida to conduct a review of the drawings already produced. [*Interruption*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** All those who have cellular phones would you please take them off or put them on the mode that does not make any noise, but simply vibrates.

**Hon. F. Khan:** The \$150 million Citibank loan was entrusted to UDeCOTT. Throughout the contract there were concerns held by both UDeCOTT and the Ministry of Works and Transport regarding the engineering design being produced by the consultant, PCA Interplan, whom UDeCOTT had been directed to hire.

In an effort to address these concerns, UDeCOTT retained an international bridge and civil works specialist Parsons Brinckerhoff of Florida to conduct a review of the drawings already produced. The review reinforced the concerns and offered recommendations. This is a nice way of saying the review indicated serious flaws in the engineering design of the overpass. All design drawings submitted by the consultant, whether complete or otherwise, were placed in abeyance with no execution of them being pursued.

The confusion over the conflicting authority and no decisions over the final designs, resulted in the project being removed from the then Ministry of Housing and Settlement to the Ministry of Infrastructure, Development and Local Government in 2001. In spite of the fact that this ministry had no contractual standing on the project, the Minister then took a note to Cabinet which was based on investigations performed by an independent investigator brought in by the then Minister of Finance who had expressed grave concern about the project. That Minister of Finance is now the Member for St. Joseph. He brought in an independent consultant because of concerns he himself was having with the project.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, by that time the estimated cost of the project had moved from \$150 million to \$250 million.

**Mr. Manning:** Say that again.

**Hon. F. Khan:** By that point in time the estimated cost had moved from \$150 million to \$250 million, like it was small airport in the making; it was a baby airport.

It was under these complex and confusing circumstances, overlaps and conflicting instructions, that UDeCOTT attempted to award a contract for the construction of the interchange. Not surprisingly then, the award process was challenged and is now the subject of a High Court matter. That is why the project had to stop. In late 2001 as soon as the legal challenge was made to the UDeCOTT process, the UNC administration through UDeCOTT instructed that all activities related to the project should be ceased. [*Crosstalk*] They instructed. By that time the hon. Member for St. Joseph was in charge. [*Crosstalk*] [*Laughter*]

**Mr. Manning:** He is a PNM minister. [*Laughter*]

**Hon. Member:** “Yuh” understand; he is a plant in “dey”. [*Laughter*]

**Hon. F. Khan:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is the fresher part of my reply; and here comes the freshness. On coming into office the new administration removed the project from UDeCOTT and returned it to where the engineering expertise lies, in the Highways Division, Chief Planning Unit under the Ministry of Works and Transport and under the control of the Chief Technical Officer. [*Desk thumping*]

This division was required to:

- (i) examine and evaluate all proposals for a comprehensive traffic solution for the Uriah Butler/Churchill Roosevelt Highways intersection; and
- (ii) to make recommendations with justification for the optimum solution.

Since then the team has made several presentations and prepared an interim report. The final report to Cabinet will be made on or before April 30, 2003.

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In the meantime, in May 2002, Cabinet agreed to the implementation of a short-term plan made at increasing intersection and laying capacities between the Uriah Butler Highway and the Southern Main Road intersection of the Churchill-Roosevelt Highway at a cost of \$13 million. This project is now 80 per cent complete.

It is the intention of the Government to take action on this traffic solution as soon as the final design parameters are agreed upon and the approved drawings become available to facilitate proper tendering and construction processes. However, Government will need to look for alternative funding to continue the project, because early in the term of the previous administration in 2002, this PNM Government attempted to reopen and revive the soft loan offer of the European Investment Bank (EIB).

The reaction of the EIB is noteworthy and I now read their response into the record:

“Ministry of Finance and Planning,  
Eric Williams Finance Building,  
Eric Williams Plaza—Level 14  
Independence Square  
Port of Spain  
Trinidad  
Attention: Dr. Keith Rowley, Minister  
Luxembourg, 6 June 2002.

Dear Minister Rowley,

Mrs. Sari Suomalainen, Head of the Delegation of the European Commission in Port of Spain has relayed your request to the European Investment Bank to reopen discussions on a loan for the East-West Road Corridor project originally discussed between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the EIB in 1998.

As you are probably aware the loan for this project was appraised by the Bank and approved by our Board of Directors in February 1999. Following the approval a draft contract was sent out by the Bank and followed up both through written communications and in meetings over the next year. In March 2000 the Government of Trinidad and Tobago formally replied that local

private sector financing would be raised for the project and that our funds were no longer required.

The Bank invests considerable amounts of time and money in an appraisal and would normally expect a prospective borrower to inform us at an early stage (normally before any appraisal) if our funds are not required.”

In other words, they wait until the last minute to tell the bank after they do all their work that “we don't want de money again”.

“In the light of this and the above-summarized history of the project we would therefore require the following in order to be able to consider revisiting this project:”

This is what the bank is now asking for.

- “1) A formal written request by the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for the Bank to reopen discussions on financing of the project;
- 2) A confirmation that the Technical Description of the project remains largely as previously proposed (see Annex 1), and details on changes, if any, made to it; and
- 3) An updated cost breakdown and financing plan (see Annex 2).

You will appreciate that after the time which has now elapsed a renewed proposal to finance this project would have to be presented to our Board of Directors. They would no doubt expect to receive an explanation as to why the project is being presented for a second time and some reassurances that it would now go ahead with EIB finance, e.g. evidence of parliamentary approval for the project. We suggest that you address these issues in your formal request to us. A final decision could take several months, particularly in view of other ongoing commitments we now have.

We trust that you understand our point of view and await your reply at your earliest convenience.”

It is a nice way of saying, “All yuh waste we time the first time, please doh come back and waste our time.” [*Crosstalk*]

**Mr. Rahael:** You should let them know it is a different government in power; it is not the same government. [*Crosstalk*]

**Hon. F. Khan:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is obvious from the onset that this project had been mismanaged, both at the financial and engineering levels. We

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have now attempted to put some transparency, sanity and proper engineering practices back into the process. [*Desk thumping*] By the end of April 2003, which is a mere two months away, a clear and unambiguous solution would be advanced to the nation on this matter.

I thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

**Mr. Singh:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have a supplemental question. Will the interchange project be part of that clear and unambiguous solution for the traffic woes that people suffer on a daily basis?

**Hon. F. Khan:** I would not want to prejudge what the final outcome will be, but it will be presented to Cabinet. The team has already submitted a preliminary report. We are presently reviewing it at the Ministry of Works and Transport. When a final solution is defined, clear and unambiguous, it goes to the Cabinet for a decision and then we would announce it right here in the Parliament. [*Desk thumping*]

**Mr. Singh:** Will the Minister indicate the time line for that kind of project? [*Crosstalk*]

**Hon. F. Khan:** As I said, shortly after April 30 you will know what the solutions are, and as a government, based on all the confusion, we will have to seek financing and funding in a very competitive way for the country.

**Mr. Rahael:** Not at 11.5 per cent.

**M1 TASKER ROAD  
(Rehabilitation)**

**21.** Mr. Subhas Panday (*Princes Town*) asked the Minister of Works and Transport:

- (a) Whether there are plans to rehabilitate the M1 Tasker Road from its junction of Manahambre Road to its junction with the Naparima Mayaro Main Road, Craignish Village?
- (b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, could the Minister state the date of commencement of work on the road and the proposed date of completion of work?

**The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Franklin Khan):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, rehabilitation of the M1 Tasker Road will be considered for inclusion in the 2003 Development Programme of the Ministry of Works and Transport. I was long the first time; short and sweet this time.

**Flood Prevention Measures  
(Dry Season)**

**34. Mr. Ganga Singh** asked the Minister of Works and Transport:

Would the Minister indicate the measures which would be undertaken in the dry season to prevent flooding in the following areas, Las Lomas No. 1, 2 and 3, St. Helena, Kelly Village, Warrentville, Chin Chin Road, Caparo, Longdenville, Ravine Sable and Mamoral?

**The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Franklin Khan):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the areas under question, which are Las Lomas No. 1, 2 and 3, St. Helena, Kelly Village, Warrentville, Chin Chin Road, Caparo, Longdenville, Ravine Sable and Mamoral are all subject to perennial flooding. During the period 1996—2001 these areas saw some of the worst flooding in the last 50 years. Obviously, the last administration approached flooding in an ad hoc, ill-conceived and arbitrary manner in an attempt to mitigate flooding in such areas as Bamboo No. 1, 2 and 3, Aranguéz and various other sections along the Caroni River.

The Drainage Division has completed designs for the improvement works on the Caroni River from St. Helena in the east to Kelly Weir in the west. The proposed improvement works include widening, desilting, embankment construction and controlled structures along the Caroni River. Construction work is expected by mid 2003.

It should be noted that the primary cause of flooding in the Las Lomas No. 1, 2 and 3, St. Helena, Kelly Village, Warrentville and Chin Chin Road areas is due to spillage off the Caroni River. The proposed improvement works will reduce significantly the possibility of overflow. Currently, localized drainage works are ongoing, which would further complement the main Caroni River improvement works carded for commencement by mid 2003.

Flooding in the Caparo, Longdenville, Ravine Sable and Mamoral areas is due to the inadequate capacity of the Caparo River; it is a different situation here, further up stream. As an example of previous flood mitigation measures which were not entirely successful, work on the Caparo River from Brasso Caparo Road to the Solomon Hochoy Highway was undertaken without the commensurate improvement of the La Clave Road culvert. This resulted in one of the worst floods in that area in 1998.

The recommended solution to this problem is the construction of a dam for which designs have been completed, and the cost of construction is an estimated \$110 million. That is the famous Mamoral Dam that we hope to construct shortly,

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as part of the holistic drainage management plan for Trinidad. Currently Government is seeking multilateral funding for the implementation of this project.

Thank you. [*Crosstalk*]

**National Insurance Benefits  
(Increase of)**

**48. Mr. Manohar Ramsaran** (*Chaguanas*) asked the hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance:

Could the Minister inform this House when will national insurance benefits be increased and by how much in each category?

**The Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Sen. The Hon. Conrad Enill):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the National Insurance Board is currently conducting the sixth actuarial review of the national insurance system as required by section 70 of the National Insurance Act, Chap. 32:01. The actuaries have so far completed and submitted reports to the National Insurance Board with respect to the review of the economic and demographic data and the ability of the system to meet existing obligations.

The actuaries are currently finalizing recommendations including those related to:

- (1) long-term viability of the system in terms of incomes and expenditure;
- (2) the maintenance of the relevance of the system, that is, the level of income insured and the level of both long-term and short-term benefits to be paid; and
- (3) the rate of contribution and the return on investment to support enhanced benefits.

The finance report will be submitted to the National Insurance Board by the end of next week. The Board will forward its recommendation to the Minister of Finance by the end of March 2003. The appropriate legislation to effect the proposed improvements in benefits will be brought to Parliament. It is anticipated that improvements in benefits will be in place by June 2003 and will be in accordance with the actual recommendations of the actuaries.

Thank you.

**WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

*The following question was asked by Mr. Ganga Singh (Caroni East):*

**Ministry of Culture and Tourism  
(Contract Positions)**

- 46.** Could the Minister of Culture and Tourism provide a list of persons employed by contract and their positions in the Ministry of Culture for the period December 2001 to January 2003?

*Vide end of sitting for written reply*

*The following question was asked by Mr. Manohar Ramsaran (Chaguanas):*

**Unemployment Relief Programme  
(Monthly Paid Staff)**

- 50.** Could the Minister of Local Government:
- (a) Furnish this House with a list of the monthly paid staff of the Unemployment Relief Programme in each of the fourteen Regional Corporations?
  - (b) Inform this House whether these positions were advertised and provide details of the dates of advertisements and the process of selection of persons?

*Vide end of sitting for written reply*

**Mr. Sharma:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, can you please guide me. The written answer for question No. 46 was provided to the House. Can I ask a supplemental on it?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I would like to draw hon. Members' attention to Standing Order 19(7):

“Questions which have not received an oral answer by 2.15 o'clock in the afternoon shall be answered in writing by the Minister to whom the question was addressed, and copies of the answer shall be sent immediately after that hour to the Clerk of the House, who shall send a copy to the Member in whose name the question stood upon the Order Paper and cause the answer to be circulated with the Minutes of Proceedings, unless at any time before 2.15 o'clock in the afternoon a Member having a question on the Order Paper but whose name has not yet been called by the Speaker signifies to the Clerk at the Table his desire to postpone the question to a later sitting...”

We are exactly on 2.15 and we still have questions Nos. 25, 29, 46 and 50 to be answered. [*Crosstalk*]

**Mr. Ramnath:** We could suspend the Standing Order because he took up all the time.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Motion has to be moved.

**DEFINITE URGENT MATTER  
(LEAVE)**

**Caroni (1975) Limited  
(Retrenchment at)**

**Mr. Kelvin Ramnath** (*Couva South*): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have the honour to seek your leave to move the adjournment of this House in accordance with Standing Order 12, for the purpose of discussing the following matter of urgent public importance, namely, the retrenchment of over 10,000 monthly and daily rated workers of Caroni (1975) Limited.

The matter is definite because it relates to a specific matter, that is to say, the retrenchment of all daily and monthly rated workers of Caroni (1975) Limited.

The matter is urgent because of the imminent threat by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to dismiss over 10,000 daily and monthly rated workers.

The matter is of public importance because it deals with the principles of governance. It deals with the relationship between the State and its citizenry. It deals with the use of significant sums of taxpayers' moneys to fund a policy without a plan. It deals with equality of treatment. It deals with freedom from discrimination. It deals with the emotional and psychological trauma and suffering of hundreds of thousands of citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

I so move and seek your leave, Sir. [*Desk thumping*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Member, I have examined the request carefully and I rule that it does not qualify, but I suggest that it be raised under Standing Order 11.

**Mr. K. Ramnath:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the greatest deference to you and your ruling, I cannot understand how a matter that is so significant— [*Interruption*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Would the Member please take his seat.

**Mr. K. Ramnath:** —that affects thousands of people— [*Interruption*]

*Caroni (1975) Limited*

*Friday, March 07, 2003*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Would the Member please take his seat! [*Desk thumping*]  
[*Member rises to his feet*]

**Mr. K. Ramnath:** I am leaving! You take your seat!

**Hon. Members:** Ohh!

**Mr. K. Ramnath:** I have no plans to stay here!

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Would the Member please take his seat! [*Crosstalk*]

**Mr. K. Ramnath:** I am leaving; you speak to yourself!

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** You may do that if you require and I will deal with it.  
[*Crosstalk*]

**Hon. Member:** If you wanted to go home early, go home early.

[*Members of the Opposition exit Chamber*]

**Hon. Member:** They cannot take the answer from the Minister of Works and Transport, that is what happen. [*Crosstalk*] [*Laughter*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, the sitting of this House is suspended for five minutes. The sitting will resume at 2.25 p.m.

**2.20 p.m.:** *Sitting suspended.*

**2.38 p.m.:** *Sitting resumed.*

#### ARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

**The Minister of Health (Hon. Colm Imbert):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, since there is no one present on the other side, I beg to move that we proceed with “Government Business”.

We would be proceeding in the order of the bills on the Order Paper with the exception of Bill No. 6.

*Agreed to.*

#### LEASES OF STATE LANDS (VALIDATION) BILL

[THIRD DAY]

*Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question* [February 07, 2003]:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

*Question again proposed.*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members will recall that the debate also included the State Lands (Amdt.) Bill.

**The Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (Hon. John Rahael):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, what this Bill proposes to do is really to amend the State Real Property Ordinance, Ch. 27 No. 11, and leases of state lands that were registered under the said chapter.

The purpose of amending this Bill is that leases registered under the Act were done so improperly because they were registered under the Real Property Ordinance Act and that was, in fact, amended to allow those leases to be registered and this was done in October 2000. There are quite a number of leases that had been registered but, as I have indicated, were registered outside the law of the Real Property Ordinance Act.

So we are here to rectify that, and at the same time go back to the position that we were in before October 2000. This is not new. In fact, the administration at the time, in amending that Act realizing that they erred, took a decision to repeal the amendment. That was a decision that they took by a Cabinet Note.

So when the Member for Princes Town made certain statements, it was because he was not a Member of the Cabinet and therefore not privileged to what was taking place in the years 2000 and 2001.

While this is a simple amendment, it would validate quite a number of leases so that persons who had their leases registered but were not given them because of the fact they were not done properly, by this amendment will be able to get their leases.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with those few words I beg to move.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a second time.*

*Bill committed to a committee of the whole House.*

*House in committee.*

*Clauses 1 to 5 ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

*The Preamble ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

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

*House resumed.*

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

*State Lands (Amdt.) Bill*

*Friday, March 07, 2003*

**STATE LANDS (AMDT.) BILL**

*Order for second reading read.*

**The Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (Hon. John Rahael):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move,

That a Bill to amend the State Lands Act, Chap. 57:01, be now read a second time.

*Question proposed.*

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a second time.*

*Bill committed to a committee of the whole House.*

*House in committee.*

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

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

*House resumed.*

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

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (AMDT.) BILL**

*Order for second reading read.*

**The Minister of Legal Affairs (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move,

That a Bill to amend the Freedom of Information Act, 1999 be now read a second time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Bill before us is requesting this House to approve legislation that would amend the Freedom of Information Act, 1999 to delete the current definition of the word “Minister” which appears in the definition section of the legislation and substitute it with a new definition.

The new definition would indicate that the word “Minister” would be amended to give general responsibility for carrying into effect the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. As it currently stands, there is some difficulty with regard to carrying into effect the provisions of the Act that now exists in our statute books.

*Freedom of Information (Amdt.) Bill*  
[HON. C. ROBINSON-REGIS]

*Friday, March 07, 2003*

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we on this side are not surprised by that fact. In circumstances where the former administration placed quite a plethora of legislation on the statute books, but did nothing to ensure that they were in fact implementable and as a consequence of that, we on this side are now in the process of looking at all the legislation and ensuring that there is a clean-up in an effort to ensure that they are in fact implementable and can work to the benefit of the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

In addition, the legislation as it now stands also has in section 25(3) the word “Minister”, but it gives responsibility to the Minister of Information for issues concerning national security. The current amendment proposed would stipulate that the word “Minister” in section 25(3) would mean the Minister who is responsible for national security. So that issues in the Freedom of Information legislation relating to national security would only be authorized by the Minister responsible for national security.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are the amendments we are proposing to the Freedom of Information Act 1999, and I beg to move.

*Question proposed.*

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a second time.*

*Bill committed to a committee of the whole House.*

*House in committee.*

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

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

*House resumed.*

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

#### **RELATED BILLS**

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, the proposal is, since the Children’s Authority (Amdt.) Bill and the Adoption of Children (Amdt.) Bill refer to similar, and in certain cases identical matters, that they be taken together.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### **CHILDREN’S AUTHORITY (AMDT.) BILL**

*Order for second reading read.*

**The Minister of Culture and Tourism (Hon. Penelope Beckles):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg move,

That a Bill to amend the Children's Authority Act be now read a second time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Children's Authority (Amdt.) Bill, 2002 and the Adoption of Children (Amdt.) Bill, 2002 seek to amend the Children's Authority Act, 2002 and the Adoption of the Children Act, respectively. These two Acts were initially part of a package of legislation that dealt substantively with issues relating to children. These Acts dealt with certain policy measures in relation to the Children's Authority Bill, the Adoption of Children Bill, 2000, the Children's (Amdt.) Bill 2000, the Children's Community Residences' Foster Homes and Nurseries Bill, 2000 and the Miscellaneous Provisions (Children) Bill, 2000.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Family Court Bill, 2000 was also supposed to form part of that package and should have been introduced together with all these Bills, but this particular bill was not introduced as it was thought that other discussions needed to take place particularly in relation to issues relating to children and, therefore, whilst all the other legislation was laid, this particular Family Court Bill, 2000 was not laid.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, to put it very simply, the Bill to amend the Children's Authority Act, 2000 simply seeks that clause 2 would amend the Children's Authority Act by deleting the definition of the word "court" therein and substituting it with another definition. When we look specifically at clause 2, it simply reads:

"Section 3 of the Children's Authority Act is amended by deleting the definition of the word "Court" therein and substituting the following: "Court" means the Court with jurisdiction for family matters."

As it relates to the Bill to amend the Adoption of Children Act, 2000 that seeks again that clause 2 will amend the Adoption of Children Act, 2000 by deleting the definition of the word "Court" therein and substituting it with another definition.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, clause 2 will simply read:

"Section 2 of the Adoption of Children Act is amended by deleting the definition of 'Court' therein and substituting the following:

"'Court' means Court with jurisdiction for family matters.'"

As it exists, there is no Family Court and, therefore, all this Bill seeks to do is ensure, by putting the words "court dealing with family matters", that the court dealing with family matters will now have the jurisdiction to entertain and properly address any matters that would relate to the various pieces of legislation that I have mentioned earlier.

*Children's Authority (Amdt.) Bill*  
[HON. P. BECKLES]

*Friday, March 07, 2003*

At present, both Acts define the word "Court" as the Family Court as established by the Family Court Act, 2000 and, therefore, when the present Attorney General came into office, a pilot project was started which necessitated giving the court jurisdiction and having the definition of court as the court dealing with family matters and not the court as the Family Court since, as we all know, that whilst we had the Bill, there was no Family Court in existence.

The Bills therefore simply seek to amend the definition of the word "Court" to now mean the court responsible for family matters which is the current administrative situation as exists in the Supreme Court of Trinidad and Tobago. So all it means is that this amendment will ensure that whenever a Family Court is established, be it administratively, or legislatively, the definition in both Acts: the Children's Authority Act and the Adoption of Children Act, would be applicable; so when the Family Court Bill comes into being we would have already dealt with those issues and everything will move very smoothly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said, this is a fairly simple exercise and will ensure that the existing pilot project that was started by the Attorney General in relation to those matters affecting children and the court will now have proper jurisdiction to be able to deal with all matters relating to children and there will no longer be the necessity to wait until the Family Court is established for the purposes of the pilot project taking place.

As I said, this amendment will now deal with the problem as the "Court" which in the Family Court Bill previously meant Family Court would now deal with the issue of the court that has the jurisdiction in relation to family matters.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move.

*Question proposed.*

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a second time.*

*Bill committed to a committee of the whole House.*

*House in committee.*

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

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

*House resumed.*

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

**ADOPTION OF CHILDREN (AMDT.) BILL***Order for second reading read.*

**The Minister of Culture and Tourism (Hon. Pennelope Beckles):**  
Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move,

That a Bill to amend the Adoption of Children Act, 2000 be now read a second time.

*Question proposed.**Question put and agreed to.**Bill accordingly read a second time.**Bill committed to a committee of the whole House.**House in committee.**Clauses 1 to 3 ordered to stand part of the Bill.**Question put and agreed to, That the Bill be reported to the House.**House resumed.**Bill reported, without amendment; read the third time and passed.***INCOME TAX (AMDT.) BILL***Order for second reading read.*

**The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance (Hon. Patrick Manning):**  
Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move,

That a Bill to amend the Income Tax Act, Chap. 75:01, be now read a second time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a simple item of legislation that seeks to legitimize an administrative arrangement that has been put in place in the Inland Revenue Department to give recognition to the fact that major reform of the Inland Revenue Department is under way in collaboration with the authorities from the United States Internal Revenue Service.

As it now stands, the Board of Inland Revenue comprises four commissioners, each one having a responsibility for a particular area; one being responsible for audit, a second commissioner being responsible for collections, a third commissioner being responsible for value added tax, and a fourth responsible for administration who is also the Chairman of the Board.

*Income Tax (Amdt.) Bill*  
[HON. P. MANNING]

*Friday, March 07, 2003*

Because of the significance of the reform exercise that is under way, and because of the fact that it was thought necessary in the Inland Revenue Division to set up special arrangements for the coordination and management for this reform team and exercise, a decision was taken to create a fifth position of Commissioner of Inland Revenue responsible for reform.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these arrangements were put in place with effect from September 01, 2001 and therefore, at an appropriate stage in these proceedings, I propose to move the amendment of the legislation in two respects; one, I propose to add a new clause 3 which will read as follows:

“This Act shall have effect from September 01, 2001.”

And a consequential amendment to clause 2 of the Bill, which will now read:

“Subject to clause 3, the Income Tax Act is amended.”

Under normal circumstances retroactive legislation is frowned on in this Parliament because, generally, retroactive legislation seeks to give retroactive effect to Acts that were not legitimate and could work against the interest of citizens. In this case, that is not so. What the retroactivity will do in this case, is legitimize arrangements that were designed to improve the whole administration of the tax collection system in Trinidad and Tobago and therefore, will not work to the detriment of any citizen, but to the benefit of all citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. It is in those circumstances that I beg to move.

*Question proposed.*

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a second time.*

*Bill committed to a committee of the whole House.*

*House in committee.*

*Clause 1 ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

*Clause 2.*

*Question proposed, That clause 2 stand part of the Bill.*

**Mr. Manning:** Mr. Chairman, I propose that we add at the beginning of clause 2 the words. “Subject to clause 3.” Therefore, the new clause should read as follows:

“Subject to clause 3 the Income Tax Act is amended in section 3(2) by deleting the word ‘four’ and substituting the word ‘five’”.

*Income Tax (Amdt.) Bill*

*Friday, March 07, 2003*

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Clause 2, as amended, ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

*New Clause 3.*

**Mr. Manning:** Mr. Chairman, the title of that clause would be “Commencement” and it reads as follows:

“This Act shall have effect from September 01, 2001.”

*New clause 3 read the first time.*

*Question proposed, That the new clause be read a second time.*

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Question proposed, That the new clause be added to the Bill.*

*Question put and agreed to.*

*New clause 3 added to the Bill.*

*Question proposed, That the Bill, as amended, be reported to the House.*

*House resumed.*

*Bill reported, with amendment; read the third time and passed.*

**COMPANIES (FORMER-ACT COMPANIES) (VALIDATION) BILL**

*Order for second reading read.*

**The Minister of Legal Affairs (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move,

That a Bill to validate certain acts of former-Act companies be now read a second time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the purpose of the Companies (Former-Act Companies) (Validation) Bill is to validate the acts of omissions of certain companies, which applied for certificates of continuance under the Companies Act, 1995—that is Act No. 35 of 1995—after the time limited for doing so had expired.

The Companies Act, 1995 came into operation on April 15, 1997 and the objective of that Act was to revise and improve the law relating to companies and to repeal the old Companies Ordinance Act and also to ensure that there was a transition period for old companies or former-Act companies which had been incorporated under the Companies Ordinance.

*Companies (Validation) Bill*  
[HON. C. ROBINSON-REGIS]

*Friday, March 07, 2003*

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in order to facilitate the transition from the Companies Ordinance to the new Act, section 51(8)(1) of the Companies Act provides, among other things, for the operation of former-Act companies under the Companies Ordinance until such time as certificates of continuance are issued.

Under section 340(1) of the Act, former-Act companies apart from public companies were required to apply to the Registrar of Companies for certificates of continuance by April 15, 1999.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, most companies by March 1999 had not made this application and various stakeholders, including the Law Association and various companies, requested that the time limit be extended. In an effort to address those concerns, the Companies (Amdt.) Act 1999—that is Act No. 6 of 1999—was enacted and by this Act, section 340 of the Companies Act, empowering the Minister of Legal Affairs to extend by Order, the deadline date for the former-Act companies was put in place.

The then Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs subsequently made approximately 10 Orders extending the time and the last Order was made on May 31, 2001 as a final deadline.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the record shows that the majority of former-Act companies still had not applied for the certificates of continuance by that time and as a consequence of that, the then Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs stopped issuing certificates of continuance.

### **3.35 p.m.**

However, in accordance with section 12(1)(a) of the Statutes Act, Chap. 3:02, all orders made by the then Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs were published in the *Gazette* to give them legal effect. Section 12(1)(a) of the Statutes Act provides that every statutory instrument shall be published in the *Gazette* and shall come into operation on the date of such publication. However, because of administrative errors by the former administration, most of the orders were published late and as a consequence of that, the deadlines set by previous orders had already expired, so that they were in contravention of the Statutes Act.

In fact, the last order that was published on time was on August 14, 2000, and all subsequent orders were published late. As a consequence of that late publication, there was a break in the continuous grace period for the publication of orders and for the application of certificates of continuance by former-Act companies. Consequently, this proved to be a disadvantage to those former-Act companies which had applied on time, but because the orders were not published

within the given time, they were not granted the cover that they would have been entitled to if the orders had been published on time.

Consequently, if a former-Act company failed to apply for a certificate of continuance within the time limited, then that company could not, without leave of the court, sue or counterclaim although it may be made a defendant to a suit, and additionally, no dividend could be paid to any shareholder; also, any director is liable in those circumstances to a penalty of \$100 per day for each day during which the former-Act company carried on its business and had not applied for a certificate of continuance.

It is clear that such exposure is contrary to the interest of the former-Act companies and their shareholders. The former-Act companies, as well as their shareholders, would have assumed that they were protected by the orders and could continue to operate lawfully which, in fact, was not the case. We on this side are very concerned that the previous administration allowed this to take place and did absolutely nothing to protect companies which had applied for these certificates of continuance. In their normal reckless way, the former administration put in place legislation that they did not intend to operate effectively and they continued to be reckless and lawless and not operate in the interest of those whom they have been elected to serve. Just look at their action today.

We on this side had proposed several amendments to the then former-Act companies legislation which were rejected. We had proposed, in an effort to ensure that all former-Act Companies were captured that they be given the opportunity to apply for certificates of continuance, but the then Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs failed to adhere to the proposed amendments and as a consequence of that we are here today trying to clean up, as I said before, the mess that was left by the former UNC administration.

We have come to this Parliament to ensure that the companies that did, in fact, apply on time for their certificates of continuance are protected, and they can continue to do their work without the possibility of being sued for acting outside of the law.

With these words, I beg to move.

*Question proposed.*

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a second time.*

*Bill committed to a committee of the whole House.*

*Companies (Validation) Bill*

*Friday, March 07, 2003*

*House in committee.*

*Clauses 1 to 4 ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

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

*House resumed.*

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

#### ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of Health (Hon. Colm Imbert):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, having been very efficient and passed seven pieces of important legislation, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to Friday, March 14, 2003 at 1.30 p.m.

On that day we shall be debating the Mutual Assistance (Agreement between Trinidad and Tobago and Canada) Order, Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Act, 1997; the Mutual Assistance (Agreement between Trinidad and Tobago and the United Kingdom) Order, Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Act, 1997 and the Mutual Assistance (Agreement between Trinidad and Tobago and the United States of America) Order, Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Act, 1997, all 2003.

We shall also be tabling the Kidnapping Bill, 2003 which would be debated at another sitting, and any legislation that may come from the Senate on Tuesday, such as the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amdt..) Regulations.

I beg to move.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Hon. Members, there is a matter on the Adjournment that was brought by the hon. Member for Tabaquite. Since the hon. Member is not here, that matter would lapse.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*House adjourned accordingly.*

*Adjourned at 3.45 p.m.*

#### WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*The following question was asked by Mr. Ganga Singh (Caroni Central):*

#### **Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Contract Positions)**

- 46.** Could the Minister of Culture and Tourism provide a list of persons employed by contract and their positions in the Ministry of Culture for the period December 2001 to January 2003?

*Written Answers to Questions*

*Friday, March 07, 2003*

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

List of persons employed on contract in the Ministry of Culture and Tourism  
during the period December 2001 to January 2003

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Period of Employment</b>
Althea Sherma Mitchell	Communications Specialist	03.06.02 – 02.06.04
Andrew Anthony Ali	Senior Investment Facilitation Officer	25.10.02 – 24.10.03
Gail Henry	Senior Tourism Officer	05.08.02 – 04.08.04
Mareba Scott	Tourism Advisor II	05.08.02 – 04.08.04
Sharon Stanley	Tourism Advisor I	05.08.02 – 04.08.04
Ann-Marie Ryce	Cultural Programme Co-ordinator	04.11.02 – 03.11.03
Neal Devonish	Cultural Programme Co-ordinator	04.11.02 – 03.11.03
Wayne Riley	Cultural Programme Co-ordinator	04.11.02 – 03.11.03
John Hoyte	Steelband Liaison Officer	28.01.02 – 27.01.04
Maria Mason Roberts	Personal Advisor to Minister	15.10.02 to present
Francis Weekes Jnr.	Personal Secretary to Minister	15.10.02 to present
Yohand Rigaud	Personal Chauffeur to Minister	15.10.02 to present
Paula Mark	Personal Assistant to Minister	15.10.02 to present
Randolph Ward	Personal Chauffeur to Minister of State	01.04.02 to present
Wade Yacub	Personal Chauffeur to Parl. Secretary	18.11.02 to present
Kurt Stephen	Personal Advisor to the former Minister	04.02.02 – 08.12.02
Victoria Ibrahim	Personal Assistant to the former Minister	18.03.02 – 08.10.02
Joshua Jerry	Personal Chauffeur to the former Minister	04.02.02 – 16.04.02
Billy Davis-Phillip	Personal Chauffeur to the former Minister	18.04.02 – 08.10.02
Colwyn Perry	Personal Secretary to the former Minister	18.03.02 – 08.10.02
Jan Thompson	Personal Assistant to the former Minister	14.01.02 – 14.03.02
Reynold Small	Personal Assistant to the former Minister	16.08.02 – 08.10.02

List of persons employed on Contract in the Ministry of Culture and Tourism  
during the period 1996 to 2001

**Ministry of Tourism**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Period of Employment</b>
Lydia Richards	Tourism Specialist	26.06.95 - 25.06.97
Ishwar Persad	Tourism Specialist	04.02.98 - 03.02.99
		01.03.99 - 30.04.99
Damian Ali	Personal Assistant to the Minister	20.06.99 - 18.01.01
Rodhan Rampersad	Personal Chauffeur to the Minister	22.10.99 - 12.12.00

**Culture Division**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Period of Employment</b>
Ralph Dyette	Folk Archivist Assistant	09.03.00 - 15.04.01
Harrington Jack	Folk Archivist	17.01.00 - 16.01.01
Sonja Goopeesingh	Cultural Researcher	09.08.99 - 08.08.01
John Hoyte	Steel Band Liaison Officer	01.09.95 - 31.10.97
		03.11.97 - 14.12.99
		15.12.99 - 14.12.01

*The following question was asked by Mr. Manohar Ramsaran (Chaguanas):*

**Unemployment Relief Programme  
(Monthly Paid Staff)**

- 50.** Could the Minister of Local Government:
- (a) Furnish this House with a list of the monthly paid staff of the Unemployment Relief Programme in each of the fourteen regional corporations?
  - (b) Inform this House whether these positions were advertised and provide details of the dates of advertisements and the process of selection of persons?

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

- a) The regional Corporations are not responsible for the Unemployment Relief Programme. Accordingly there are no monthly paid staff of the Unemployment Relief programme in the Regional Corporations.
- b) The reply to part (a) of this question negates a reply to part (b) of the question.