

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES*Friday, April 26, 2013*

The House met at 1.30 p.m.

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

Mr. Speaker: Hon Members, I have received communication from the following Members: the hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar SC, MP, Prime Minister and Member for Siparia is currently out of the country, and has asked to be excused from today's sitting of the House; the hon. Winston Dookeran, Member of Parliament for Tunapuna, is currently out of the country and has asked to be excused from sittings of the House during the period April 21—28, 2013; the hon. Stephen Cadiz, Member of Parliament for Chaguanas East, is currently out of the country and has asked to be excused from sittings of the House during the period April 24—26, 2013; and Joanne Thomas, Member of Parliament for St. Ann's East, is currently out of the country and has asked to be excused from sittings of the House during the period April 26 to May 11, 2013. The leave the Members seek is granted.

PAPER LAID

Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Regulated Industries Commission for the year ended December 31, 2009. [*The Minister of Housing, Land and Marine Resources (Hon. Dr. Roodal Moonilal)*]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (ENTERPRISES) COMMITTEE**SECOND REPORT****Caribbean Airlines Limited****(Presentation)**

Mr. Colm Imbert (*Diego Martin North/East*): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following report: the Second Report of the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee on Caribbean Airlines Limited.

ORAL ANSWER TO QUESTION**Federation Villas State-owned Housing Units****(Details of)**

- 32. Miss Donna Cox** (*Laventille East/Morvant*) asked the hon. Minister of Housing, Land and Marine Affairs:

- A. Having noted the Minister's response to question No. 2 on January 22, 2013 in the House of Representatives, can the Minister in his capacity as Minister of Housing provide a listing of the persons who have occupied/utilized the state-owned housing units at Federation Villas assigned to Ministries, during the period January 2011 to date?
- B. Can the Minister provide the listing of those currently in occupation or utilizing any of these state-owned housing units and the terms of such occupancy or utilization?

The Minister of Housing, Land and Marine Affairs (Hon. Dr. Roodal Moonilal): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in response to question No. 32, colleagues would remember, as the question stated, on January 22, 2013 in the House, I answered questions related to this matter. Two weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, I also answered three questions related to this matter. In response to question A, may I repeat that housing units at the villas are assigned to Ministries of Government and not individuals, therefore, it is difficult to identify individuals but, rather, Ministries of Housing, Land and Marine Resources; Attorney General; Tobago Development and Public Administration.

Mr. Speaker, in response to question part B, we are not in a position to identify individuals, given the response to part A.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I have been advised that the hon. acting Prime Minister will be making a statement in this honourable House. He is not here at this time but, with your leave, we will defer this item for later on in the—

Hon. Members: No! No! No!

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, a statement is to be made by the hon. Prime Minister, acting—a statement is to be made by the hon. Prime Minister, acting, and I am simply indicating to the House that this item will be deferred for some time later on in the proceedings. Let us proceed. Please—

Dr. Rowley: Mr. Speaker—[*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: I have ruled. Let us proceed, please. [*Crosstalk*]

Miss Mc Donald: Mr. Speaker, may I?

Mr. Speaker: You are not going on the same point though.

Miss Mc Donald: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: I have ruled on that already. I have ruled on it.

Dr. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, on a point of enquiry. Mr. Speaker, on a point of enquiry.

Mr. Speaker: Member, Member wait, Member wait. I have ruled that a matter falling under the item “Statements by Ministers” is to be raised. The hon. Acting Prime Minister is not here, and I have just advised the House that this item will be reverted to sometime later on in the proceedings. Would you want me to put it to the House?

Hon. Members: Yes!

Mr. Speaker: All right! Hon. Members—

Dr. Rowley: Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Member, please. If you continue to behave like this and your voice, could I ask you to control your voice in this honourable House.

Dr. Rowley: I am only saying thanks, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: No, no, not in that way, please.

Hon Member: “Say it in de road nah.”

Mr. Speaker: Please, please, please. No, please, do not get there.

Agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: Let us proceed, please. [*Desk thumping*] Let us proceed please. [*Interruption*] Please Member, let us proceed. Please, please. I now call on the hon. Leader of the Opposition and Member of Parliament for Diego Martin West. [*Desk thumping*]

PRIME MINISTER’S FAILURE TO ACT

(RE: FORMER MINISTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY)

Dr. Keith Rowley (*Diego Martin West*): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the following Motion standing in my name:

Whereas the private activities of the Member of Parliament for Chaguanas West and former Minister of National Security have been the subject of widespread adverse commentary, censure and inferences, both locally and internationally which were in conflict with his position as a Minister of Government; and

Whereas the actions and conduct of the former Minister of National Security have been the subject of widespread adverse commentary, censure and inferences, both locally and internationally; and

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[DR. ROWLEY]

Friday, April 26, 2013

Whereas the former Minister of National Security and his business partners have been linked to, or associated with, a number of alleged investigations into alleged misconduct and/or alleged criminal offences, both locally and internationally, which have attracted widespread adverse commentary, censure and inferences, both locally and internationally; and

Whereas in the face of the overwhelming evidence of his unsuitability as a Minister of Government, the Prime Minister did not act expeditiously with respect to the former Minister of National Security:

Be it resolved that this Honourable House express its disapproval of the failure of the Prime Minister to act expeditiously to take appropriate action to protect the image and interest of the people of Trinidad and Tobago which have consistently been damaged by the actions and business of the Member for Chaguanas West and former Minister of National Security.

Mr. Speaker, this Motion was filed in keeping with the Order Paper and Standing Orders of the House of Representatives. Subsequent to the filing of the original Motion, we have had certain dramatic developments—and I dare say dramatic, but not unexpected, developments. So, the Motion as read a moment ago is, in fact, a slightly revised Motion taking into account that yesterday was yesterday and today is today.

Mr. Speaker, I have seen it written in the newspapers; I have heard it said on political platforms; I have heard it said on the radio and probably on television, that this Motion is somehow a clashing of heads between the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for Chaguanas West.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, the Motion as written really is not directed at the Member for Chaguanas West for his response. He might be the subject which generated the Motion, but the Motion very clearly, having identified the subject, really, is taking into account the response of the Prime Minister to the shenanigans of the former Minister of National Security, currently the Member of Parliament for Chaguanas West, I am advised for another few hours.

Mr. Speaker, the issues raised in this Motion, with your leave I would like to go back to a few phrases in the Motion, so as to keep in focus what we are here about today. In the Motion, we speak about the private business activities of the Member for Chaguanas West. We speak about the indisputable fact that there has been widespread adverse commentary.

There was a time when Trinidad and Tobago's name was mentioned or when certain names of citizens of our country were mentioned on the international stage—names like Roger Gibbon, Ato Boldon, Bernard Julien, Hasely Crawford, Janelle Penny Commissiong, Giselle La Ronde, and people like that—whenever their names were mentioned, the people of Trinidad and Tobago felt a sense of pride [*Desk thumping*] because their exploits made our name, a name that we could be proud of, and we did not have to shirk and shrink and lurk.

Mr. Speaker, this Motion points to the private business and actions of another citizen who, if he was a private citizen, we of this House may have paid attention to his personal circumstance with some interest and maybe he might have commented on it outside of this House but, certainly, there would not have been a Motion in this House as there is today.

The reason there is a Motion in this House today making reference to the private business of one of our colleagues, namely, the Member for Chaguanas West, is because by virtue of his presence in the Cabinet where he took responsibility of accepting an offer made by the Prime Minister, his private business automatically placed the public business and the public image and interests of the people of Trinidad and Tobago into the scrutiny of the local and foreign eyes.

1.45 p.m.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, those businesses resulted in widespread adverse commentary, because what has happened is that whenever this Member of the House whose name was called and his business was referred to, the business was referred to as criminal conduct or unethical conduct, and his name was prefaced by an adjective as “disgraced” or “infamous”, and that rubbed off on the people of Trinidad and Tobago. And, insofar as he held his position in the Cabinet, and I dare say, as he rose and was a rising star in the Cabinet to National Security Council member, from his original position, to Minister of National Security, and, in between, Acting Prime Minister. In fact, in the calypso arena, he was Minister of everything, he spoke for every Minister in the Cabinet.

Insofar as that was his position in Trinidad and Tobago, given what his private business was, it called into question the standards and values of all the people of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*] All! Because people will ask the question: What kind of people are these who will so accept, blindly, blithely, and promote and defend what to the rest of the world is unacceptable?”

Mr. Speaker, the Motion talks about censure and inferences, a series of inferences have been drawn on the information and the evidence, and the talk and the script and the conversations surrounding this Minister. The inferences were that there was unacceptable conduct and the inferences also were that such conduct was not appropriately censured.

Mr. Speaker, the second recital speaks about the actions and conduct of the Minister. I specifically refer here to the Minister's response; because you see when you are in public life you are not immune to allegations, in fact, you attract allegations. You cannot help that; it is par for the course; it is part of the vineyard in which we labour. However, how we respond to these allegations is what is going to determine who we are, what we are, and whether, in fact, the allegations have been properly dealt with.

The response of our colleague, the Member of Parliament for Chaguanas West, has been always one of bland dismissal, outrage, arrogance and bombast. Notwithstanding the landslide of consistent allegations of all kinds being made against him the one thing that he stands firm on is that he makes it quite clear that he will subject himself to no enquiry and will cooperate with no investigation; he puts himself above the law and above the interest and concerns of the people whose name he is tarnishing, or the people in whose name he is serving under an oath of office in this Parliament.

So his actions and his conduct in response to the allegations, even if the allegations are frivolous, once you hold office you are duty-bound to respond and to respond effectively and truthfully. Our people are not unreasonable. Our people, in fact, like to defend the underdog, and if allegations are made against you, they give you the opportunity to clear your name, not only in the court of law but in the court of public opinion, sometimes to a fault. But when you take the position as the actions and conduct of our colleague from Chaguanas West, that I have nothing to say to you, you cannot talk to me—as a matter of fact, “I gave you breakfast, is now lunchtime, why are you asking me about my theft?”; that is his attitude. That action, that conduct, Mr. Speaker, hurt, hurt the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister is not alone, he is a man of many arms, many legs, whatever impediments he may have elsewhere, he is a man of many seasons and, therefore, when you come into public life like that, you have to be mindful of the fact that if problems arise with your associates and your business partners, those questions, in fact, might fall to you to be answered, especially if the specific allegations treat with your tenure, your term of office. You cannot take the

position that that is football business and I am in Government now, and do not ask me about football business. If a man was known to be a paedophile two years ago, his presence today in the kindergarten class is not acceptable. [*Desk thumping*] He might think so but we cannot be encouraged to accept that yesterday was yesterday and today's concerns are out of place.

He might subscribe to that, Mr. Speaker. That might be his yardstick, but, we, the people of Trinidad and Tobago, we are not to accept that and be encouraged to accept that as our standards, so we have to say no to that. [*Desk thumping*] Mr. Speaker, this matter did not come to us as a thief in the night. He himself, last night in a charade at Pierre Road in Chaguanas, on the late show—[*Laughter*]—the late show with Jack; the beanstalk was absent. Mr. Speaker, he himself said that the moment he was appointed as a Member of the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago, he came under attack from the Opposition Leader.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure you saw television last night, which was the Member's attempt to respond to a landslide of allegations going back, way back when. In fact, it is interesting that some of his defenders today use as part of his defence that these things, these allegations have been around a long time, thinking that by saying so, we should all accept that since they have been around for a long time, there is nothing to be raised nor to be addressed now, not realizing that what they are saying is that when you put him in the Cabinet you knew he was as "crooked as a corkscrew", and, therefore, you did that with your eyes wide open. Therefore, we will not join you in saying now that we knew about that a long time ago. We might have had inferences, we might have had innuendos, we might have heard allegations, but, today, Mr. Speaker, we have gone a bit further than that.

Let me indicate, Mr. Speaker, that we are not inventing any wheel here, we are not trying to be different, we are not trying to persecute our colleague, because I want to make it quite clear, and I think I have said so in this House before; I have no personal vendetta, no personal animosity towards the Member of Parliament for Chaguanas West—[*Desk thumping*]—but I am duty-bound to examine and monitor his actions with respect to the business of the people of Trinidad and Tobago; it is my duty. [*Desk thumping*] And if his business is all bad business, unfortunately for him, I can only respond to bad business and report on him about bad business.

Mr. Speaker, we spent a lot of time here a few years ago talking and taking action in trying to become a developed country. Under the PNM Government it was a vision, an objective, and many persons thought simply meant building multistorey buildings in town, and hosting international conferences and walking

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[DR. ROWLEY]

Friday, April 26, 2013

as though we are a developed country. I do not know there is anybody in the country who actually said that we should not want to be categorized as reaching the standards by which a developed country is identified, but I dare say, it is not only by your infrastructure or the numbers of dollars in the bank that will make us a developed country, the most important part of our development, if we are to attain that status, is the quality of governance that we bring to bear on the affairs of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*]

Therefore, as we strive to do that, even though the PNM is out of office and it is no longer fashionable to speak about wanting to become a developed country, I am sure the current Government, in doing what it is doing, when it goes to Cabinet, in discussing our business, incompetent as they might be, they are trying to contribute towards that road that we embarked upon to make Trinidad and Tobago a better place and, ultimately, to become a developed country.

So how do developed countries deal with allegations, serious allegations against ministers of government? Let me give you a few examples, Mr. Speaker, because last night, when I watched the Pierre Road show, I saw a lot of people in tears and I could understand it; an MP who has been serving them well is now not in office in the Cabinet. And even in my own constituency where I have not been in a position to hand out largesse of dollars and whatever else, because you have served, you make connections and there is an emotional connection.

But, Mr. Speaker, I heard people who ought to be in the know and who should know better, trying to excuse away the conduct of the Member, and I ask this House to disregard that as being self-serving on their part. "Many of those people are speaking with their jaw full of some kinda food, I doh know what." But let us disregard that, and let us look at what happened in New Zealand, one example. With your leave, Mr. Speaker, I will just quote a couple of examples.

In New Zealand, a Minister, Mr. Field, was removed from his post by then Prime Minister, Helen Clark. Field was expelled from the Labour Party and he lost his seat in South Auckland. What did he do? What happened? Why did that happen? New Zealand is an example that we can aspire to in the Commonwealth—one of the best examples. You know what Mr. Field did? He fell from grace when he used an immigrant from Thailand, a non-resident of New Zealand, to tile his home, and allegations surfaced that he used his influence as an MP to obtain a work permit for the Thai. It also was alleged that he used his position to obtain a discounted price on a property deal.

Those were the allegations made against Mr. Field and he was sent down, as we say in Oxford, he was sent down from the Cabinet; he was expelled from his Labour Party and so on, and the Prime Minister had this to say, and I commend it to my colleagues here today. Prime Minister Helen Clark had this to say in New Zealand, she said:

Mr. Field's behaviour reflected—ultimately, it reflected badly on our Parliament.

She did not say it reflected badly on him, she said:

It reflected badly on our Parliament.

You know what, Mr. Speaker? She was saying, as a parliamentarian we are held to certain standards, and if we fall below those standards, each and every one of us, it reflects very badly on our Parliament. [*Desk thumping*] I commend that to my colleagues.

In Japan, a number of Ministers—Japan is not a Commonwealth country but is subscribed to western democracy and has a very effective democratic tradition since 1945—one Minister used public housing to rendezvous with his girlfriend; he was sent down.

Another one was criticized by the Opposition. Listen to this. He was criticized by the Opposition for questionable spending. And, of course, there were some allegations that some moneys were misspent somewhere and the Minister committed suicide. I am not asking anybody here to commit suicide, but in Japan, suicide is part of their culture. If you find yourself disgraced, you hara-kiri—is a Japanese cultural icon. And, of course, the famous Japanese Prime Minister, Mr. Tanaka, he faced allegations—and while allegations are being made, bear in mind, Mr. Speaker, I am not talking here about the outcome of any court and after any appeal, and any Privy Council, you know. I am talking about serious allegations being substantially made from important quarters like the Opposition, and once the allegations are sufficiently strong, action is taken at that stage—and Mr. Tanaka, as the Prime Minister, had to resign. Mr. Speaker, the process took place ultimately and like another Prime Minister of Japan, he went to jail.

2.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, in India, allegations of corruption surrounding the lack of a tendering process saw a Minister Kalmadi being dismissed. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was in the forefront of sanctioning the Minister, and he promised and took action. He said that corrupt officials will be given—and his

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[DR. ROWLEY]

Friday, April 26, 2013

own words were—"severe and exemplary punishment". Of course, the Indian Government announced the formation of a special committee to probe the allegations of the wrongdoing on the part of Minister Kalmadi with respect to his behaviour with the Commonwealth Games matter.

In Uganda two Ministers were forced to resign, because usually these individuals might fall in love with office and might give you all kinds of reasons as to why they are victims—as we saw last night—but sometimes they are forced to resign. Two Ministers in Uganda were forced to resign after information—not a conviction, after information, not rising to the examination and cross-examination of evidence—information surfaced that they may have been involved in corrupt activities while in public office, because there was sufficiently good information that they played a role in the matter.

In England, where we look all the time, there is the example of Neil Hamilton, MP for Tatton, who had to resign immediately when information surfaced that he was taking money from businessmen to file questions in the Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, in Trinidad and Tobago what are we facing right now? After a consistent din of strong and troubling allegations against our colleague for Chaguanas West, we are at the point now in 2013 where we could go no further, because the findings of a properly constituted ethics enquiry, an integrity enquiry done by an internationally observed body of which we are a part, found that our colleague fraudulently misappropriated State funds and FIFA funds.

Mr. Speaker: Could you quote from the title of the report itself?

Dr. K. Rowley: No, no; the title? No, no, I do not have the volume—
[Inaudible] This is in the public domain. [Crosstalk]

Dr. Seemungal: You are quoting in Parliament.

Dr. K. Rowley: I am making reference to the CONCACAF Integrity Find Report. That is the report which has been published. [Crosstalk] I am not here to debate the report; do not even have it in front of me. I am not prepared to debate the report. I am making reference to what the report has said to the public and to the world. It is on the Internet. [Interruption]

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you for giving way. Could I ask the Member if when making these references it is possible to quote either from the report or from a newspaper report that used those words, because you are giving the impression these are the words in the report. We just wanted the reference for it, that is all.

Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, unless the Member wants to make my contribution for me, the words that I am going to use—[*Desk thumping*] if he wants me to say, “I have read in the newspapers,” I will say that. I assumed that all Members of Parliament would have read what has been published in the newspapers, what has spent a number of hours on television. If they have not read it, I am not surprised, but I have read it in the newspapers, I have seen it on television, I have heard the Member himself making reference to it. If they want to bury their heads in the sand and take issue now about whether in fact there is a report that speaks about the misappropriation of funds at CONCACAF involving our colleague, that is their business. [*Desk thumping*] I have no duty or requirement to bring them any copy and quote any sentence for them. They have had their heads in the sand or other parts for quite some while, “yuh could keep it right there”. [*Desk thumping and laughter*] I am not working for them.

As a matter of fact today, I am not speaking to any of them. “Stick break in their ears.” They will get up and defend their colleague, as they have done all along, because we could have steered ourselves away from this place. This may never have happened if, as the Member said last night, the minute he was appointed they were told, they were warned, they were encouraged not to put him in the Cabinet because there would have been conflict of his private business and our public business. That was not an act of malice. That objection was done against the background of a requirement for us to observe our own established parliamentary code of ethics. That was raised with them in June 2010.

I am hearing my name being called now, as though it is my problem and my business. The objection was rooted in the letter and spirit of a debate that took place in this House, where we established a code of conduct for parliamentarians and Ministers, championed by no less a person than former President ANR Robinson when he was the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, seconded by no other person but the Attorney General of the day, Mr. Anthony Smart. All of us in the Parliament accepted those codes of ethics, but the minute the Member of Parliament came into the political arena this ruling party took the position that he was not to be held in the standards that the Parliament expected. In violation of the expectation of the code of ethics they put him in the Cabinet, and I warned them. I warned them that this was going to expose us to scandals of FIFA, because scandals were known to us. They were known to us. So when they say it was here a long time ago, they are right, they knew.

The Member for Chaguanas West would like us to subscribe to certain standards which we rejected, and not yesterday. In an earlier time of the UNC, I

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[DR. ROWLEY]

Friday, April 26, 2013

was in the Opposition, this country set about to build four stadia, a decision taken by the PNM, to host Junior World Cup in Trinidad and Tobago: Ato Boldon Stadium, Dwight Yorke and two others. The Member for Chaguanas West at the time was not a public official. He was a private official, doing very well and very well known. What struck me as odd at that time, this public business of building stadia was handed to him by an earlier UNC Government.

I went to a function in Ellerslie Plaza, and this person who was not a public official stood in front of nationals in a birthday party and announced, without batting an eyelid, "I have today awarded the contract for the consultancy to a particular consulting firm for project management." I said, "What?" "On what basis is this private citizen, who happens to be friendly with the Government, has the authority to make any award on any contract?" But so confident was he that this was how Government should be run, he came there in a function of 100 people and announced that he—and he was not joking—the end result was that the stadia were constructed under his imprimatur. I saw cheques written to contractors for those projects signed by him, addressed from his house in Arouca. I asked myself, "How did public business come to be conducted in this way that it could end up like this?" But as far as he is concerned, that is how it should be. He could feel so if he wants; that is his standard, that is his expectation. All I am saying to my colleagues and the rest of the country is that we have to reject that, because if we join him in going down that road we end up where we are today. [*Desk thumping*]

The chickens have been clucking all along the route and they have come home to roost today—come home to roost. That is why I have brought this Motion, because when the Prime Minister was first alerted to the potential for problems with this appointment, her very first statement gave the impression that she understood what was required of her, and that was, that she should not allow him, the private business, to conflict and to operate with the public business.

The second statement was quite different. In the case of the first statement she said, "Jack will do the right thing." I read that to mean, okay, she understood that he would have to choose one or the other. Soon after I heard her saying about his work ethic—and even today, even last night, you see people telling him what a wonderful hard worker he is. I am sure that there are many Members in the Government who are hard workers. I am sure that you are a hard worker, Mr. Speaker. I know you are a very hard worker, but you have no licence to disgrace this country—you are not in parallel. I am sure the record will show how wonderfully generous and caring Pablo Escobar was. We do not want those standards, Mr. Speaker.

You have to answer to the specific allegations. The specific allegations which the Prime Minister turned a blind eye to—and listen to me carefully, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister turned a blind eye to them—are now summarized, digested, served up in a report of Sir David Simmons, and having run all the way, they could run no more, and we saw what happened in the last few days.

What has been disclosed is that the wrongs were committed against the State of Trinidad and Tobago as well as other wrongs. Even if we are to subscribe to the inanity that if you do wrong in FIFA or in wherever, that is there, it is not here, what has been disclosed in that David Simmons' report—which I commend to you for your reading, Mr. Speaker; it will be quite depressing, but you must read it. What it contains is an allegation, beyond just ordinary allegation, to the point of finding that our colleague committed wrongs against the State of Trinidad and Tobago. And for those who do not understand that, let me explain to you what that meant.

It meant that public moneys which the Cabinet of this country appropriated to the sporting fraternity for use in the TTFB, the audit is now showing that those moneys leaked quite profusely into the private corporate entities of our colleague for Chaguanas West. As far as he is concerned, that is okay, that is how it should be. But I do not know any of my colleagues here has the gall to get up in this Parliament and say that they are satisfied that the Cabinet could appropriate funds to TTFB and the TTFB could hand it over to any private corporate body, because they are better able to spend and manage it, without the oversight of the TTFB. This for me is particularly grievous, I will tell you why. [*Interruption*]

Mr. Warner: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, can the speaker quote exactly the part of the report that said I used State funds. Can he get it for me, please?

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: What point of order?

Mr. Warner: I am not talking to you, Ma'am.

Mr. Speaker: He is referring to recitals in this Motion. What I would advise is that you take your notes so that at the appropriate time you can respond to it. Continue.

2.15 p.m.

Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, it is even simpler than that. I will give way, so that the Member could get up and say that nowhere in the report of Sir David Simmons is there any reference to the fact that moneys provided by the Ministry of Sport to the TTFB ended up into an LOC where he controlled it. If he can get up and say that is not true, I will give way.

Mr. Speaker: No, continue.

Dr. K. Rowley: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will continue. [*Desk thumping*] The reason I am making this a point in my Motion is because I happen to know a little bit about it. [*Crosstalk*] I understand what had happened. Shocking, as I was, when I found out what actually happened because I was in the Cabinet in 2006—I was in the Cabinet in 2006—so I have a personal connection to this development. We were all euphoric with the exploit of our boys, and I am sure our colleague from Chaguanas West had a major contribution to that. But my grandfather always told me, “a cow that give a pail of milk and kick it down, is no use to the farmer.”

So when we were—as a Cabinet—agreeing, without hesitation, to provide public funding for the qualified team to go to World Cup, my colleague from Chaguanas West was out in the open shouting loudly, that the Government must put in \$200 million in the process. I was in the Cabinet, we heard it. In fact, by not agreeing instantly to make \$200 million available, he was publicly excoriating us for being anti-football. In fact, he went further, he threatened us that for the next World Cup we would not qualify on the cheap, and he would ensure that State put in the hundreds of millions required to qualify.

We kept quiet, but we said, “Bring a budget to us, and whatever you cannot fund, the State will fund it with public funds”. I know that because I was there. I was a member of the subcommittee of the Cabinet that oversaw the relationship between this offer from the Cabinet and the TTFF, which we received, who came to us and led us to believe that the local organizing committee was theirs and under their control. Mr. Speaker, I was duped.

I accepted that as the state of play until I saw a lawsuit going through the local courts. The first time that I was alerted to the fact that there was something amiss with the TTFF, with whom I had interacted as a Member of the Cabinet, and agreed to pass large sums of public money to the TTFF for the sole purpose of advancing the football team, I saw this lawsuit being reported in the papers where persons could not account for their books, and could not account, through proper bookkeeping and auditing, for public moneys handed to the TTFF.

Subsequent to that, Mr. Speaker, only recently by way of the report of the audit elsewhere, which is now in the public domain, I am seeing that the moneys ended up in an LOC, controlled, not by the TTFF, but by persons in their private corporate capacity.

If the Member wants to deny that, he can, and he had the opportunity to deny it before it was printed, because Sir David Simmons tells the world that he asked

him to respond and to assist the enquiry, he chose, arrogantly and bombastically, to tell Sir David Simmons where to shove it. But Sir David Simmons makes reference to evidence and findings made.

So do not get up here today and jump on my shoulder and tell me, "It was not so". "Yuh sums wrong, and the inspector gone, and you will stay down in class." That is what it is because he was given the opportunity. He was given the opportunity. So he cannot say he was not given the opportunity.

Sir David Simmons, one of our finest jurists, whose name will now stamp on that, says to us what we can digest as the work of fairness. I saw him last night in Pierre Road, Mr. Speaker, saying that he does not hold Sir David Simmons wrong because Sir David Simmons was misled. Well, if you did not cooperate and he was misled, whose fault is that? Whose fault is that?

The Prime Minister sat there and watched that. I refuse to believe that from the Opposition, where I have limited resources and limited responsibilities, that I would have observed that in a court in Trinidad and Tobago the name of a Minister of Government was being called as being solely responsible for public funds, and that Minister flatly refuses to cooperate with the courts. I assume that the Prime Minister, if not directly, but indirectly, would have been informed by somebody around her who would have drawn to her attention that a Minister of Government is in this position.

Compare that with the examples I gave you of the countries a moment ago, and ask yourselves if, as a people, our governance is measuring up to what is expected by the people of Trinidad and Tobago, and I dare say, the people of the world. Because if we as a people, at the level of the Prime Minister, turn a blind eye to a situation where in the court, not down the road by a bar, in a rum shop, or in a roti shop, you know, in a court in Trinidad and Tobago, a judge is behaving as though he is pulling teeth to get documents where public moneys have been involved, and the name of a Minister of Government is central to those proceedings, and the Minister's attitude is to go to some lawyer, to write the court and threaten the court for pressuring people to come against him.

I would have thought that if the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago is to aspire to the standard of the Parliament of New Zealand, as described by Prime Minister Helen Clark, where we would all feel the shame of a Member, as a House, if a Member falls short, if that was the standard that we were subscribing to, then we would have wanted our colleague to cooperate with the court and to

show that he has nothing to be afraid of. Instead, he does not do that: not once, not twice, but repeatedly, and I dare say, every time allegations are made. That is his style.

In this instance, I am not concerned about FIFA's business. It could be FIFA's style. It could be the proceedings of the articles of association that executives of FIFA, the vice-president and the president who are in fact not owners of the organization, could one day decide, "Pardner, I like you. I call you friend, and you know what? I will give you US \$22 million as a gift." That is their business. I agree with him. That is FIFA's business, but I knew long ago that FIFA was a mafia.

When I was in Government and my colleague was doing his first term as a vice-president of FIFA—he was in Parliament in his first term—and I referred to FIFA as a mafia in the Parliament—and of course only mafia men live in mafias. When I did that he came to Parliament and complained and said that he had to go to Zurich and apologize for me because I called FIFA a mafia. And I told him, it is on *Hansard*, I do not want you to apologize for me. He came and put on *Hansard* that he had to apologize in Zurich because I, as a Member of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, called FIFA a mafia. Today it is common knowledge around the world that FIFA is the most corrupt organization in the world [*Desk thumping*] and unfortunately it is a sporting body among young people.

Hon. Member: "Hmm."

Dr. K. Rowley: But of course there is hope, Mr. Speaker. FIFA is currently under full public pressure, from the Europeans in particular, to clean up its act. But unfortunately for us, the poster boy for FIFA corruption resided up until a day or two ago in the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago; unfortunately for us. That is a fact.

Hon. Member: "Hmm."

Dr. K. Rowley: Thank God Almighty we have been relieved of that as of two days ago. [*Desk thumping*] So this thing has—"is not yesterday we dealing with this, you know; not yesterday." This has been a monkey on our back for years, Mr. Speaker. And when I see my colleague from Chaguanas West trying to impress his colleagues and the Prime Minister about his "victimhood", I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I feel sad—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: "Um-hmm!"

Dr. K. Rowley:—for all of us because this did not happen to us by accident. It happened to us by our reluctance to treat with this issue from the very beginning.

Mr. Speaker, I, once again, am forced to make my own personal experience enter this debate. But I, Mr. Speaker, have a ticket home in my house which I am keeping for “meh” grandchildren. It is a grounds ticket for the stadium. I, as a Member of Parliament in this country, our national team was playing a World Cup qualifying match to try to get into the World Cup, and as a Member of Parliament I could not get a ticket to buy—not a free ticket “eh”—I wanted to buy a ticket because I was not offered one out of courtesy. I wanted to buy one. I could not get one to buy.

When I was eventually offered one for sale it was out of New York at US \$50 and on principle, that word that is alien to some of us, I refused to buy it, and I bought a ticket for the grounds, and I went to grounds. I could not get to the stadium, could not get to the precincts of the stadium. I got in through favours from the police service, and therefore I still have the ticket.

Hon. Member: What match? What match is that?

Dr. K. Rowley: And my colleague who was accused, then, of wrongdoing, he was doing exactly what he is doing now; “everybody wrong. Doh bother me”. Ridiculous! “And all ah dat.” And he denied it to the hilt; a commission of enquiry—[*Interruption*]

[*Cell phone rings*]

Hon. Member: What match is that?

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member. Members of the public may I suggest that if you have cell phones, would you be kind enough to switch them off whilst you are in this honourable House. We would not want to have a repeat of any cell phone going off in the public gallery, please. Continue, hon. Member.

Dr. K. Rowley: “Yeah”, Mr. Speaker. I was saying when those allegations were made as they are being made now a different matter, my colleague from Chaguanas West was adamant that they were baseless, but so serious were they that a commission of enquiry was empanelled under Mr. Lionel Seemungal. Go look at the records in the archives and see how many instances that the accused person then, not a Member of this House at the time, attacked in the most denigrating way Mr. Lionel Seemungal—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: “Uh-huh.”

Dr. K. Rowley:—and never cooperated with the enquiry. In the end that enquiry came to an end without his cooperation and delivered nothing.

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[DR. ROWLEY]

Friday, April 26, 2013

Subsequently, I was surprised to see him admitting what actually went on at the stadium. And for me, Mr. Speaker, it is even more painful because having gone to grounds in the way I did, stayed in the sardine can for the five hours or how many hours I spent in there to watch the match, I found myself in the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago dealing with public business. When I was in the Cabinet the report came about the structural damage that was done to the stadium.

So there is always a price for the public when private individuals overstep their bounds and take liberties with public resources. These are facts, undisputed facts. I am not making these up. It is against that background that I take the comments of persons like the Prime Minister and others who are saying that this was a long, long time ago.

Last night, Mr. Speaker, I wondered if the Prime Minister—I wonder what she would have said if she was here today. Because I take note of the fact that the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago is so confident in her own self and in her own operations, that a matter like this calling into question her operations of Government business as recorded in the resolution here, can see it fit to absent herself from the House, go to another country, have a good time—[*Interruption*]

Dr. Moonilal: Mr. Speaker, please. The hon. Prime Minister is on an official state visit to Canada that had been planned way in advance and could not be [*Crosstalk*] easily changed. No, because he is making some—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: “Yeah.” And also may I suggest that the Prime Minister has been properly excused by this honourable House, please.

Dr. K. Rowley: I do not know why I am being disturbed, you know. And I did not ask whether she was excused or not. It is my view which I am free to express. [*Desk thumping*] I am expressing my view and you do not have to agree with it.

2.30 p.m.

Hon. Member: That is right.

Dr. K. Rowley: You might have a very good reason to disagree. I am simply saying—right!—that I would have preferred if the Prime Minister was in this House to respond.

You see, Mr. Speaker, it is one thing to take the position as is being taken now that what has happened is an act of victimhood, and great instability has now been placed on the people of Trinidad and Tobago. This country has been suffering for

the last three years under a cloud of lack of confidence. [*Desk thumping*] And these political developments only contribute to maintaining that or creating further lack of confidence in the country, because right now as this matter has come to where it has come, the political fallout of this and the effects of that political fallout is instability. Instability! And political instability has a way of reflecting itself in economic and social instability. [*Desk thumping*]

And if the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago wants to go and pay a state visit to Canada while Trinidad and Tobago is in a state, that is “all yuh business”, but it is my opinion to express that she should have been here responding to this Motion.

Hon. Member: That is right. [*Desk thumping*]

Dr. K. Rowley: Maybe if she were here, Mr. Speaker, she would have been able to defend herself from the allegations made by the Member for Chaguanas West. Because, you see, Mr. Speaker, this Government operates on the basis that we are all stupid, but most of us in this House, most of us in this House would have studied Shakespeare.

Hon. Member: “Um-hmm”.

Dr. K. Rowley: In fact, I enjoyed my school days acting in a number of Shakespeare plays and I am familiar with Julius Caesar.

Miss Mc Donald: And Macbeth.

Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, when I heard my colleague from Chaguanas West last night it reminded me of Mark Anthony, “I’ve come to praise, not to bury Caesar”.

So, he did not come to bury the Prime Minister. He expressed his love and affection for her as part of our national debate, but he pointed out that the Prime Minister told the press that she was stunned when she found out what happened in the report, what the report contained and, in love and affection he told the country, “I asked her, ‘You were stunned?’” “She say, ‘Ah never say dat’.” [*Laughter*] But he went on to say—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: “Oropouche, you told him that?”

Dr. K. Rowley:—that is why he offered his resignation, because he heard that she was stunned. When he asked her if she was stunned, which the media duly reported, he told us last night, she said, she did not say that, and then tongue in cheek, he said, “I believe her”, and the proof of the belief is that he did in fact offer his resignation.

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[DR. ROWLEY]

Friday, April 26, 2013

If he was going to resign because he was bothered by her being stunned, when she said “I didn’t say that”, and he said he did not believe—he believed her, then why resign? [*Desk thumping*] But it falls to us to unravel what he truly believes. Then he asked her again, Mr. Speaker, “How come yuh could stay in Canada and say when yuh come home yuh coming to deal with me?”, which the press reported in first person speech. He told us last night, when he asked the Prime Minister that she said, “I didn’t say that”, and then he said, “I believe her”. [*Laughter*] Because he knows that the press reported first person speech of the Prime Minister saying, “I will deal with it when I come home”.

Miss Mc Donald: “Um-hmm.”

Dr. K. Rowley: But apparently, Mr. Speaker, what the Member was saying to us, that face to face the Prime Minister cannot even own up to him to a simple matter like saying, “When I come home I will deal with the matter.”

Imagine a Prime Minister is not able to face down a Minister who asked her, “Did you say when you come home you will deal with me or you will deal with the matter?” Why is the Prime Minister so afraid? According to him; and he paid endless money on a television station to come and tell the whole country that, out of love and affection for the Prime Minister. And it brought me back to some day in this House, I think it was in the vote of no confidence last year, whenever it was—it was March 02 last year, when our colleague from Chaguanas West got up and he spoke at length, and it is recorded on *Hansard*, where he described how the Prime Minister was created and made by his efforts, and he went as far as to say she was an investment.

Miss Mc Donald: “Um-hmm.”

Dr. K. Rowley: As a matter of fact the exact words were somewhere around that, I think somewhere around here, when he spoke about “she was an investment”, and in fact, in the Motion that they were responding to, he virtually said that they were defending and they were duty bound to defend the investment, and that maybe explains why the Prime Minister cannot say to the Member—I mean, if I am stunned, I am stunned, because what is in that report is stunning. [*Laughter*]

And, of course, if I am away and I choose to defer action on the matter until I come home, then, why am I afraid to admit that? Then, Mr. Speaker, I talk about the actions of our colleague. In the Motion I speak about the actions of our colleague, and one of the actions I want to take issue with is his action last night where he was begging for sympathy—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: “Hmm.” [*Laughter*]

Dr. K. Rowley:—and trying to hold on to the UNC votes so they could vote for an independent candidate.

He went out of his way last night to give the impression, and stated, that he was not dealt with fairly. He produced unchallenged information. He described the behaviour of some of his colleagues lurking in the garden and virtually ambushing his expectation to resign on his own terms. I find that my friend from Oropouche was crawling on his hands and knees, knife behind his back, crawling on his knees. [*Laughter*]

Dr. Moonilal: Hello!

Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, but the important point was this— [*Interruption*]

Dr. Moonilal: Please do not bring me in that.

Dr. K. Rowley:—our colleague’s action once again was one of not taking responsibility for his own actions, because that is what is required. But the history has been, not taking responsibility for your own action; it is always somebody else’s fault.

Even as the Prime Minister has taken action to protect the country and the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago he is saying that is a wrong action. “You have been misled, you have been misadvised”, and even as he is saying out of love and affection that she is the best Prime Minister in the country, he is saying she is taking bad advice from a cabal who is giving her bad advice. And even as he is saying and professing his love and affection for her, he is pointing out your last Cabinet appointment was so bad you created this mega Ministry and give one man all the contracts.

Miss Hospedales: That is right.

Dr. K. Rowley: “He best Prime Minister do him that?”

Miss Cox: That is right.

Dr. K. Rowley: Tongue in cheek.

Miss Mc Donald: Most competent!

Dr. K. Rowley: But what, Mr. Speaker, about him claiming that the action of his removal from the Cabinet was unfair. Listen to what the Prime Minister has said to the country, and I am quoting here from the *Newsday* of April 24, 2013:

“Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar”—which I believe is the same one he is so in love with, right—“on Monday night, pointed out”—so she took

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[DR. ROWLEY]

Friday, April 26, 2013

pains to point out to our people—"that her decision to accept the resignation of Jack Warner as National Security Minister came after her meeting with the US State Department officials."

This is a new twist. This is a new twist. However, the Prime Minister pointed out that she did not act capriciously. It was after careful consideration, and they are quoting the Prime Minister here: "The Prime Minister said, the decision came 'after careful scrutiny of all the facts.'" Yet our colleague pays humongous amounts of money, from that famous money pile, to try and tell the country's children, to try and tell us in the Opposition, to try and tell his colleagues, that he has been unfairly treated by a Prime Minister who acted capriciously on the advice of bad advisors. But why should we be surprised, Mr. Speaker? That is his record, that is his history, never taking responsibility for his own actions, and I say, Mr. Speaker, character matters, and on that basis alone and what we know we should never have found ourselves in this situation that we are in here. [*Desk thumping*]

The Prime Minister goes to tell the *Newsday*, and it is reported as first person speech in the *Newsday*, "After a careful meticulous review of the facts brought before me"—it was he himself last night in that charade that said the Prime Minister is a brilliant lawyer. So, he acknowledges her brilliance. The Cabinet gave her senior counsel within 24 hours of getting up the steps in Whitehall, but the bottom line is, "After a careful, meticulous review of the facts brought before me..."—those are the words of the Prime Minister, "...you will remember I was in Washington and I met with the State department—and having considered all of this..."—the Prime Minister took the action that she took.

Our colleague from Chaguanas West will not accept the action. He prefers to create political instability in Trinidad and Tobago, to damage our economy and damage our social fabric. [*Desk thumping*] And so hell-bent was he to damage our social fabric that he identified the new Minister of Works and Infrastructure as a man who was within one day of going into the Ministry of Works, was making decisions based on ethnic considerations. [*Interruption*] That was part of last night's show. And I took note of that, Mr. Speaker, because that same Member for Chaguanas West was in the forefront of taking verbal action against me. When I came to the Parliament, I think it was last year or sometime, and I said to the Parliament that I went to New York and while I was in New York visiting one of our agencies out there, someone of the staffers came to me and told me that Mr. Ramlogan came to New York and he very quickly was taking issue with the ethnic composition of the mission.

I was reporting what was told to me. Mr. Ramlogan quite properly objected because he said it was not true; he had not been there and he had not done that.

Hon. Member: And you apologized.

Dr. K. Rowley: I at the point said, well, I will check what was said to me. I went and I investigated what was said to me. I received in writing, which I will share with the House, that it was not Ramlogan who had done that and I apologized to Mr. Ramlogan in this House.

Hon. Member: Yes.

Dr. K. Rowley: But I told the House that the written correspondence I had from a senior person in the mission was that the person who did that was a certain “Suruj Rambachan”, Member for Tabaquite.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member, I know that the Motion before this honourable House is about the Member for Chaguanas West, I do not think that we should really bring any other Member into this debate, and you are raising the conduct of a Member in this instance, so I would ask you to refrain from going there and just focus on your recitals and not bring any Member other than the two Members that you have identified.

Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, I raise that in the context of recital number two, the actions of the Member for Chaguanas West, and had I not been interrupted I was moving immediately to point out that here it was, after he was taking a position of not accepting an explanation sometime in the past, he, last night was volunteering to the country his own appreciation of the behaviour of our colleague from Tabaquite, all, Mr. Speaker, in a response to a situation where all we required of him was to take responsibility for his own actions. That is all I was doing, Mr. Speaker.

I am not here today—maybe another day, maybe another day I will take issue with my colleague from Tabaquite, but today, today, I am talking about the Prime Minister who ought not to be oblivious to these things.

Mr. Speaker, in lieu of the fact—should I say, in light of the fact that notwithstanding what flavour is put on it by our colleague who will not accept the work of Sir David Simmons, who prefers, rather than subject himself and his story to checks and cross-examinations, prefers to stay away and then put on a show where he is the only person talking his own story and his own side.

2.45 p.m.

Well, nobody could challenge him on particular points. He cannot, as I gave way to him a while ago, and he chose not to respond, I am sure he will respond after. I hope when he responds he will put us in a position of comfort that no public moneys formed any part of scrutiny of that report of Sir David Simmons, and that the TTFF is in no position to have to account to a court for public moneys, because money is fungible, you know. I know the next thing I will hear is that the Government is only putting \$18 million and it was \$200 million, so the Government's \$18 million went down here. Once the public moneys went into the TTFF account, whether it is \$1, the TTFF is duty-bound under the laws of Trinidad and Tobago to respond and account for public moneys.

Without going, Mr. Speaker, into the matter before the court. I can tell you it took a threat from the judge to officials of TTFF that, if they did not take legal action in context of the submissions of the affidavit those individuals would have been held in contempt of court. And what was the legal action they took in response to that? It was a pre-action protocol to our colleague from Chaguanas West seeking the books and information on the place where public moneys went.

I want to advise my colleagues, particularly, my colleague from Chaguanas West and his friends last night who were talking about "that was long time"; fraud is a crime for which there is no statute of limitation. And that means, if it took us until now to find out that public moneys did not go where they were intended to go and were not used for the purpose for which they were intended, it is as fresh as a daisy.

And therefore, today, I am calling on those who will speak for the Government, based on what is contained at findings in the report of, Sir David Simmons, findings, to commit to the people of Trinidad and Tobago that the Simmons report would be passed to the police, the Integrity Commission and the Director of Public Prosecutions for their urgent action and relevant interest. If the Government of Trinidad and Tobago does not do that today, it will further confirm in the minds of the people of Trinidad and Tobago and the world, that the cabal that runs this country is only pretending and giving lip service to the concept of morality in public affairs.

Mr. Speaker, there is one other point I want to draw, and I draw it in the context of what I say over and over, character matters. As a Member of Parliament, as a colleague of my friend from Chaguanas West, I made sure I stayed home last night in front of my television because he said that the tsunami

was coming. I live on the hill above Glencoe and I felt safe, I stayed home, and I waited. And one of the waves of the tsunami was a wave of somebody surfing on a statement from the *Express* where the main point that was being made by my colleague was that he had said all along that the ownership of the Centre of Excellence was his, and he does not understand why now, FIFA, or anybody is making an issue of that because all along—that was last night's show.

I want to quote for you, Mr. Speaker, from the *guardian.co.uk* of Tuesday May 29, 2012. It is an article written by the Press Association:

“Jack Warner to escape prosecution over alleged Fifa bribery scandal”

And the part is, and I am quoting from the *guardian.co.uk*:

“Lawyers working on behalf of Concacaf”—which is—“the North and Central American governing body, said the centre was owned by two companies belonging to Warner's family, and that he had also arranged for a mortgage to be taken out on the centre.

Warner told local media:”

And I am quoting here:

“I don't own it, so what is all the fuss about?”

How does that statement of May 29, 2012, square with the show last night where we were asked to accept that we were always told that he owns it? I distinctly recall, when I saw this article in the *Guardian* where he was categorically saying, he, and by “he”, I mean, he and his extended family, did not own the Centre of Excellence, and he went on to say, “what is all the fuss about?” Last night I am seeing him saying at last that we should have known all along that he owned it. Mr. Speaker that tells me—and he went on to say, that any idea of him owning it is an action of Blatter and his cohorts to tarnish his image.

I end on a note, Mr. Speaker, what are we to believe? What does this Member want us to believe? The Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago made his appointment, protected this Member, exposed the country to his actions and his foibles, exposed the country to the scandal of FIFA, to the point where today, nothing that goes on in this scandal-ridden issue leaves Trinidad and Tobago and the people of Trinidad and Tobago out of this murky empire.

So therefore, beginning today, with the next speaker, who I presume will come from the Government, we will start the catharsis of acknowledging that something has gone radically wrong and we could begin to step back from the brink that we are on, being known as a people without moral and spiritual values. I thank you, Mr. Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member, if I may advise, I beg to move.

Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move.

Mr. Speaker: This Motion requires a seconder.

Miss Mc Donald: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second the Motion and I reserve the right to speak.

Question proposed.

Mr. Jack Warner (Chaguanas West): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and let me begin by apologizing for being late here this afternoon. But with the rain outside and some other work to finish after last night, I could not be here earlier; my apology, Sir. But, Mr. Speaker, while listening in the car and even while listening here when I arrived, I asked myself what really is there to discuss. In fact, as I sat here this afternoon I asked myself if I did not have a meeting last night then of course there would have been no debate at all, because apparently the meeting last night was the sum total of the substance of the debate. And therefore since that is the case, and since the last speaker, Member for Diego Martin West, continues on his usual fishing expedition, I will try to explain as succinctly as possible, not only last night's meeting, but possibly the genesis of why this debate is here.

But before I start, Mr. Speaker, I want to make it quite clear, absolutely clear for the *Hansard*, that throughout his submission, the Member for Diego Martin West kept saying his colleague from Chaguanas West. Member, I “eh” your colleague. [*Laughter*] I “eh” your colleague, never was and never will. So I want to get that on the *Hansard* absolutely clear—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Seemungal: “He feel you a PNM?”

Hon. J. Warner (Chaguanas West): A PNM? And the point is as time progresses you will understand more and more why I could never be your colleague. But take time, because the hole that one tends to dig for others, he may very well be digging it for himself. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker, the Motion began by talking about my personal dealings, my personal dealings; my private business activities, my private business activities. The very meaning of the term private suggests that it is not public business activities, and as my contribution progresses you will see that some of us in even our private lives have a lot to answer. I do not! I do not! So the emphasis on my private activities, I am saying that I do not understand how based on that there can be widespread—in private, but then you have widespread adverse commentary, censure and inferences, both locally and internationally.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make the point that it would seem to me that my public dealings here are not under scrutiny if I take the Motion as it is. So therefore, my public dealings though I might speak about them en passant, I will put them in the background, since of course the Member for Diego Martin West is so concerned about my private interest, my private business interest.

When this Motion was filed, on April 12, it became very clear to me that this Motion was filed based on a witch-hunt, a witch-hunt which began the very first day I was made a Minister of Government to the present time. And what was the witch-hunt? In my quest for political office I chose to be there. [*Member points to the Government side*] and not there [*Member points to the Opposition side*] That is my right, Mr. Speaker. In fact, as some friends kept telling me. “If you join the PNM it never happen to you.” Well, my friend, I want this to happen to me because I will never join the PNM. [*Desk thumping*]

So, therefore the Member Diego for Martin West—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: “They wishing that.”

Hon. J. Warner:—cast a wide net, a very wide net, and the fact is, he was hoping with this wide net that something would stick. Even as I speak today I want to tell the Member for Diego Martin West that nothing has stuck, and I will develop that a little later. The hope was that somewhere along the line that something, however small, would have been found in the agenda, and therefore the Member for Diego Martin West would be able then to make something out of that. So the “Get Jack Warner Campaign” continues. It began on May 24; it has never stopped. And, Mr. Speaker, I do not want it to stop either. I want to keep them busy, keep them active, because the fact is that I say today, the last laugh will be mine.

3.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, when this Motion was filed on April 12, the Member for Diego Martin West, our last speaker, had no idea what I would have said in Pierre Road last night. So you filed the Motion on April 12, but when you filed the Motion on April 12, you did not know what I would have said on April 25, but you took what I said on April 25 to substantiate what you filed on April 12.

Now, please, please, I mean, “who fooling whom?” “Who fooling whom?” And you come here with all your erudition and your posturing and so on, Leader of the Opposition, and “you so squeaky clean and you living on a hill so that no tsunami could “tackle” you, and 13 days later you take what I say in Pierre Road

to justify and validate a Motion of two weeks before.” [Desk thumping] And your whole debate is based on that. If ever there was an example of a waste of time in a House, this is it. [Desk thumping] You see, Mr. Speaker—[Interruption]

Dr. Gopeesingh: Rubbish Motion. Rubbish!

Mr. J. Warner: “Ah comin to dat just now.” They were banking on the CONCACAF Integrity Report. And before I forget, let me say, very quickly, one of the points the Member for Diego Martin West has raised, that this commission of enquiry that investigated 38 unnamed persons—I “doh” know if he was one—38 unnamed persons; did not investigate Jack Warner, and for a person who went to a court to prove to a court that at an Integrity Commission trial he was not called; he was not summoned, and on that basis, that technicality, he got away—[Interruption]

Dr. Gopeesingh:—for now.

Mr. J. Warner: For now. He went to the court, Mr. Speaker, to prove to the court that they did not call him at the Integrity Commission Enquiry and therefore it is void.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Any fraudulent case is still open.

Mr. Speaker: Member for Caroni East, please!

Mr. J. Warner: I am coming to that. Thank you, Sir—is void and he makes the point, Mr. Speaker, that, of course, as somebody said before, that because they “eh” call him, that is the case.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the commission of enquiry, under David Simmons, wrote me and asked me to come to discuss with them. I said to them, “No problem. I eh going no way. Come and see me if you want to, but at the same time, give me my FIFA pension which you have not paid two years ago.” Mr. Speaker, it is two years now I am entitled to US \$90,000 per year from FIFA for having worked for 30 years in FIFA. When he was still teaching in Roxborough Government Secondary as Dean of Discipline, I was—[Interruption] “Ah coming back to dat just now.” I was, of course, in FIFA for 30 years, Mr. Speaker, and for 30 years because I decided to make a break and say that I want “A” for leader and not “B”, you hold back my pension? Well, “I eh talkin tuh you at all. If you gimme meh pension, ah sing to you if yuh want.”

That is the reason. It is no big—no big, I mean, some hullabaloo thing, as if it is some kind of surreptitious move. I said to them, “I told you I would have left

football two years ago. Why football does not leave me, guys? I done wit allyuh! We blow way, I said, but give meh meh pension”, which, to this day, they have not given me, and Mr. Speaker, I want to say, I have never asked for it.

Those who resigned before me and those who resigned after me got theirs. Nobody in the FIFA has served longer than I have served and nobody in the FIFA has a bigger pension than I have, but they gave those before me. They were compliant. They gave those after me. They were compliant, and they have not given me, and I “eh” asking them!

So to answer that question about, of course—and, in fact, therefore, how could you have an enquiry and a report without speaking to the President of CONCACAF who has been there for 20 years? So you have a report and a CONCACAF President is there for 20 years and you have not spoken to him and you have 38 persons, unnamed—could be all these that came—[*Member points to the Opposition Bench*—and you tell me that is a report that is good and you come to this House, this hallowed hall, you come here to fool people. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker, I will come to that again—a little longer.

Hon. Member: Garbage in, garbage out.

Mr. J. Warner: Mr. Speaker, let me say it quite clearly, the private business interest that the Member for Diego Martin West wants to examine has nothing to do with the business of the State. I will say it slowly. FIFA business, Mr. Speaker, CONCACAF business, has nothing to do with the business of the State, and when he comes and talks about the international outrage, and so on, I did not see any outrage for guys who took State money and fled. I saw no international outrage over Calder Hart, Monteil, over Prevatt and so on. [*Desk thumping*] I did not see any international outrage over Landate. Those were state resources. And before I forget, Mr. Speaker—I have some notes here but I am just, you know—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Indarsingh: Warming up.

Mr. J. Warner: Before I forget, Mr. Speaker, the last speaker said something about the Ministry of Sport gave \$20 million. Well, the Minister of Sport could speak for himself but I will tell you here, it was \$11.7 million and that was not enough for two tours, if anybody knows anything about football and sport. But to know about football and sport, you would have had to give a trophy at some time, or a medal, or a plaque and so on, or go and visit some football match. Let him say if he has that experience and let him tell this House which match he has ever seen in football.

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. J. WARNER]

Friday, April 26, 2013

In fact, Mr. Speaker, during his contribution he spoke about a ticket he bought and he could not, of course, get in and so on. Mr. Speaker, when he was ostracized and marginalized by the PNM, I called him, Mr. Speaker, and I told him, “They told me not to give you a ticket, but I will bring the ticket for you”.

Hon. Members: Ohhhhh!

Mr. J. Warner: “Tell dem I am not talkin’ de truth! Tell this House that I am not talkin’ de truth!”

Hon. Member: “Siddong and leh he tell yuh, nuh. Give him way! Give him way!”

Mr. J. Warner: I called him! And I should say, Mr. Speaker—if he “want meh to sit dong”—I called him. Mr. Speaker, “I jump in meh buggy and I say, ‘meet meh X place. Look de ticket!’” And I come here today to hear the very same Member come here to excoriate me—today! [*Crosstalk and laughter*]

And I will tell you something, Mr. Speaker. When the history is written, you will see, Mr. Speaker, that what he has done me here today, “he will do all ah dem”. [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Member: “And dey know dat, eh? Dey know dat.”

Mr. J. Warner: Mr. Speaker, so I am saying, therefore, what I have done, or even what I have failed to do, has nothing to do with the purse of Trinidad and Tobago; has nothing to do with the breach of any laws of Trinidad and Tobago.

Hon. Member: That is correct.

Mr. J. Warner: Mr. Speaker, I breached no law in Trinidad and Tobago, and I have come here to set the record straight. Not a single law! And talking about allegations, I will come to allegations just now, to tell you that if I, based on allegations, could go to my constituents and ask them to validate me in three months’ time, you do the same for Landate! [*Desk thumping and laughter*]

Hon. Member: They will fire “yuh”.

Mr. J. Warner: And then when you do that for Landate, if they re-elect you, then you have been validated. Do it, “nuh”!

Hon. Member: “He fraid.”

Mr. J. Warner: I will come back to Landate just now, Mr. Speaker. You see, it is difficult, Mr. Speaker, to sit down here and to listen to these things being said, hoping that, of course, you know, because of your histrionics and so on, you will get some headline tomorrow. You could get headlines from Ria Taitt “just so, yuh know”. [*Laughter*] “Yuh doh have tuh do dat! Yuh doh have tuh do dat!”

At the end of the day—I am making the point, Mr. Speaker, that people in this country like to talk. It is the nature in our people to talk, and worse yet, they talk what they do not know, Mr. Speaker. They talk about politicians; they talk about public figures, and, Mr. Speaker, when you hear them talk and if you put the person they “talking about next to them, they doh know de person at all.” That is the country.

I ask anybody in this House here, except the Member for Diego Martin West of course—he is very sanctimonious and holy. But apart from him, ask anybody in this House here who has not been, at some point in time, the butt of criticism from the public, in either a small degree or large degree—anybody, except, of course, the Member for Diego Martin West, Mr. Speaker. Ask anybody here, once you are here, whether at some point in time they had not looked at your private life, however deeply and wrongly.

Hon. Member: Correct.

Mr. J. Warner: I ask anybody here. So what makes me different, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, the fact is this, I will always put my head on a block for what I have achieved for this country, and I challenge the Member for Diego Martin West, even remotely, to achieve for this country what I have done, Mr. Speaker. What I have done!

But I always maintain, you know, I could never have understood—let me say my colleague from in front here. I understand him now. I understand the pain and passion he bore. I understand it now because the fact is, something has to be wrong in the psyche of man to be so everlastingly angry. Everlastingly angry, Mr. Speaker! He would not even “chinks of ah smile”! And you come here to excoriate me. “Ah coming.”

Mr. Speaker, where, I ask, in this House, has there not been somebody making allegations of conflict? Mr. Speaker, the point I am making, if you were to go by allegation, almost this entire House will be empty, based on allegation. The Prime Minister is quite right—and you could say what you want, Member for Diego Martin West, I said last night; I say here again for the *Hansard*, I say again tomorrow, that I love the Prime Minister and she is the best this country ever had. [*Desk thumping*]

I was not drunk last night; “I eh drunk now and ah would not be drunk tomorrow, when ah say de same ting again. So doh tell me about my Prime Minister. Yuh out of place. And she eh act expeditiously. Leh meh put it easier: she eh act quickly.” Well, if Mr. Manning had acted quickly, you would not be here today! [*Laughter and desk thumping*]

Hon. Member: “I eh see dem laughing now. Dey eh laughing now!”

Mr. J. Warner: Mr. Speaker, every criticism, every allegation against me has been in the public domain for the last 20 years. Nothing new! They rewrite, they remodel, they rebrand—yes, rebrand—but it is the same criticism, Mr. Speaker. And by and large, Mr. Speaker, besides those people in the country here, those outside, my biggest problem outside was that I was looked at as the kingmaker in FIFA, for good or for evil. Because in FIFA, Mr. Speaker, I had a block of votes—30—and therefore those 30 votes, depending on if you give my people something, fine.

So I formed the Caribbean Football Union, Mr. Speaker, a very powerful union. Today, it has gone back to the old days where one American has eight chairmanships and a Mexican has six. In my time, you could never have had that. It happened today. At some point in time they will pay.

But the fact, Mr. Speaker, I am making the point to you that there is nothing being said about Jack Warner that is new, and nothing I am saying, Mr. Speaker, which I said last night, is new. Mr. Speaker, there have been no startling revelations in the CONCACAF Integrity Report released one week ago. In fact, some of the contents of the report were quite predictable. If the last speaker, the Member for Diego Martin West, read it at all—114 pages in the report, three were on Jack Warner—I feel a bit hurt, after 20 years. Only three? *[Laughter]* One hundred and fourteen pages, three on Jack Warner, and you come to this House to talk about Jack Warner.

Mr. Speaker, for 20 years in CONCACAF I never signed a cheque in my life. Mr. Speaker, for 20 years in CONCACAF I never banked a deposit of any kind; took a loan of any kind, Mr. Speaker—for 20 years! Check the report and let him say so. “Urrrrr.” *[Laughter]* Check the report and let him say so. The facts are there! The facts are there!

Hon. Members: “HmMMM.”

Mr. Speaker: Please, Members.

Mr. J. Warner: But you see, Mr. Speaker, it is easy in this country, especially when you are in Opposition—it is easy to tear down, to destroy. But build, “nuh”! Build! Construct! Construct!

Hon. Member: “Dey cyar do dat.” *[Interruption]*

Mr. J. Warner: “Laventille, leave meh alone, right?”

Mr. Speaker, as I said again, I called the meeting last night because out of respect for my constituents, I had to go to them to talk to them before coming here.

Mr. Speaker, it is no secret. It is no secret. I said before I feel that I have to go back to be validated by my constituents and that is what I am doing. It is no show! All over the world, or the country, wherever it is, whoever wants to talk about Jack Warner, one thing they will say, that they made allegations, he defended them and he went back to his people for validation. I said so last night and that is why, of course, I am here to answer this today.

3.15 p.m.

So I would not use this Parliament's time, Mr. Speaker, to repeat all those things that are in the public domain. I would not do that, because, as you will agree, it will be a waste of your time and this House's time. But, there are those who are out to get me because they see me as being a threat to their personal aspirations. They see me as being a threat to their personal aspirations, Mr. Speaker.

I could still walk through Laventille, and at the same time, walk through Caroni, but there are some of those who could walk through Laventille but might not be able to walk through Caroni the same way. I could do that! I could still eat with a king in the morning and a vagrant in the afternoon; I could do that. That is my forte. Therefore, to expect that because of who I am, I am a threat to your political aspirations just does not make sense. So whether I used to hold high office in FIFA, whether I used to be CONCACAF President, whether I used to be CFU President, whatever it is, I am saying to you that I remain a humble person.
[Desk thumping]

Mr. Speaker, in this Parliament, the Member for Point Fortin has harassed, and of course, you know what is hurtful? They were her friends, "yuh know", her children. They have harassed my family, my sons who are living miles away in the US, my sons did not escape. If you hear them! When I thought—I said to him, that is "yuh friend", that is "de people you go to and eat and drink".

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: Mr. Speaker, 36(5).

Mr. Speaker: May I suggest, Member for Chaguanas West, that we do not make reference to any other Member of Parliament because this Motion does not refer to any other Member. I would not like any other Member's name to be brought into this debate unless a substantive Motion is being brought against them; so kindly refrain from calling other Member's name, please.

Mr. J. Warner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your guidance, I will be happy to stick to the Member for Diego Martin West. It would take me about two days to finish but I will stick with him, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, the casting of malicious aspersions against my family and me has been going on for the past 20 years. But, Mr. Speaker, the casting of aspersions and allegations against the Member for Diego Martin West in the Landate issue, those allegations did not warrant him to resign, did not say that he was an embarrassment to the Government. What were some of those allegations? Let me go to the Landate report, which, of course, I am sure he would like to forget. I will come back to the points he raised just now.

In the Landate report on page 28, after the enquiry and so on, it says and I quote:

“Nevertheless there was an abundance of evidence that materials and machinery were removed from the Scarborough Hospital site to the Land Date development from 1st October, 2003 to 16th October, 2004.”

That was said, Mr. Speaker.

Dr. Moonilal: Gravel and sand walking.

Mr. J. Warner: “Yuh see?” “Yeah, that is true.”

Hon. Member: Disappeared!

Mr. J. Warner: It is the first time, Mr. Speaker, gravel and sand could walk.
[Laughter]

Mr. Seemungal: “And dais public property!”

Mr. J. Warner: Public property! State funds! Public property on a Landate development owned then by the speaker and his wife. I am told—[Interruption]

Dr. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, 36 (5). I own no Landate in Tobago or anywhere in the world.

Dr. Moonilal: One of your family?

Mr. Speaker: Sustained. Hon. Member for Chaguanas West, I sustained that point so do not pursue it, please.

Mr. J. Warner: Mr. Speaker, if it is here, can I read it?

Hon. Member: Yes, you can read it from—[Continuous crosstalk]

Mr. Speaker: “Yeah, yeah, yeah”—please, Members, I am on my legs, please, please, please. Reference can be made en passant, but we have before this honourable House a substantive Motion against the Member for Chaguanas West made by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, Diego Martin West. What I would like to suggest is that we do not bring the conduct or the behaviour of the Member into question unless we are filing a substantive Motion. So I would like you to be guided accordingly.

I know you are going into that report but I am saying that you cannot dwell too long, en passant and move on, because he is not the subject—that is the hon. Leader of the Opposition—he is not the subject of this Motion; so, please, this is a substantive Motion and therefore we have to stick to the recitals and the resolution. Continue, hon. Member.

Mr. J. Warner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I will do better than that, I would not even use it again. History, at some point in time, will absolve me from what I want to say so that is okay.

Let me go then to the points he raised. I would not use it again, Mr. Speaker, at all. Let me put away all my Landate notes and so on; put all away.

Mr. Seemungal: Give it to the press!

Mr. J. Warner: “Nah, I ent giving nutten’ to the press, man, the press ha enough.”

Mr. Speaker—if I quote wrongly, let me know—I heard from the last speaker, he said—while I was in the car—something about paedophile, if one is a paedophile and one ends up in the classroom as a teacher—did I hear correctly?

Hon. Member: Yes!

Mr. J. Warner: About a paedophile?

Hon. Member: Yes.

Mr. J. Warner: A classroom? A teacher

Hon. Member: Yes, yes.

Mr. J. Warner: What classroom? What age? What teacher? How old is the child? What year? Because, you see, you have a lot of investigative journalists here, you know, and they must investigate. So when I heard this being said about paedophile in classroom and year and so on, it jolted me as if, of course, the Member tried to refresh his memory.

He said also that I misappropriated state funds and FIFA funds. Nowhere have I read anywhere for the last 20 years where I ever misappropriated state funds and FIFA funds, and therefore, it is a figment of his imagination. He said, of course, that I may have been involved in corrupt activities. But, because of the fact that I have been constrained in the Landate report, I would not say anything, Mr. Speaker; I would not say anything about that, except to say that I have never been involved in any corrupt activities, Mr. Speaker; I have never been involved, especially in FIFA and the State.

Mr. Speaker, he spoke at length about the Prime Minister and how, of course, the Prime Minister gave me certain amount of freedom and licence and so on, to do what I want. I do not know of the last speaker's relationship with his Prime Minister. What I do know is of my relationship with my Prime Minister, and Mr. Speaker, it was, is, and will always be, first class. [*Desk thumping*]

He further said, Mr. Speaker, that one should have no licence to disgrace this country and what I did was not a credit to this country. I did not disgrace this country; I put this country on the world map—the smallest country ever. [*Desk thumping*] In the history of world football, no other country this size has ever gone to the highest forum on earth as I helped to do. As I said last night, on the road of doing that, my wife and I had to mortgage our home for \$30,000 then, to repair the team.

The very first world under 16 football tournament, the first ever in the world, was held here in Port of Spain at the stadium. When I asked FIFA to let us have a competition by invitation as a trial run and let us bring 16 countries together—15 plus this country—to have a world competition was the first ever. When I went to the PNM—when, of course, the last speaker was still a Member then in Government—and asked for funding, they gave me \$10,000 the last day of the competition. So, I had to mortgage my house and that competition gave rise to people like Rocke, and Latapy and Yorke and so on; it was that.

Hon. Member: Shame on them!

Mr. J. Warner: Mr. Speaker, between '80s and '90s, there is no other country in CONCACAF that held more youth competitions in this country than Trinidad and Tobago under my watch. I did not come from the roof just so, from the sky, and therefore to tell me that I am a discredit to this country, he does not understand history. I have reached where I have reached in football because of what I have done, not what I have failed to do. Therefore, I resent very much the

fact that I am told that I, of course, am a discredit to this country. There may be other reasons why others are a discredit to this country, but I know I am not; but again, time will tell.

Allegations! Allegations! Allegations! I ask the question: where are they? Allegations, allegations and, Mr. Speaker, because of the tightness of this debate, I wish I could have said some allegations, but I cannot because the debate is so tight, I know you would tell me that I am outside of the recitals. But the allegations are outside there, some as much as 40 years old, 43 years. Out there have allegations. “Ent Vernella?” [Laughter] “Yeah”, they have it there. The fact, Mr. Speaker, is that until we get affidavits and until we get letters and so on, they remain allegations.

So, I am therefore saying if it is good for Tom, it is good for Harry and for Dick. You cannot be selective in allegations. In fact, I was told just now in one of his statements, he said that fraud is not statute barred—I agree—but so is rape and many other crimes. It is not only fraud. Fraud is not statute barred, but it is not only fraud, there are other crimes as well. Mr. Speaker, I am saying in the fullness of time, these things shall be exposed. I could stand and walk anywhere in this land and defend myself, from Roxborough to Charlotteville to Chaguanas; I could do that.

Hon. Member: Roxborough Secondary.

Mr. J. Warner: “I ent calling no school yet, I will do it outside the debate.” [Laughter]

Mr. Speaker, he referred to FIFA as a mafia. Oh my God! FIFA has come to this country and hosted the 2001 World Cup. FIFA hosted the 2010 ladies World Cup. FIFA has given this country numerous courses. FIFA has trained our referees, both male and female. FIFA has helped in several goal projects. FIFA gives this country a million dollars a year every four years. FIFA has been able to take three officers here every year to congresses all over the world, and the list goes on and on. Mr. Speaker, for me to listen to the Leader of the Opposition, one who is aspiring to be Prime Minister, to call FIFA a mafia, it hurts!

Hon. Member: Shame on you!

Mr. J. Warner: I want, on behalf of the international community, on behalf of FIFA, I want to go on record as apologizing for that statement. FIFA is a mafia? Mr. Speaker, when you could be so excessive in your speech, it tells you the person you are. “FIFA is a mafia!” Women’s football, when we had to bring the

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. J. WARNER]

Friday, April 26, 2013

English team here with Beckham and so on, it was FIFA that helped to do that. Beckham sat down in Lever Brothers and coached young children—Mr. Speaker, it is painful, is “a mafia”, because “a mafia”, it suits today’s agenda.

But I would not say much more about the mafia because if I talk about the Mafia I will be going outside of the debate, but I would talk about mafia when I go outside this Chamber, very soon Mr. Speaker. I want to go on record and say again, I apologize to this House and to the international community for what he has said.

3.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, he makes reference to my saying something about the Member for Tabaquite. “Leh meh tell yuh something, leh meh tell yuh something”, we on that side and on this side, there is a bond between us which nobody could break. [*Desk thumping*] “We doh have six so and six so, yuh know, and ain talking, yuh know. We doh have dat.”

Mr. Seemungal: And one outside.

Mr. J. Warner: And because of that bond we are free to “cuss” today and “hug up” tomorrow because that does not affect our relationship. It is not what we say. When I say X is bad or X is good it has nothing to do with the person, it may have to do with a deed, an act or a word but not the person because the bond is there, it is tight, it is taut and “doh come into dat”, Member for Diego Martin West. Leave Suruj and me alone. That is our business. So, to come here and try to make some kind of a schism, if you can, between yourselves you will fail, you will fail, because on that side, I repeat, and on this side, is a bond that cannot be broken. [*Desk thumping*]

And, of course, in his debate he says that he is so happy that I have been relieved of my Cabinet status as from today. First of all, not today, last Sunday. I want to correct you for the *Hansard*, and even then I want to tell you, for the first time let me tell you what you did not know. Two weeks ago, when I offered the Prime Minister my resignation, she refused it. It was not Sunday, it was two weeks ago and she said: “Let me consider”. I said: “Listen, Prime Minister, do not let me be a distraction for you. Ah say: Prime Minister, they will come after me and after me they will come after Anand and after Anand, Prime Minister, they will come after Anil and then they will end up with you because they will feel emboldened. But let me, Prime Minister, offer it to you and then, of course, I will deal with them. I could deal with them.” And she said: “Jack let me consider it.” And she did not take it because I can deal with them one by one. [*Desk thumping*]

And I will be happy to do so outside of this Chamber because I have no rules and regulations and Standing Orders then. “Is free sheet, free sheet”.

Mr. Seemungal: “Free vooping”.

Mr. J. Warner: So, to come to tell this House the Prime Minister released me from her Cabinet, so what? Manning did the same to you, but where mine was done with honour, where mine was done with honour, yours was done with dishonour.

Mr. Seemungal: Disgrace. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. J. Warner: Mr. Speaker, my Prime Minister did not call me a “wajang” to release me.

Mr. Seemungal: And a raging bull.

Mr. J. Warner: She said I am a contributor. She never called me a raging bull; she called me a doer and an achiever. And you come in here today to gallery with some histrionics about Jack Warner. I could take care of myself, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Roberts: And not on cell phone.

Mr. J. Warner: You know something Mr. Speaker? It may be a good thing I came late to this debate, you know, because the fact is, he says I am—“what he say?”

Mr. Seemungal: A pack of rubbish.

Mr. J. Warner: Yes, I am not taking responsibility for my own action. I am not taking responsibility for my own action. But let me ask you, without talking to the book: did you take responsibility for yours? I am not reading, Mr. Speaker. I am not reading. “Ah not reading.” All I ask you: did you? I did not take care of my own, fine but I would do it today. I am doing it today. I did it last night to my constituents and I would do it today when I leave this House and thank the Speaker for having me here and give him my letter of resignation, I will do it. But this, I am asking you: Did you do it for yours when this came out? Did you account for your responsibility when it came out? “Who yuh trying tuh fool? Who yuh trying tuh fool?” I know what is responsibility and I know what is right and wrong and I know what is in keeping with the best parliamentary tradition. And the fact remains that I verily believe that what I am doing here is the correct thing to do in the circumstances, to resign from the Parliament, go back and face the people. If they want me, come back and say: yes I am back, and if not, I go and fish.

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. J. WARNER]

Friday, April 26, 2013

So at the end of the day, do not tell me about not taking responsibility for my own actions. I have and continue to do that. And I said that my removal from the Cabinet was unfair. Quote again: he said his removal from the Cabinet was unfair. Me? I said so? Every Cabinet Member is my friend. We quarrel, we “cuss”, we hug, we kiss and so. We take a beverage. So what? We disagree. But not because we disagree means that we are disagreeable. [*Desk thumping*] And that is what we call a fraternity, as it were.

I feel, again, I feel I was unfairly treated by the Prime Minister based on bad advisors. I never said so. I never said so. But even if I said so, so what? So what? In your case you had bad advisors who were highly paid and they all living in Miami now. And if we have bad ones here who are lowly paid we are better off. So what?

And then last but not least, no not last, I am told—I mean, Mr. Speaker, I have to sit here and to hear the Member for Diego Martin West. I was the Secretary of the Trinidad and Tobago Football Federation in 1974. In 1990, when we “loss” to the US I left because I felt I had done enough and I went to form and to build CONCACAF.

Before 1990, nobody in this country knew what CONCACAF was. In fact I want to ask the Member for Diego Martin West, what the acronym means but I would not embarrass him this afternoon. But I was secretary there from 1974—1990, 16 years, and after that I was a special advisor. I was one of their main financiers. People like Ellis Clarke, Ameer Edoe all these guys would come in and help, help us, and we built the TTFF. And, therefore for me to hear today that the Member for Diego West said the TTFF sent me a pre-action protocol letter. Never did! Never did! Last time, never did! But it sounds good for the press. Tomorrow's headline: Rowley says Warner get pre-action protocol letter. Because you thirst after headlines, especially in one of the newspapers. I do not need that. By my deeds people will know me. And if you do not know my deeds, just walk through anywhere in Chaguanas West.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the speaking time of the hon. Member has expired.

Motion made: That the hon. Member's speaking time be extended by 30 minutes. [*Dr. R. Moonilal*]

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: You may continue, hon. Member.

Mr. J. Warner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This whole purpose of this debate is intended to embarrass our Prime Minister. That is the debate you know. Because having gotten Jack, then they going after the Prime Minister or Anand and so on. That is the purpose of the debate, to embarrass the Prime Minister, hoping that the Prime Minister, of course, will be sitting there and hearing all these things and she did not act expeditiously. They did not even understand that when the time of the debate the Prime Minister had booked to travel a long time ago. My Prime Minister is not afraid of anybody in the Opposition. And to give the impression that she is not here and she should be here—here to do what? Any one of us could take you all on, any one of us.

Mr. Seemungal: Any time any day.

Mr. J. Warner: Any time, any day, anywhere, anyhow.

Dr. Gopeesingh: That is right, Jack.

Mr. J. Warner: So who tell him about she should be here? A Prime Minister who has faith in her troops “doh hah tuh be here. So I doh know how dat come your business.”

Dr. Gopeesingh: She has troops behind her.

Mr. J. Warner: Then he leaves Trinidad now and goes to the *Guardian* in the UK. He goes to the *Guardian* in the UK and UK *Guardian*, he says, on May 29, 2012—he says, oh boy—that I said, I quote: About the Centre of Excellence, I do not own it. Mr. Speaker, he said I said that in the *Guardian* in the UK. In the UK *Guardian* I said so on May 29, 2012. But on July 19, in the local *Express*, which he reads so voraciously every day, July 19, in this newspaper here, an article by Ian Prescott where he says it was given to the Caribbean, the Warner family, he did not read that, so he is a selective reader, Dr. Rowley.

Mr. Speaker: The Member for Diego Martin West.

Mr. J. Warner: And, therefore, I am making the point again that is the level of debate we have here, where you bring one side, hopefully you try, of course, to gain points.

Mr. Seemungal: “He vooping.”

Mr. J. Warner: “I doh even know who in the *Guardian* wrote the article. Who wrote the article? I do not know, it did not say. It might be Jennings for all yuh know.” I am not surprised but the fact is I know who wrote the article in Trinidad in the *Express*, a fella called Ian Prescott. Go and check it. I had copies

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. J. WARNER]

Friday, April 26, 2013

last night. Since you were watching TV last night you would have seen a copy on the TV. "I did not even know I coulda have you glued to the TV for two hours. I very good boy, very good."

Mr. Speaker, so on May 29, 2012, I said that. And I produced documents to my constituents that go back as far as 1996, to show where I have signed documents from the President of FIFA giving/bequeathing the Centre of Excellence. I produced documents where I showed, of course, he wrote me, I wrote him, he wrote, I wrote him and so on, and I produced it last night for people to see for the first time because I am tired with the kind of allegations and insinuations. I was of the belief that after last night and the Member who sat in front the TV for two hours, would not have come here today to make these allegations, but apparently, of course, there may have been a power shortage up on the hill.

Mr. Seemungal: Tsunami.

Mr. J. Warner: What does all this say? All that this says is that at the end of the day, I have nothing to answer. My private business activities are mine, as are his, no doubt. "I ain calling anything because dey say I would be out." But I am sure again, my activities are mine as are his. Mine are not documented as yours. That is all. That is the only difference, right.

Mr. Speaker, my conduct and my actions have never caused widespread adverse commentary. I can show you reams of newspaper where I have gone to over 175 countries, where my actions have been always of the highest level. I have no alleged criminal offences, neither here or anywhere else, and neither censure as well.

Furthermore he says in his Motion:

"Whereas in the face of the overwhelming evidence of his unsuitability as a Minister of Government..."

Mr. Speaker, between the Member for Diego Martin West and me, who is more unsuitable?

"Whereas in the face of the overwhelming evidence of his unsuitability as a Minister of Government..."

Mr. Speaker, I say I am very, very, very much highly suitable, highly qualified but I cannot say the same for the Leader of the Opposition, the Member for Diego Martin West. And the time will come, the time will come, I am putting it on the

Hansard, when this country will know in truth and in fact how suitable he is. Mr. Speaker, hear me again, the time will come very soon when this country will know, taking him from the cradle to now, to know how suitable he is, even to be a Member of Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I want to thank you for being here for these past 10 months in this new regime. I spoke to my executive in Chaguanas and my, of course, constituents last night and I crave your indulgence just to say thanks to you and to your staff and my colleagues on that side and those on this side.

3.45 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a wonderful experience. I believe that in the best form of parliamentary tradition, I should step down from Parliament. I believe that in any event if my service to the people is good, has been good, and if the party of which I am a Member for life—let me tell them, “I doh care”—for life—“doh come, doh come to try to get me you know”—[*Laughter*] So, I believe that if time is short, who knows what three months will bring, I may be back, but if I am not back, I want to tell you thanks for everything. As I leave here I will go up to the tea room and also thank the ladies for the service they have given me over these past months. It has been a nice experience, Mr. Speaker.

I thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for Diego Martin North/East. [*Desk thumping*] Member. Member for Diego Martin North/East, my apologies to you. I did indicate earlier on in the proceedings that the hon. Acting Prime Minister has a statement to make, and the House did agree that when the hon. Acting Prime Minister arrived, we would address that question.

I would now take this opportunity to call on the hon. Acting Prime Minister to make his statement at this time. [*Desk thumping*]

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

**Public Service Association
(Auditing of Accounts)**

The Acting Prime Minister and the Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development: (Hon. Errol Mc Leod): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Permit me to briefly address an issue which has caught the attention of the media in recent weeks in relation to the auditing of a prominent trade union's accounts. We have been reading and hearing calls being made for the intervention

PSA (Auditing of Accounts)
[HON. E. MC LEOD]

Friday, April 26, 2013

of the Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, with regard to an audit of the accounts of the Public Services Association of Trinidad and Tobago, and concerns about members of the said union not being able to view the accounts of their association. [*Mr. Warner exits the Chamber*]

I wish to shed some light on this issue particularly with respect to my role and jurisdiction as Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, in trade unions' financial affairs and their internal operations. From the outset, Mr. Speaker, permit me to clarify that the Trade Unions Act, Chap. 88:02, governs a range of issues material to the functioning of trade unions, including their registration, cancellation, disillusion, amalgamation, management of finances and inspection and auditing of accounts.

Section 8 of this Act provides for the appointment of a registrar of trade unions, whose duties I wish to make quite clear to this honourable House. In accordance with the Trade Unions Act, Mr. Speaker, the Registrar of Trade Unions is required to keep a register of all trade unions registered under the Act, and discharge all duties required by the Act and its regulations. Some of these duties include: to register trade unions and their rules, and to hold copies of registration documents submitted by trade unions; to issue a certificate of registration to such trade unions as have adequately complied with the statutory requirements for registration; to withdraw or cancel the certificate of registration issued to any trade union in the circumstances outlined in section 21 of the Trade Unions Act.

This includes circumstances where the withdrawal or cancellation of the certificate of registration is requested by the trade union; where a certificate of registration is obtained by fraud or mistake, or where the trade union has wilfully and after notice from the registrar, violated any of the provisions of the Trade Unions Act; to appoint a fit and proper person for the auditing of the trade union's accounts and to cause the books, accounts, vouchers, documents, securities and funds of a trade union, to be inspected by a fit and proper person at any time. In summary, the registrar's role is largely administrative in nature, as the post is not required by statute to intervene in either the internal operations or the overall efficacy of trade unions.

I wish to emphasize that the Registrar of Trade Unions in Trinidad and Tobago is not, I repeat, is not empowered by law to make any pronouncements concerning the internal management and affairs of unions, except in specific circumstances as outlined in section 33(2) of the Act, which applies to misuse of funds in furtherance of political objects in breach of union rules.

I wish to add that the post of Registrar of Trade Unions was vacant from October 01, 2010 to January 28, 2013 due to the resignation of the former registrar, and some challenges in sourcing persons who were qualified and willing to fill the post as configured presently. The new registrar was appointed with effect from January 29, 2013, this year.

One of the first tasks being undertaken by the Registrar of Trade Unions, is to promote compliance with section 29 of the Trade Unions Act, which requires that all registered trade unions submit by June 01 of every year, a general statement of the receipts, funds, effects and expenditure, showing fully the assets and liabilities at the date, and the receipts and expenditure during the year preceding the date to which it is made out of the trade union. In simple terms, all registered trade unions are required to submit to the Registrar of Trade Unions an annual financial return by June 01 of each year for the preceding year.

With regard to the Public Services Association of Trinidad and Tobago, the last financial return was submitted to the Registrar of Trade Unions in 2008. By letter dated March 05, 2013 the newly appointed Registrar of Trade Unions informed the said union of the appointment of an auditor to audit its books and accounts for the year ended December 31, 2011 and December 31, 2012.

On this note, Mr. Speaker, I must express my concern with the lack of reporting by trade unions to the registrar in accordance with the Trade Unions Act. In many instances, the reporting time frame is not adhered to and there are delayed responses from the unions. This practice does not augur well for sound governance of trade unions, and is in contravention of the Trade Unions Act.

On the matter of the intervention of the Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, where members of a union are denied requests to view the union's accounts, it should be noted that neither the Minister nor the Registrar of Trade Unions has any authority to give directions or instructions in this regard as this is a matter relating to internal operations and governance.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago does not in any way get involved in the operational affairs of any trade union. However, for persons so interested, attention is drawn to section 16(1), (2) and (3) of the Trade Unions Act which specify the responsibilities of treasurers, or similar officers such as trustees or members of a trade union.

With regard to financial reporting within the union and the course of action that can be followed where such breaches occur, Mr. Speaker, it has been

PSA (Auditing of Accounts)
[HON. E. MC LEOD]

Friday, April 26, 2013

recognized that there are some antiquated provisions associated with the Trade Unions Act which came into being in 1932 and amended on two occasions, the most recent being in 1980. We are at this time reviewing certain key pieces of labour legislation as part of a programme of modernizing these laws. While our top priority at this time is the review of the Industrial Relations Act, Chap. 88:01, we have also recognized the need to examine the Trade Unions Act particularly in respect of the powers of the Registrar of Trade Unions.

Apart from the provisions of law in respect of trade unions, Mr. Speaker, I am personally interested in seeing that these bodies uphold transparency, efficiency and accountability. Additionally, our Government is committed to upholding the principle of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, which are fundamental principles embodied in the decent work agenda, and will continue to work to ensure that the enabling environment exists for the exercise of these and other rights at work.

I take this opportunity to indicate that this Government is moving forward towards the establishment of a social dialogue process in Trinidad and Tobago, which will involve meaningful discussions and consultations among Government, workers' representatives, employers' representatives and civil society on issues of national importance. The success of this initiative will depend on the strengths and contributions of the individual partners and, therefore, it is in all of our interest to see all of the partners function well and managing their affairs effectively.

We also anticipate that these issues all relate to governance at all levels. We also anticipate—I beg your pardon—that issues related to governance at all levels, including the execution of fundamental rights by all persons, will form the subject of one of our conversations and action planning in the social dialogue framework.

Before I close, Mr. Speaker, I wish to call on all trade unions to take note of the several developments that are affecting the manner in which collective bargaining can be conducted. At the governing body of the International Labour Organization, where Trinidad and Tobago represents the Caribbean at present, and where the direction and policy articulation for the ILO takes place, it is quite clear that tripartite partners, Government, labour and employers need to approach their relative place in all deliberations, and indeed in the economy with great care. Dialogue has to be paramount in all dealings for myopic, selfish or idealistic positions by any of the three parties, would serve the interest of no one. We must see the bigger picture, and the bigger picture can be none other than Trinidad and Tobago.

I wish to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to address this issue before the Parliament, which is an issue indicating a fundamental relevance and importance to the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

Thank you very much. [*Desk thumping*]

**PRIME MINISTER'S FAILURE TO ACT
(RE: FORMER MINISTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY)**

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for Diego Martin North/East. [*Desk thumping*]

4.00 p.m.

Mr. Colm Imbert (*Diego Martin North/East*): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I took notes during the contribution of the last speaker, the Member for Chaguanas West. He made some statements, Mr. Speaker, that can only be described as astonishing. I will repeat these statements. [*Interruption*] I was stunned, yes. To use the words of the Prime Minister, I was stunned.

The first statement that the Member for Chaguanas West made is that he is entitled to a pension from FIFA in the amount of US \$90,000, which is over TT \$500,000 per year; but he complained that he is not getting his pension from FIFA and he said that persons who came before him and persons that came after him are getting their pension, so why is he not getting his pension of US \$90,000 and, I repeat, that is over TT \$500,000 per year.

But at the beginning of the life of this Government, Mr. Speaker, there was controversy with respect to the private business activities of the Member for Chaguanas West and, in fact, that is the first recital in the Motion. It was a big issue in Trinidad and Tobago as to whether the Member for Chaguanas West could function effectively and properly as a Cabinet Minister while receiving income from FIFA or being employed by FIFA or holding a position in FIFA; and one after lynchpins in the argument used to support the contention that, yes, he could hold the two positions was that he was not in receipt of any income from FIFA. The year 2010, and now we hear that he is entitled to a pension of over \$500,000 per annum. [*Interruption*] So pension is not income. Okay, I am so sorry. Yes, Mr. Speaker, tell the pensioners that; that what they are getting is not an income. [*Interruption*]

The second most astonishing statement—you see, Mr. Speaker, will you ask Members opposite to quieten down, please?

Mr. Speaker: Yes, please Members. I support the point made by the Member for Diego Martin North/East. Would you allow the Member to speak in silence, please?

Mr. C. Imbert: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, the utterances from hon. Members are consistent with an article written in the daily newspapers, and you see this Motion speaks to commentary both locally and internationally on the activities, the conduct, the actions of the Member for Chaguanas West, in his capacity as the former Minister of National Security; in his capacity as a FIFA Vice-President; and in his capacity as a businessman. And what I just heard over there illustrates the point that was made in the article.

Let me go straight to the point because this deals with the first and second recitals, and I will read them:

“Whereas the private business activities of the Member for Chaguanas West and former Minister of National Security have been the subject of widespread adverse commentary, censure and inferences, both locally and internationally which were in conflict with his position as a Minister of Government; and

Whereas the actions and conduct of the former Minister of National Security have been the subject of widespread adverse commentary, censure and inferences, both locally and internationally; and...”

Then it goes on to say:

“Whereas in the face of the overwhelming evidence of his unsuitability...the Prime Minister did not act expeditiously”—and so on.

Mr. Speaker, let me go straight to some local commentary. Just give me one second, I will find the commentary, which is in a local newspaper and was written by a columnist by the name of Michael Harris, Mr. Speaker. I notice the people are laughing. I notice the people are laughing, but before I get to the commentary by Michael Harris, let me deal with a commentary by Raoul Pantin because you see the Members Opposite they really wish to bury their heads in the sand, Mr. Speaker and Mr. Raoul Pantin, in the *Express* of April 23, 2013, had this to say:

“National Security Minister Jack Warner’s resignation from the Government on Sunday was about the only acceptable response after that Concacaf report on financial wheeling and dealing by Mr. Warner during his stint with that organisation.

...for a while it didn't look like it was going to happen...Mr. Warner kept insisting on his innocence, even declaring at one...point that he was 'incorruptible'."

And as a good Catholic, Mr. Speaker, "incorruptible" has a religious connotation and it means "not prone to death and decay". It also means "too honest to be corrupted by taking bribes".

"His first reaction to the Concacaf report...was to dismiss it as 'malicious and baseless'."

But I have found the article written by Michael Harris. It is entitled, "The Pit and the Pendulum", April 21, 2013, written a little while before the Member for Chaguanas West's resignation as the Minister of National Security, and Mr. Harris goes as follows— and this is to deal with the first and second recitals in the Motion where I am producing evidence, Mr. Speaker, that the Member for Chaguanas West is the subject of widespread adverse commentary both locally and internationally.

One of the most astonishing things he said, in effect, is that that is not true; that he is not the subject of widespread adverse commentary locally and internationally. I took it down. I think the Minister of Health had better start checking on the Member for Chaguanas West.

Let me read Michael Harris:

"I hope that I am not breaching any copyright laws by borrowing for my headline to this article the title of the famous short story by Edgar Allan Poe."

And the title is *The Pit and the Pendulum*.

"...with the latest published findings of the Concacaf Integrity Committee into the dealings of Mr. Warner during his tenure as president of that body there is no space left for this Government, and Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar in particular, to duck and hide."

And that goes to the Motion itself, that in the face of overwhelming evidence of his unsuitability, the Prime Minister did not act expeditiously. So here we have a columnist, Raoul Pantin, more or less said the same thing, saying that there was no space for the Prime Minister to duck and hide.

"The sharpened blade of the pendulum is swinging faster and is reaching lower than ever and it is only a matter of time before heads begin to roll."

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. IMBERT]

Friday, April 26, 2013

He goes on to say:

“Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar reportedly declared that she was ‘shocked’ by the report and stated, ‘I have action to take’. But we should be cautious about giving too much credence to her professions of shock and her promise of action.”

Mr. Speaker, I am simply reciting this in the context of the second and first recitals to prove that there is widespread adverse local commentary.

“...the fact is that we have been here before and our Prime Minister and her Government have shown themselves to be adamantly unwilling; or unable; to lift a finger against Mr. Warner.

It was less than a year ago that The Court of Arbitration for Sport...in its published judgment in relation to allegations of bribery against former FIFA presidential candidate Mohamed Bin Hammam, declared about Mr. Jack Warner; that he was ‘an unreliable witness,’...‘appears to be prone to an economy with the truth,...’...‘his own actions are marked by manifest and frequent inconsistency’ and...‘There is ample evidence that Mr. Warner ran a secret US-dollar bank account in which he commingled CFU and personal funds.”

I am simply reading from local—this is local commentary, which I interpret to be adverse.

“In the face of all of this...the Prime Minister maintained that she could not act until she was presented with evidence of wrongdoing by Mr. Warner who she insisted was entitled to natural justice and was to be presumed innocent until found guilty. It was...mooted by spokespersons”—I am sure the Member for Oropouche East was one of them—“for the Government that the matters enquired into by the”—arbitration panel—“had to do with FIFA business and had nothing to do with the affairs of the government of Trinidad and Tobago.

Such protestations in defence of Mr. Warner are manifest balderdash. In the first place it is an egregious folly to have a man who has been deemed by one of the highest and most respected international courts as untrustworthy, unreliable and lacking in integrity, in the government of the country and it is even more outrageous to make that man the Minister of National Security.”

This is local commentary by Michael Harris written in the *Express*. You did not read it? [Interruption] I am merely dealing with the Motion. The Motion—

Mr. Speaker, let me explain. The Motion bases its argument on the fact that there has been widespread adverse commentary on the actions, conduct, utterances and activities of the Member for Chaguanas West, and these actions, this conduct, these utterances and these activities have attracted such negative publicity that it was incumbent upon the Prime Minister to act with dispatch long ago and in the face of this overwhelming commentary, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister did not act expeditiously.

So the Member for Chaguanas West has said—I took it down; I was astonished that he—[*Interruption*] “Yeah”, he said it—allegations have been in the public domain for 20 years; nothing new.

Mr. Speaker, just this week we learned that the Australian Football Federation alleged that it had sent money in 2010. That is not 20 years ago, Mr. Speaker, that is three years ago. The Australian Football Federation has alleged that it used taxpayers’ money and sent millions of dollars to CONCACAF, which were misappropriated. That is not 20 years ago and that is certainly new, and I do not think the Australian taxpayers are going to take that lightly. I am certain that there are going to be calls from Australia for an enquiry into that matter and demands for tracing of that money to determine exactly where Australian taxpayers’ money that was supposed to be used for CONCACAF, where it went, Mr. Speaker.

So that when I hear that there is nothing new, Mr. Speaker, the CONCACAF report speaks about things that happened 2007; things that happened in 2006, 2005; it speaks about things that happened in 2010, 2011. How on earth could all of these things that are now being revealed in this report be described by anyone as allegations that have been in the public domain for the last 20 years and nothing new.

The hon. Member of Parliament also said there were no startling revelations in the CONCACAF Integrity Report. He actually said that: no startling revelations in the CONCACAF Integrity Report, but his own Prime Minister, who he has some kind of love/hate relationship with, was stunned, was shocked and eventually had to take action. Why, Mr. Speaker? In her own words, Jack Warner’s problems were a distraction to the Government, Mr. Speaker. But if there were no startling revelations in the CONCACAF Integrity Report, then why is the hon. Member for Chaguanas West sitting in the last seat in this Parliament? Why is he not over there? Why is he not in front of me where he used to be, occupying pride of place next to the hon. Prime Minister, if there were no startling revelations in the CONCACAF Integrity Report?

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. IMBERT]

Friday, April 26, 2013

Mr. Speaker, he also said that the report has 114 pages and only three pages deal with Jack Warner. Mr. Speaker, I tell you the Minister of Health, you need to check him out, you know. He may be heading for a breakdown because, Mr. Speaker, this is the report. And I went through and I did not highlight all of the pages that deal with the Member of Parliament for Chaguanas West.

Here we have (iv), he appears in five places; (v), three places; (vi), about 10 places; (vii), four places; (viii), two places, Mr. Speaker. I have gone through—as you will see, everywhere I have highlighted—recent statements by Jack Warner, Mr. Speaker: failure to disclose the proper financial statements by Jack Warner.

4.15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Chaguanas West is mentioned on almost every page in this report, Mr. Speaker. If he is not mentioned directly, he is mentioned by inference and he is mentioned by reference to the actions and activities of other people that he is alleged to have condoned, and overlooked and colluded with, Mr. Speaker.

What normal person would look at a report like this that where he is mentioned on virtually in every single chapter—right through the report from beginning to end—and say he is only on three pages? My goodness, Mr. Speaker! Something is—Mr. Speaker, I am concerned, something is wrong; something is very, very, wrong.

The hon. Member also said—and I am coming back to the Michael Harris article in a short while because it will deal with the comments across the floor by the Member for Tobago West. He says that the report says he never took a loan or banked a cent. He actually said that, Mr. Speaker. I had to write it down almost in capital letters, that the Member for Chaguanas West said that this report—the Integrity Committee's Report of Investigation said that he never took a loan or banked a cent that was due for CONCACAF, and all of them banged the table.

Hon. Member: He read the wrong report.

Mr. C. Imbert: I do not know what report he was reading. I do not know, but the word “fraud” and the words of “commingling of funds” and “secret bank accounts” and “loans” are right through this report, Mr. Speaker, and all of these things are attributed to the Member for Chaguanas West. The point I making is that this ties in to the Motion.

This is not my report, this is a report by three distinguished gentlemen: Mr. Simmons who is the former Chief Justice of Barbados; you also had a judge who

was a judge in the United States at the federal and the state level for some 30 years, Mr. Speaker, and you also had—I will just read out the members of this committee, because there is a view that this is only the views of Mr. Simmons. He was simply one member.

The other member was Judge Ricardo Urbina. He served for 31 years as a judge in both the federal and local courts in the district of Columbia in the United States. He presided over numerous high-profile cases, issued over 1,000 memorandum opinions during his tenure on the bench. Before he became a judge, he was an associate professor of law at Howard University School of Law.

The third member, Ernersto Hempe, retired partner and partner in charge of risk management and ethics at PricewaterhouseCoopers Inter-America. He currently serves as general coordinator of various projects in Panama, financed by the Inter-American Development Bank, and is an advisor to the Superintendent of Banks of Panama.

So, these are not Mickey Mouse men, Mr. Speaker. This is not only a former Chief Justice of Barbados; this is a judge from the United States with a distinguished record, and a person who has served with distinction in the international accounting and audit field. But let me go back to the article written by Mr. Harris:

“Mr Warner has played fast and loose with the provisions of the Constitution and with principles of transparency and good governance. We need only to remind ourselves that it was Mr Warner who called out the army to remove the Highway Re-Route protesters; that it was Mr Warner who threatened to ban the release of crime reports and statistics by the police; that it was Mr Warner who declared to Dr Kublalsingh on his hunger strike that he had better kill himself quickly...it was Mr Warner who was accused of resuscitating the Flying Squad without sanction and in secret; to make the point that Mr Warner’s perverse disregard for all ethical standards was not confined to his role in FIFA.

The question...is why? Why in spite of all the international evidence and condemnations which have come before, why in spite of all the internal governmental breaches of good conduct...has the Prime Minister not acted against Mr Warner and what is there to lead us to believe that she is ready to act now?

Speculation abounds...It is said that Jack has files on Kamla, it is said...”

Mr. Speaker: Member—[*Interruption*]

Mr. C. Imbert: I am just reading an article here, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: No, no, no. When you read these things you must take responsibility for them. You cannot use the newspaper to impugn the character of a Member. So, we cannot hide behind Harris. No, what I am saying, you are quoting him. He is not in this House. And I just want to make it clear to all Members, if you are quoting from newspapers, you take responsibility when you speak and you quote newspaper reports, and there are consequences.

Mr. C. Imbert: What?

Mr. Speaker: So, I am just advising Members; I am just advising Members, be very careful, and when you quote you take responsibility for your quotation. Okay, continue.

Hon. Member: That is a new one.

Mr. C. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, I mean, I have no choice but to abide by your ruling, but I do not agree with it. I have to abide by your ruling, but I do not agree with it. I am simply presenting evidence [*Desk thumping*] of adverse commentary. [*Desk thumping*] These are not my words. I am making it abundantly clear, [*Desk thumping*] pellucidly clear, Mr. Speaker, these are not my words.

Dr. Moonilal: This amounts to disrepute.

Mr. Speaker: “Yeah, yeah.” All I am saying to the hon. Member—hon. Member, all I am saying is that the Prime Minister’s conduct is not in question in this debate.

Hon. Member: In the what?

Mr. Speaker: The Prime Minister’s conduct in the context of where you are going is not in question here. The hon. Leader of the Opposition was very careful when he was speaking about that. You are now quoting a source, and then in quoting that source, you are impugning the character of a Member of Parliament and that Member of Parliament’s conduct is not in question in the context in which you are quoting. I am just advising you and all other Members, do not go down that route, please.

Mr. C. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, I understand what you are saying that you are—[*Interruption*—you be quiet, you are not the Speaker—in that I should be careful not to make adverse references to persons who are not the subject of this

Motion, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, let me clarify my position. The Motion itself—let me put the Motion back into the record:

“...in the face of overwhelming evidence of his unsuitability as a Minister of Government, the Prime Minister did not act expeditiously with respect to the former Minister of National Security.” [*Desk thumping*]

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am not trying to score any points here. I am simply dealing with the Motion as I consider the Motion should be dealt with, and I will abide by your ruling whenever you make them, Mr. Speaker. You are in charge here. That is a fact! [*Laughter*] But let me move on to the second page of this— [*Interruption*—no, it is a fact, he is in charge. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Speaker, the article goes on to make some very strong statements about the Government; very strong statements about the Government, and gives an opinion as to why the Prime Minister did not act expeditiously when she got the report from the arbitration panel on sport, and why she did not act immediately when she got the report from the integrity committee of CONCACAF.

But let me go back now to the statements made by the Member. Let us go back to the statements made by the Member. He alleged that the integrity committee report says that he never took a loan or banked a cent. Now, let me deal with that specifically. I do not have to go that far.

Hon. Member: He said that.

Dr. Khan: He said he never did it. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. C. Imbert: I do not have to go that far, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not know—Mr. Speaker, the crosstalk; the crosstalk, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Members, allow the hon. Member to speak, please, in silence. Continue, hon. Member.

Mr. C. Imbert: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the report in many places speaks to the commingling of funds and the taking out of loans by the Member for Chaguanas West and unauthorized loans. Mr. Speaker, we do not have to go to the report, you know, we can go to the words of the hon. Member for Chaguanas himself because after he did his dog and pony show or song and dance, Mr. Speaker—that is just an expression—yesterday in Chaguanas, he published his speech—and, Mr. Speaker, he published his speech, Mr. Speaker—and I have a copy of his speech.

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. IMBERT]

Friday, April 26, 2013

Not only did he pay for it to be broadcast on channel 3 and on channel 6—*[Interruption]*—no, I have it here. I have it here, Mr. Speaker. Not only did he pay for it to be broadcast live on channel 3 and live on channel 6, but he also published his speech which has found its way into the daily newspapers.

Mr. Speaker, when you read what the hon. Member actually said—Mr. Speaker, I will quote from it verbatim in a short while—the hon. Member actually said to his constituents last night that he took a loan for the Centre of Excellence. Those were his exact words. I heard him myself *[Desk thumping]* and it is in his published speech.

Dr. Browne: Shocking!

Mr. C. Imbert: So, which one am I supposed to believe?

Mrs. Mc Intosh: Which Jack?

Mr. C. Imbert: Which Member of Parliament for Chaguanas West am I supposed to believe, Mr. Speaker? Am I supposed to believe the one that spoke on television last night, and the one that is published in the newspapers today? Am I supposed to believe that one or am I supposed to believe the one who came into this Parliament today and said that the report says that he never took a loan or banked one cent, Mr. Speaker? Who am I supposed to believe? I found it, Mr. Speaker. I found the document.

I mean, when you do a Google search on this hon. gentleman, *[Laughter]* you get—I cannot count how many thousands of hits that you get. You get thousands of hits. And, Mr. Speaker, it is not fly-by-night organizations. It is not people who have some quarrel with the hon. Member, you know.

I have an article here from *the Guardian* of England headlined: “Jack Warner was ‘accessory to corruption’ says leaked Fifa report”. I a headline here from *The Economist*: “Jack Warner resigns—Here we go again” and, of course, they pour scorn on the alleged resignation. I have an article here from the *Mail Online* of England: “Warner set to be witness in corruption case”, and I just downloaded maybe 2 per cent of the articles that exist outside.

The Wall Street Journal: “Jack Warner resigns; FIFA Drops Bribery Probe”. Mr. Speaker, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist*, *the Guardian*, *The Mail*—*[Interruption]*

Hon. Member: That is not—*[Interruption]*

Dr. Browne: That is not widespread.

Mr. C. Imbert: That is not widespread, Mr. Speaker? And I am just in one hemisphere! I am just in one part of the world, you know, Mr. Speaker. This thing has been reported in Indonesia; it has been reported in Korea; it has been reported in Singapore; it has been reported in virtually every country in the continent of Africa; in every part of India this thing is reported; it is reported in China, Mr. Speaker; it is reported in Russia; it is reported in Scandinavia. [Crosstalk]

Mrs. Mc Intosh: On the moon! [Laughter]

Hon. Member: But not in the UNC!

Mrs. Mc Intosh: But not in the UNC; not in the UNC. [Crosstalk]

Mr. C. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, you know—

Dr. Browne: *Sunshine* newspaper!

Mr. C. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, some of the commentaries talk about the denial of the Members opposite. In fact, a lot of the commentary, the local commentary talks about the wilful denial, the avoidance—[Desk thumping] and the Minister of Health would know what I am talking about [Desk thumping]—avoidance is a medical term—the avoidance by Members of the Government of reality; the denial of reality. “Things are staring them in de face.” When you have articles—when you have prestigious magazines like *The Economist*—[Crosstalk]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member, hon. Member. Hon. Members, I think it is a good time for us to pause and have some tea. This sitting is now suspended until 5.00 p.m.

4.30 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

5.00 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for Diego Martin North/East. [Desk thumping]

Mr. C. Imbert: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Member: [Inaudible]

Mr. C. Imbert: That is okay, you are suffering from denial. [Laughter] Mr. Speaker, during the break, I went on the computer and downloaded a copy of the report of the Integrity Committee into the investigation of matters relating to CONCACAF. I did so, Mr. Speaker, because I wanted to use a very useful tool that is available if you are using a word processor or a software programme that deals

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. IMBERT]

Friday, April 26, 2013

with reading and words, and I put in the word “Warner”, and I asked the computer to tell me every single page that “Warner” appeared on, and how many times he appeared. [Interruption] Mr. Speaker, what is it?

Mr. Speaker: Please! Please, Members, allow the Member.

Mr. C. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, when I hit page 36, I had crossed over 200 times the “man” name had been mentioned, and I gave up after page 36. So this is why I am asking, in all good conscience, I am asking the hon. Member for Barataria/San Juan, check up on your colleague, because, Mr. Speaker, he said that in the 114 pages of the CONCACAF report, only three of the 114 pages deal or refer with him.

Hon. Member: “Yuh lie.”

Mr. C. Imbert: That is what he said. As I said, I got tired when I hit page 36; that is after pages 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, coming down the road.

Mr. Speaker, he also said, another astonishing statement, and I did not have the information at hand at the time, but he said he never took a loan or banked a cent, and he said the report says that he never took a loan or banked a cent. So I put in the word “loan”, and I asked the computer, search for the word “loan”, and it starts around page 26 and continues in great detail, thereafter. On page 26 of the report—and this is the CONCACAF Integrity Report of Investigation, it states:

“From 1996 to 2006, CONCACAF committed at least US \$25,950,00 to the construction and development of the”—Centre of Excellence—“The funds were secured by Warner through loans provided by FIFA directly to CONCACAF and in one case by means of a third-party loan to CONCACAF guaranteed by FIFA. The loans were to be repaid through offsets against future disbursements of funds that FIFA was expected to allocate to CONCACAF. Ultimately, CONCACAF repaid the loans by surrendering its share of certain...FIFA World Cup proceeds and”—other—“FIFA...grants that were available to fund CONCACAF development projects.”

Now, you need to understand was it happening here. This building, this facility up in Macoya, which gets a lot of mention in this report, adverse mention, and adverse mention associated with the Member for Chaguanas West, the construction of this facility was financed through loans, but all of the loans were repaid by others.

FIFA repaid some of the loans, some of the loans were repaid by grants, but the report states, after that, the ownership of the facility resided in companies owned by the Member of Parliament for Chaguanas West. So this is a very serious allegation that is being made that US \$30 million—it is a lot of money,

Mr. Speaker, that is almost TT \$200 million—were sent by FIFA and other related football organizations for the construction of the Centre of Excellence on the understanding—and this point is made throughout the report that the facility was an asset of CONCACAF, and it was financed through loans that were ultimately repaid by others. And at the end of the day, the Member for Chaguanas West, according to the report, after all these loans were repaid by others, ended up with the ownership of the land and the facility.

The report also goes into, in great detail, the money that was transferred to CONCACAF over a period of time, not just for the construction of the Centre of Excellence, but also for the funding of the operation and expenses of CONCACAF, and it makes a clear statement that the funds that were sent by CONCACAF for the funding of that facility and the payment of expenses, ended up in a bank account that was in the name of the Member for Chaguanas West. It makes an allegation, a finding—let us use the word “finding”—that the Member for Chaguanas West commingled his personal funds with funds coming from CONCACAF.

So that funds came from CONCACAF and ended up in bank accounts controlled and in the name of the Member of Parliament for Chaguanas West. I mean, it is there on so many pages. I do not think it is necessary for me to get into all the details of all the loans and the transfers of funds, and the various accounts that the money went into, but the fact is the report has made a finding that significant sums of money, millions of dollars left FIFA, left other football organizations, left CONCACAF and ended up in bank accounts owned or controlled by the Member of Parliament for Chaguanas West. Yet, he makes this astonishing statement that he never took a loan or banked a cent.

That is what I am saying, you know, take a close look at this guy, something is wrong, Mr. Speaker. He also said:

Nowhere have I read, for the last 20 years, where I have misappropriated state funds.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is a burning controversy right now where there is an allegation, it was in the *Express*; the *Express* ran a five-section series on this matter where it is alleged that \$100 million of taxpayers’ money—now, I am not saying this, but these reports appeared in the *Express*. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, in your spare moments you might have had a chance to glance at them. These reports indicated that \$200 million was provided for the funding of the “Road to Germany” in 2006, of which at least \$100 million came from taxpayers’ funds,

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. IMBERT]

Friday, April 26, 2013

and \$100 million has gone missing, and these articles alleged that it went missing into bank accounts owned or controlled by the Member of Parliament for Chaguanas West.

So when he says that he has never read for the last 20 years, that he has misappropriated state funds, well then, “doh read at all”, because I mean this has been a series in the *Express* for the last two weeks: front page, page 2, page 3, a whole series of articles—and this is not in Parliament where parliamentary privilege applies, you know, this is outside there in the public domain, where people are giving accounts of the trail of the money, they are tracing the money, where the money went, how much money and so on, yet this gentleman says he has never read that he has misappropriated state funds.

Well, I would love to know what happened to the \$200 million that was provided for the “Road to Germany” and the funding of our “Soca Warriors,” bid in World Cup 2006. I am even told, Mr. Speaker, I was even provided with a cheque number, that every cheque from LOC Germany 2006 bore one signature: Jack Warner.

Hon. Member: “Hmm!”

Mr. C. Imbert: This is what I am told. I have been given a cheque number: account number 1365168, February 01, 2008, payable to Mount Irvine Bay Hotel signed by Jack Warner in the amount of \$123,827.

Hon. Member: What more they want than that?

Hon. Member: Who is the advisor?

Mr. C. Imbert: Another account, Mr. Speaker, September 2009, payable to CNL first-class services, \$91,200. LOC Germany, account number 1365168, August 08, 2008, payable to TTF, \$250,000.

They are saying that every single cheque for LOC Germany was signed by Jack Warner. Now how can that be true—because this is just information that I am getting—how can that be true if the gentleman “say he never bank” one cent? So if the hon. Member for Chaguanas West never bank a cent, then where did all this money come from? And I have just read out some of the information that has been presented to me as I am speaking in this debate.

Mr. Speaker, the Motion speaks about—by the way, Mr. Speaker, how much more time do I have?

Mr. Speaker: In terms of your first 45 minutes, you have three more minutes.

Mr. C. Imbert: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker let me just switch subjects now. The hon. Member of Chaguanas West—and you see this Motion speaks about the actions and conduct of the former Minister. The former Minister told us in the House today that the bond between Members of the UNC or the People’s Partnership—I am not sure what he was saying—is unbreakable, “We are free to cuss each other today and hug up tomorrow”. Now, Mr. Speaker, if that works for them, well good for them, but that makes absolutely no sense within an environment of any kind of management, any kind of collective responsibility system, any system of Cabinet responsibility. How could you have the Member saying, “We are free to cuss each other up today and hug up tomorrow”?

Mr. Speaker, when I get it, I am going to read from comments made by the hon. former Minister, comments that were published in his speech at Chaguanas last night, and this deals with his actions and his conduct. In that speech—I will find it, do not worry—the hon. Member for Chaguanas named three Members of the Cabinet who were conspiring against him, and he indicated that he had met with the hon. Prime Minister and asked the Prime Minister to give him some time with respect to his resignation.

He said that when he spoke to the Prime Minister, he was of the opinion that the Prime Minister—I found it—was in agreement. So let me deal now with the actions and conduct of the Minister, and before I get to that part about him maligning members of his own party and Members of his own Cabinet, I go to the part where he talks about the Centre of Excellence and CONCACAF, and these are his words:

By 1996, I could not take it anymore so I went to Dr. João Havelange and I asked him for a US \$6 million loan.

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

Motion made: That the hon. Member’s speaking time be extended by 30 minutes. [*Mr. N. Hypolite*]

Question put and agreed to.

5.15 p.m.

Mr. C. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, thank you. These are the words of the hon. Member for Chaguanas West:

“...so I went to Dr. Joao Havelange...I asked him for a \$6 million US...to open a Centre of Excellence in T&T”—dis is de man who say he never take a

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. IMBERT]

Friday, April 26, 2013

loan.—“so that I could lift the level of football in the Caribbean and ultimately the CONCACAF. I also decided I would use my influence to increase the CONCACAF allocation of slots for the FIFA World Cup...By 1997, I had taken the loan and I bought the premises of Metal Box and Lever Brothers through two companies which I formed and I also bought lands from Tricon.

But having now bought the land there was nothing I could have done in terms of structure...I went back to Dr. Havelange and told him...I want the loan”—this is de loan that he say he never get—“to be converted into a grant...by letter dated May 26, 1998, I wrote to Dr. Havelange thanking him for converting the FIFA loan into a gift to the CFU and Jack Warner.”

Of course this mysterious evidence could not find its way into the deliberations of the integrity committee, because these mysterious letters, although they are referred to, no one seems to be able to get a copy of all these documents.

Let me go to the actions and conduct of the Minister and why he is unsuitable to be a Minister in the present Government. He actually went on to say:

“So the Centre of Excellence was built, first by a loan that was given to Jack Warner”—these are his own words—“the Centre of Excellence was built, first by a loan that was given to Jack Warner that was converted into a grant and by further assistance from Dr. Havelange after whom I named the Centre.”

That is why I am asking the Minister of Health to check up on this “fella”; but let us move on.

The statement continues:

“...at no point in time have I ever kept the ownership of the Centre of Excellence a secret. As late as July 19 2012 in a press briefing, Ian Prescott from the *Express*...asked me about the Centre of Excellence and I answered him truthfully...What did I say?”—and he went on and spoke about it.

He said:

“Up until the year 2000, there is not a single document that suggests that the Centre of Excellence was the property of FIFA or the CONCACAF. How come all of a sudden it is now the property of CONCACAF?”

He is saying that when he spoke to that reporter in 2012, he made it clear that he owned the Centre of Excellence, and he said prior to that there was not a single document that suggested that the Centre of Excellence was the property of FIFA.

What does the adverse commentary on this international report have to say?

“The Committee concluded that Jack Warner committed fraud against Concacaf and FIFA in connection with the COE in two ways.

First, Warner secured funds from FIFA and Concacaf by falsely representing, and intentionally creating a false impression, that the land on which the COE was developed was owned by Concacaf when he knew that it was in fact owned by his own companies.

Second, Warner induced FIFA to transfer funds that were intended for development of COE to himself personally by falsely representing that bank accounts to which FIFA should send the funds were Concacaf accounts when he knew that in fact he controlled them personally.”

Hon. Member: What!

Mr. C. Imbert: “Dis is de same man who say he never took a loan and he never bank a cent.” But this report says that he secured funds from FIFA and CONCACAF and he induced FIFA to transfer funds intended for the Centre of Excellence to himself personally by falsely representing that the accounts were CONCACAF accounts when he controlled them personally.

The report continued:

“The Committee also concluded that Warner committed fraud and misappropriated funds that were sent by (FFA) to Concacaf for development of the COE, and that he breached his fiduciary duties to Concacaf through fraud and misappropriation of funds.”

But the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, the report states that for 10 years Mr. Warner had represented that the Centre of Excellence was an asset of CONCACAF—for 10 years. When the accounts were presented by Mr. Blazer and Mr. Warner at the annual general meetings of CONCACAF, for 10 years Mr. Warner misrepresented to the delegates of CONCACAF that the Centre of Excellence was owned by CONCACAF. That is in here, and they have details. They speak to the meetings, they could give you the dates. They have gone through the minutes of the meetings. There were over 40 meetings in that period, and they say that in 27 of these meetings the Centre of Excellence and its financing and its ownership were raised, and not once did Mr. Warner indicate that it was not owned by CONCACAF.

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. IMBERT]

Friday, April 26, 2013

In fact, he gave them the clear impression that the Centre of Excellence was owned by CONCACAF. Yet this gentleman tells us that there is not a single document. So what about the audited accounts that he submitted to the CONCACAF annual general meetings, in which it was stated to be an asset of CONCACAF? But he says:

“There is not a single document that suggests the Centre of Excellence was the property of FIFA or Concacaf.”

So an audited statement presented by his accountant to CONCACAF for 10 years in a row, states that the Centre of Excellence is an asset of Concacaf. This was also misrepresented to our First Citizens Bank, and the people there may have some questions to answer, because they gave a loan to entities that were not authorized to borrow money and not authorized to receive money, and the money was dissipated. But this same gentleman says that there is no document that suggests that the Centre of Excellence was the property of CONCACAF. Ten years of published accounts submitted by him, where he says it is the property of CONCACAF, he is now saying it is not so.

Let us go on to his actions and conduct:

“At last Sunday’s meeting, I told the PM that in order to give her peace of mind that I would resign on Friday, April 26, 2013, thereby giving me enough time to tie up some loose ends...as well as to discuss the SOFA Bill”—whatever that is—“a Bill to which I had serious objections.

Our Prime Minister is a very brilliant legal mind and I do believe she followed my presentation and the facts. Following my presentation, the Honourable Prime Minister advised me that she will consider my resignation offer.

I then left the Prime Minister’s residence with the intention of going to a puja in Tunapuna but upon coming outside of her office I saw three MPs lurking outside the room”—talking about his own people; three of his own “MPs lurking outside the room”.

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: “I sure is not Tabaquite.”

Mr. C. Imbert: He continued:

“and I knew then that everything I had said to the PM would have been in vain.”

I mean, this is English you know. So he is saying that the three MPs conspired against him and also that the Prime Minister was not persuaded by him, but

persuaded by these three Members of Parliament. I see the Member for Oropouche East is smiling. He is smiling. I am not imputing any improper motives.

Hon. Member: You are allowed to smile.

Mr. C. Imbert: I simply noticed that the Member for Oropouche East was smiling. I did not say he was one of the lurking MPs; that is for him to deal with. [*Desk thumping*]

“The rest is history. I was called out of the puja by my security detail to call the Prime Minister who then advised me that she had reconsidered and she would prefer to accept resignation now.” [*Crosstalk*]

So three lurking MPs conspired to confuse the Prime Minister to get him to resign right away.

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: Who were they?

Mr. C. Imbert: He continued:

“Friends, it is easy to fight external enemies like the PNM...but the hardest fight is to strike a blow against internal enemies and I have had to fight against my internal enemies for too long. We cannot win as a party if a Cabinet Member...”—listen to this.

Miss Mc Donald: Were you one of the lurkers?

Mr. C. Imbert: There is a clue as to identity of this one:

“We cannot win as a party if a Cabinet member bears so much malice as to deprive me from telling my side of the story by instructing CNMG to cancel the coverage of tonight’s meeting.” [*Crosstalk*]

Well it has to be either the Minister of Information or the Minister in charge of state enterprises, one of the two, because nobody else is authorized to give instructions to CNMG. [*Crosstalk*] But it is true, Mr. Speaker, I accept through you, what the Hon. Leader of the Opposition is saying, in this Government they have no rules, so anybody could tell CNMG—these are not my words.

Mr. Roberts: There is no Minister of Information.

Mr. C. Imbert: Whatever, communication. Mr. Speaker, through you, I will repeat this for the benefit of the Member for D’Abadie/O’Meara:

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. IMBERT]

Friday, April 26, 2013

“We cannot win...if a Cabinet member bears so much malice...”—listen to the words—“as to deprive me from telling my side of the story by instructing CNMG to cancel the coverage of tonight’s meeting.

We cannot win as a party if within one day at the Ministry of Works & Infrastructure we are threatening to change communication departments in the Ministry because of the ethnic composition.”

That is a clear accusation of racial behaviour against someone who has gone into the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure for one day. “He is saying this bol’, bol’, bol’, you know,” and then comes back and says that “we could cuss each other today and hug up tomorrow”. So you accuse one of your Cabinet Members of being a racist, you accuse one of your Cabinet Members of instructing the State television station not to cover your meeting, you accuse three Members of Parliament of lurking and conspiring to get rid of you, but that is “yuh cuss somebody today and yuh hugging them up tomorrow”. What kind of ethics, what kind of morality is this? What kind of ethics and morality is this?

Hon. Member: The love boat.

Hon. Member: It is terrible. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. C. Imbert: Not like this. I never accused anybody of being a racist. Not me.

Hon. Member: We do not have that here.

Dr. Gopeesingh: That is not true. You went against Dr. Rowley in your election.

Mr. C. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, they could bleat all they want. They could bleat. They could bleat; this is a completely different situation. This is a Member of Cabinet who has been forced to resign under very difficult circumstances, who is now accusing sitting Members of the Cabinet of being racist and sitting Members of the Cabinet of instructing the State television station not to cover his meeting.

“We cannot win...if as a Government people’s jobs are lost because of their closeness to Jack Warner.

When these things begin to happen it is because some of us are misinterpreting the responsibilities given to us and when large portfolios like two mega Ministries are placed under one man’s control.

It sends the wrong message not only to the person in charge but also to the national community...when one’s race or ethnicity can be punished because of the historical patterns of some of us.”

These are the statements, the things this man is saying. He has been forced to resign from the Cabinet because of widespread allegations, findings, reports of fraud, of corruption, of misappropriation of funds, of theft of public funds, of theft of private funds, of theft of football money, because of widespread allegations and reports and commentary, adverse inferences and so on.

The gentleman has been forced to resign, and he retaliates by saying that one of his Cabinet Members is racist, that another one is victimizing him, that three of them are conspiring against him, “one get a Ministry dat too big, he should never get dat Ministry”, and then he says that he is going to resign his seat as a Member of Parliament and he is going to contest on a UNC ticket.

Now he is no longer a Member of the executive of United National Congress. “So he running de UNC even though he is no longer”—the hon. Member is no longer Chairman of the UNC, but he is now in charge of the screening committee of the UNC. [*Desk thumping and laughter*] So he is instructing the Prime Minister, the political leader, instructing the executive, instructing the Member for Oropouche East, who I believe holds some position in that party, that as his resignation takes effect tonight, he is going to be the candidate for the constituency of Chaguanas West. So the whole screening process would have been a farce, and he is in charge. He is out, but he is in.

Hon. Member: He will be contesting. “He get a new contest.” [*Crosstalk*]

5.30 p.m.

Mr. C. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, you see it goes back to the Prime Minister because the Motion deals with the Prime Minister’s delay in acting expeditiously with respect to the Member for Chaguanas West. I have an article here from the *Express*, August 26, 2012, headlined: “Partap Fired”:

“Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar acted swiftly last night when she fired Collin Partap as Minister in the Ministry of National Security, rendering him a backbencher,...

The Prime Minister’s decisive action came hours after Partap’s detention for not taking a breathalyser test.”

Now the matter is before the courts. The fact that the matter is before the courts there is a presumption of innocence until proven guilty. [*Crosstalk*] You hush. [*Crosstalk*] Mr. Speaker! Mr. Speaker! Mr. Speaker!

Hon. Member: Ahhh [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. C. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, who is charge of this—[*Interruption*]

Dr. Gopeesingh: On a point of order. It is before the courts.

Mr. C. Imbert: Who is in charge?

Dr. Gopeesingh: 36(2).

Mr. Speaker: All right. Let us avoid the crosstalk, please. The Member is speaking, I do not think that we should be interrupting a Member unless we rise, as you have risen. Hon. Member for Diego Martin North/East, as you rightly said this matter is before the court, and I would ask you not to go too much into that matter.

Mr. C. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, the point that I was making was that in that case the Prime Minister acted immediately. There was no presumption of innocence. There was no question of evidence and waiting to hear what had happened, and hear the other person's side of the story; "just fired de man one time!" So that was a situation where the Prime Minister acted swiftly and decisively, did not bother to wait until the outcome of the matter.

September 20, 2012:

"Breaking News Volney Fired.

Justice Minister Herbert Volney was tonight fired by Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar for his role in engineering Cabinet's approval for, and the President's proclamation of Section 34 of the Administration of Justice..."

So, Volney fired.

Newsday; May 11, 2011:

"King Falls.

Prime Minister, Kamla Persad-Bissessar yesterday fired Mary King as Planning Minister and a government senator after being advised by Attorney General Anand Ramlogan that a serious conflict of interest had arisen with respect to the award of a \$100,000 contract for website development..."

So King fired, decisively; Volney fired, decisively; Partap fired decisively. [*Crosstalk*] Then, of course, I am hearing, I am being prompted there, we had the demotion of one of the Tobago MPs [*Crosstalk*] because of allegations of abuse with respect to the use of a credit card.

I read from the *Express* of April 21, 2012 “Alligators’ in Kamla’s Govt”. Well, Mr. Speaker, just the headline, I am not expressing any opinion on anyone.

“There are ‘alligators’ in Prime Minister’s Kamla Persad-Bissessar’s Government.

This is the view of the much-maligned economist Mary King...

She suggests that the yardstick used by the PM to deal with her alleged misconduct has been absent from dealing with other Government ministers.”

‘There have indeed been many allegations of massive impropriety and corruption by this government, so much so that a minister could publicly acknowledge that he instructed a board to hire certain people without even a murmur from the watchdogs in government...’

This matter was examined by an organization called GOPAC, [*Laughter*] Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption. They submitted a report.

“The report contextualises King’s case in relation to her fellow ministers, namely Works Minister Jack Warner and Transport Minister Devant Maharaj. It observed that Warner had faced public and international disgrace over the FIFA bribery scandal but that he remained a Member of T&T’s Cabinet. It pointed out allegations of impropriety which have been levelled at Maharaj during his almost one year stink in public office.

‘These are serious allegations against Ministers of State in Trinidad and Tobago that do not appear to bring a response from the Prime Minister...’ There does not seem to be (any) balance by the government who punished Mary King... There have been no allegations of corruption against Mary King, only allegations of a conflict...”

Mr Speaker, you see—[*Crosstalk*] please, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Member for Caroni East, please allow the hon. Member to speak in silence.

Mr. C. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, “If dey cyar take it”—I mean that is what all the columnists—the point is that when the Prime Minister had to deal with the Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla, she acted. When the hon. Prime Minister had to deal with the former Minister of Planning, she acted. When she had to deal with the Member of Parliament for St. Joseph, she acted. When action had to be taken

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. IMBERT]

Friday, April 26, 2013

against the former Minister of Health and Ambassador to Geneva, action was taken. In all of these situations, action was taken, and this has not escaped persons in Trinidad and Tobago who look on at these things.

You see, what the Motion speaks to is widespread adverse commentary. If you google Jack Warner you get one million hits, and over 500,000 of these hits are adverse. In fact, there are few people in the world who attract such adverse commentary as the Member of Parliament for Chaguanas West.

You see the problem with hon. Members on the other side is that they live in a little cocoon, a little world of their own, they talk to themselves, they prop up themselves, they believe whatever they say. A man could say the most outrageous things today, but if it is going to threaten the stability of your party, then you forget that by tomorrow. A man could call you a crook, a man could call—
[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: A racist.

Mr. C. Imbert:—you a bandit, he could call you a racist today, but tomorrow, if it is going to threaten the stability of the Partnership, [*Crosstalk*] “dey hug up and kiss”.

Hon. Member: Not me! [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. C. Imbert: There is a blog written by a fella called Phillip Alexander.

Mr. Roberts: Oh, wow!

Hon. Member: “Oh, gawd!”

Mr. C. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, you see their reaction. So Raoul Pantin writes a critical argument.

Hon. Member: Okay.

Mr. C. Imbert:—the hon. Member for Oropouche East say, “He still alive?”

Dr. Moonilal: I meant Dennis. So I did not mean it—[*Interruption*]

Mr. C. Imbert: Whatever! Michael Harris, a Tapia member, certainly not a PNM, writes a scathing commentary about the issue surrounding the Member of Parliament for [*Crosstalk*] Chaguanas West and the inaction of the Prime Minister; they dismiss him as disgruntled. The entire world press, virtually every country in the world views the Member of Chaguanas West as an international

pariah. The gentleman is even afraid to leave the country because who knows what will happen if he leaves the protection of the territorial borders of Trinidad and Tobago. You have local people, it does not matter who they are, Mr. Speaker. We are looking at the quantity of adverse—it does not matter. You have to give everybody a hearing, Mr. Speaker. You have to give everybody a hearing.

The point Mr. Alexander made [*Crosstalk*] we need to be reminded of the following. He is dealing with facts, you know, that is what they cannot handle.

“On May 10th 2011 the appointment of Government Senator and Minister of Planning... Mary King was revoked by President Maxwell Richards. On August 25th 2012 Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar acted swiftly when she fired Collin Partap.

On September 20th 2012 Justice Minister Herbert Volney was fired by Prime Minister... Bissessar.

Now contrast and compare those three above with this:

‘Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar is seeking official corroboration of the information in the Reuters FBI probe story in which National Security Minister Jack Warner and his son Daryan are mentioned’, according to the PM’s office. This statement was issued yesterday by the Office of the Prime Minister...in response to queries about the international Reuters story, headlined ‘FBI has co-operating witness for soccer fraud probe.’ ”

Dr. Moonilal: Reuters.

Mr. C. Imbert: “Reuters”, Reuters it does not matter.

“Why such a sudden and drastic change to the Prime Minister’s previously demonstrated response to allegations of misconduct, especially in a situation that carries the seed for such widespread humiliation simply based on the personality in question? Surely she is aware that to waffle here on this most serious of issues is to remove all doubt from an already reticent and suspicious electorate that she is in fact not in control of her Cabinet...

Regardless of Warner’s position in the party.... at this point she is still the Prime Minister...and is bound by her Office to carry out that duty responsibility. She needs to be told in no uncertain terms that to do otherwise, to quibble over issues or circumstances, to attempt to deflect, misdirect or distract...is to willfully and knowingly commit political suicide.”

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[MR. IMBERT]

Friday, April 26, 2013

Now you could say he is a foolish man. You could say he writes nonsense, it does not matter. He is one of the vast array of commentators outside there, and everything he said there made perfect sense, Mr. Speaker, [*Crosstalk*] and it goes to the Motion itself.

“Be it resolved that this Honourable House express its disapproval of the failure of the Prime Minister to act expeditiously to take appropriate action to protect the image and interest of the people of Trinidad and Tobago which are being consistently damaged by the actions and business of the Member for Chaguanas West...”

It is also necessary to read into the record because hon. Members opposite—
[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Four more minutes “eh”.

Mr. C. Imbert: No problem. Hon. Members opposite have a tendency to hide from the truth. I have in my possession the arbitral award by the court of Arbitration for Sport published by the Court of Arbitration for Sport—July 19, 2012, and this is what they had to say about the Member for Chaguanas West:

“Mr. Warner appears to be prone to an economy with the truth. He has made numerous statements as to events that are contradicted by other persons, and his own actions are marked by manifest and frequent inconsistency.

Most significantly, he made a statement...before the FIFA ethics committee, declaring that no cash gifts had been offered, a claim that is directly contradicted by the video evidence of his statement on May 11, 2011, when he referred to the gifts that had been given the previous day.”

And these are Mr. Warner's words:

“The cash envelopes were given to you” because (Mr. Bin Hammam) said he could not bring the silver [tray], some silver trinkets...and something with Qatari sand. We do not need Qatari sand....Put a value on it and give the countries, and the gift you get is for you to determine how best you want the use it...

Whether you want to pay salaries, whether you want to pay rent, it is for development... [*Crosstalk*] Because as I said before I did not want it to appear that it would buy votes.

...the most majority of the panel concludes that Mr. Warner is an unreliable witness and anything that he has said in relation to the matters before the panel is to be treated with caution.

...the majority of the panel finds it difficult to place any reliance on any statement that he (Warner) has made, whether in the form of a witness statement or in anything he has said to a third party and which is before the panel in the form evidence provided by that...person.

...the majority of the panel regrets it is unable to place any...weight or reliance on any statement made by Mr. Warner, or alleged to have been made by him, in the assessment of the facts of this case.”

This is the Court of Arbitration for Sport, it is not a PNM—it is not a subcommittee of the PNM, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Member: The Acting Prime Minister of Trinidad.

Mr. C. Imbert: This was, as I said—I read out the date of this finding, this is a judgment of a court of record; this is July 2012, but here we April 2013. “Since dat, all kinda kankatang an bacchanal has occurred.”

The Member for Chaguanas West has appeared, as I said, in every newspaper or in newspapers in every single country in the world, except maybe North Korea because they do not allow newspapers of that type. Probably North Korea and maybe one other country [*Crosstalk*]—

Mr. Speaker: One more minute again.

Mr. C. Imbert: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Adverse commentary since the findings of the arbitration for sport have appeared in newspapers in virtually every country in the world. As I said, we heard most recently about the Australian Federation saying, “whey de money gone?”

Therefore I join with the Leader of the Opposition, the Prime Minister has failed miserably [*Desk thumping*] to take action. She has ducked, she has “ran”, she had hidden, she has dodged, she has failed miserably to take action, and I join with the hon. Leader of the Opposition to express disapproval of the failure of the Prime Minister to act expeditiously to protect image and interest of the people of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for Oropouche East and Minister of Housing, Land and Marine Affairs.

The Minister of Housing, Land and Marine Affairs (Hon. Dr. Roodal Moonilal): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I join the debate on this Motion—the Motion filed by the hon. Member for Diego Martin West and Leader of the Opposition that speaks to several issues pertaining to the Member for Chaguanas West, but also to the Member for Siparia, the hon. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. DR. R. MOONILAL]

Friday, April 26, 2013

Let me acknowledge for the record that we are dealing today with a Motion that was amended a few hours ago. It is a Motion that appeared on our desks with red and that signifies that the Motion was amended, changed within the last few hours before Members arrived at the Chamber. Mr. Speaker, in terms of the changes, a couple are very clear. There is a reference to the Member for Chaguanas West and also former Minister of National Security which is a fact, but the one that I took note of is that the Member for Diego Martin West had to amend his Motion scrambling to be relevant today—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: Oh, yes.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: He had to amend his Motion as he scrambled to be relevant to put that the Prime Minister did not expeditiously, with respect to the former Minister, take action. He had to take his pen and scratch off that the Prime Minister has not taken any action to date. So in the wee hours of the morning I imagine the Leader of the Opposition took his pen and was adjusting the Motion because of the action taken by the hon. Prime Minister. [*Crosstalk*] So he expeditiously amended his Motion.

5.45 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, this Motion, to use a Latin term, is otiose. The Motion is otiose; o-t-i-o-s-e, derived from otiosus. It is otiose, meaning that the Motion serves no practical purpose, it has no point, it has no reason, it has no purpose, it is null and void and futile.

Mr. Speaker, the Motion is otiose, not that the mover is equally otiose. [*Interruption*] Mr. Speaker, the Motion before us had to be amended trying to be relevant. Well, you know, I must say something at a personal level, this Motion is not about the Member for Diego Martin West and I recognized that, and throughout my contribution I will draw a line and I will not speak to the Member for Diego Martin West. It is not a Motion on him. At a later date we can bring a substantive Motion on the conduct of the Opposition Leader, but this is not for today. [*Interruption*]

But you see, Mr. Speaker, I would have thought that if anyone in this House, anyone, would have had an inkling of understanding—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Roberts: “Um-hmm.”

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:—about allegations against a Member, and action taken on allegations, it would have been the Member for Diego Martin West.

Mr. Roberts: Correct.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: The Member for Diego Martin West was embarrassingly and humiliatingly fired on the basis of allegations. I could have come to this House and read article after article about adverse commentary on the Member for Diego Martin West, which I will not do. It is not a Motion about the Member.

But you know if it is one person I thought would understand that you cannot easily take action on the basis of allegations, it is the Member for Diego Martin West. This Member served with us, and I remember that day when we assembled in Parliament and when I looked to the front I could not see him, when I looked to the back I saw him and he indicated to all of us, he said, “I know where my place is”; he was fired two hours ago. It was based on allegations. The Member had to go to the court, use his money to try and defend himself and clear his name and his family as well, because his own colleagues had invested a lot of money trying to send him to jail, and there were enormous allegations.

Hon. Member: And speech in Parliament.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Yes, there were enormous allegations. At the Ministry of Housing, I said it before, they spent almost \$5 million trying to jail him. They could have built houses with that, but that was probably more important for his colleagues at the time to put him in jail than “to build house”.
[*Crosstalk*]

There have been allegations stalking this Member for years, whether it is Tanteak, or National Quarries, or whatever, but I thought if one person would have been sensitive in public life to allegations and treating it with consideration and maturity it would be my friend from Diego Martin West who was a victim. [Interruption] And I would ask my friend rhetorically today from Diego Martin West, [Interruption] do you sit today and say you accept the decision of the former Prime Minister to fire you on the basis of allegations? You cannot. You cannot. [Interruption] He will contemplate, but there is where we are.

When you read this Motion, Mr. Speaker, alleged investigations, alleged misconduct, alleged criminal offences and so on, and matters that are very serious; albeit very serious, but the power of allegations. My friend from Diego Martin North/East just read several, what you call, letters and so on from columnists, and I meant no disrespect to Mr. Raoul Pantin, I thought you were quoting Dennis—“is Dennis?”

Mr. Roberts: Dennis Pantin.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Dennis Pantin, that is the brother, so I meant no disrespect to him. But, by the same token we can stand in this House and quote columnists writing about the Member for Diego Martin North/East, the Member for North/West, the Member for everything, and we can claim adverse reporting and say, listen, take action.

Dr. Gopeesingh: We can go on Google as well.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: No, but if you google my friend from Diego Martin North/East, I cannot begin to tell you what you will find.

Hon. Member: “Ah going and google him now”.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Grenada, Legoland, Wahl, Elias—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:—but I am not about that. I am not about that today.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Today is not about that.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Mr. Roberts: What is the Standing Order?

Miss Mc Donald: 36(5).

Mr. Speaker: Well not only 36(5)—[*Crosstalk*—do not get the Member for Diego Martin North/East involved in matters.

Mr. Imbert: “Doh bring me in your kankatang.”

Mr. Speaker: I have already ruled that if you want to raise a matter of conduct, bring a substantive Motion. This matter is not about any other Member in this House except the Member for Chaguanas West and from a tangential point of view, the hon. Prime Minister. Nobody else, please!

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and we follow the ruling. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Diego Martin West in his earlier presentation was at liberty to look at examples in New Zealand. Mr. Field in New Zealand did

some wrongdoing; a suicidal Minister in Japan; India, interfered with tendering; Uganda, corrupt activities; took us to UK; took us all over the Commonwealth to explain to us good behaviour, where, on the basis of allegations alone Ministers have been thrown out, they have resigned, some in and some without dignity.

You know, Mr. Speaker, before, I remembered something, there was a year, 2005, between April to November 2005, there were serious allegations concerning two members of a former regime, they are not members of this House at this time, but two members who were accused of picking up money somewhere and calling it sweetbread; going down St. James. In fact, they encouraged us to adjourn early so they could go and pick up somewhere on a Friday, and those members remained in the House. There are persons who now talk about Japan, New Zealand, Uganda and India and there was adverse commentary from April to November, they resigned in November.

Mr. Roberts: “Aah, aah!”

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: They resigned in November; April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, eight months, and no one in the Cabinet and the Government then, no one who speaks about Japan and Mr. Field—*[Interruption]*

Hon. Member: Or Jack, called—*[Inaudible]*

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:—called for anybody to resign or be fired. *[Crosstalk]* Mr. Speaker, when they were charged and before the courts—*[Interruption]*

Hon. Member: Then they did.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:—they resigned. One is now, today, I think the chairman of a prominent party.

Mr. Roberts: Yes.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: I believe so, looking to come back for more sweetbread. *[Laughter]*

So, Mr. Speaker, I point out that to tell you—*[Interruption]*

Mr. Peters: He lives Mayaro.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:—that we did not—yes—have to go to Mr. Field in Japan and Mr. Tribeni or whoever in India.

Hon. Member: He right here.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: We could have stayed here and look for those who were collecting sweetbread and when they get it they said they did not even say thank you. One is still before the court now on 13 counts of something, one, in that episode. So we did not need to go quite there, we could have looked in Trinidad and we could have said that they were members in the Government who said nothing and did nothing, “no call for no action.” Nothing! So, Mr. Speaker, I put that on the record.

The next issue—[*Interruption*—allegations we spoke about today. Allegations. If we go on allegation, every time you raise an allegation about someone you fire them, what will happen? You would just read the newspaper. Mr. Speaker, there are persons who speak here today—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: What about the panel—[*Inaudible*]

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:—who may well go on, if there is a nightmare, they may well go on to be Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Roberts: “Oh gawd!”

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Mr. Speaker, if we ever experience a nightmare, there are persons in this Chamber who may go on to become Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, how would they act?

Mr. Roberts: North/East!

Hon. Member: “Um-hmm.”

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Are we getting the impression today that they will act on allegation? They will act on the blogging? Who is the “fella”, Phillip Alexander? [*Interruption*] You will read bloggers and you will take action. [*Interruption*] So, they will have blog-induced policy and you will get an email in the morning and you take a decision, a different email in the night and you change your decision. [*Interruption*] This is how we will operate?

Mr. Roberts: Yes.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Mr. Speaker, Government is not made like that. That is not good governance. It is not good governance.

Hon. Member: Equal justice.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: And what has been the conduct of the Prime Minister in this matter? Mr. Speaker, it is really hard being Prime Minister, you know, because if you act too swiftly you are responsible, if you take too long to act you are responsible.

I was laughing—in the media the other day, I saw a note from someone portraying himself as a spokesman of the Opposition party, and he said one day there was an article to the effect of, “Jack must go”, when Jack gone they had “a next article”, “Why Jack gone?” [*Laughter*] He must explain why “he gone”. So, first he must go, then he must explain why “he gone”. This is what we face. This is what we face.

You see, Mr. Speaker, as a Prime Minister—and I will come to Siparia now—and those who aspire to be Prime Minister, in the event of a nightmare, will learn that a Prime Minister cannot make decisions without careful consideration, without the facts, and those facts and getting them will take time in different circumstances. So ascertaining the facts in a matter involving the Member for Cumuto and so on, will take a different time than the Member for somewhere else, than the Member for St. Joseph, or some other matter. Am I to understand that anyone here, who, by a nightmare, becomes Prime Minister will just treat every allegation that comes his or her way, and say, “ah ha, alleged, allegation I have read in the papers, I follow the news and they are saying this, I'll take action.” You cannot manage a country and a government like that. [*Interruption*]

You see, Mr. Speaker, you cannot do that. You just cannot govern like that. What does it say about a leader who will not have the care, the consideration, the maturity, the level-headedness and some knowledge of legal principles to allow persons to exercise, what is called natural justice, that you listen, you find out what is the case from them, you enquire, you consult others and then you act.

Mr. Speaker, this country also has another challenge as it is related to this issue and I will tell you the challenge, and I will say it in my way and in a frank way. This country has come out of a leadership culture for almost 40 years based on a hegemonic, one-man, not-a-dog-bark culture, and the bad news is that there are some people who like that culture. When that culture goes away we complain that we have weak leadership because we are culturized into somebody telling you, “shut up”; somebody telling you, “get to hell out of here”; somebody telling you, “if you have the evidence take it to the police”; somebody telling you, “when I speak not a dog bark”. That is the culture we have. So, when a leader emerges that does not subscribe to that culture, because we are accustomed to it, we believe that leader may be weak and could be persuaded one way or another, and that, Mr. Speaker, is a challenge this country faces now, because there is clearly a different leadership culture.

There are people who talk all they want about equality, fairness and so on, but you know what they want? They really want strongman leadership. They want

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. DR. R. MOONILAL]

Friday, April 26, 2013

you to “bouff” them up and tell them what it is. Today, in Member for Siparia we have a leader who listens, who learns and then who leads. That is the leader. [Desk thumping] Mr. Speaker, I also asked myself today—I have heard the Member for Diego Martin West and the Member for “North/East Diego Martin, the Diego Martins”—had it not been. [Crosstalk]

6.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, this Motion here was received by the Parliament, if I am interpreting correctly, on April 12, 2013. So April 12 Parliament received, April 16 released, and it is due April 25, 2013. Mr. Speaker, the CONCACAF report that they are quoting so much was released on the 19th.

Hon. Member: We had an advance copy.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: I clear—they may have an advance copy knowing their intrusion into these matters. [Laughter]

Mr. Roberts: They admitting.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: So, assuming, but not admitting that they had no advance copy, assuming but not admitting that they had an advance copy—on the 19th this report was made public.

Mr. Speaker, within 48 hours the Prime Minister of this country acted—48 hours. I want to ask, what they were planning to come and say here had it not been for this CONCACAF report? What is the argument? What were you coming with? Eighty per cent, 90 per cent of their time was spent on that CONCACAF report, and thank God they heard a speech last night. They do not look at other shows on TV. Nobody was watching *Death in Paradise* or *Elementary* or anything like that. So they tuned in.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Or even cricket.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Or even cricket; they missed a good match. Had it not been for that speech last night and the CONCACAF report which came way after April 12, what was the argument today? It would be “mauvais langue” and bacchanal, and what they read in the press, the newspaper that they are reading from.

Mr. Speaker, colleagues opposite spent 80 per cent, 8 out of 10 minutes reading from newspaper articles. I remember I had a Prof. Ramaswamy from India during my PhD days and early in my PhD days I wrote a paper for him, and in that labour relations paper, Prime Minister, I started to quote what writers said

on a particular issue—Caroni East is a scholar he will understand. So I was quoting what writers wrote on this labour relations and you know what he told me? Prof. Ramaswamy said: “Listen, I do not want to know what everybody else said, I want to know what you say. Tell me what you think. Do not tell me what 20 other people think. I could read that.” If we ask them today, what did you say? Forget Michael Harris and Raoul Pantin “and them”, what did you say? You said nothing; you said nothing. You were otiose; you were without purpose and without results. [*Crosstalk*]

You see, Mr. Speaker, so this is it, they had no argument. They came today as well, and my friend opposite ended on the “return this country to moral and spiritual values” and so on, because he feels this is a hook line that will register. Mr. Speaker, this is a society which we are all trying to return to moral and spiritual ways; we are all trying. [*Desk thumping*] But it does not help when you look at the national community and one Member of a party convicted for beating somebody in Tobago; a next one may be before the court; a next one may be doing some other wrongdoings. It does not help. So we need to be careful.

Many years ago in dealing with moral and spiritual values, the police arrested about 50 people for voter padding; all except two were discharged. The two were convicted in 2007 and they confessed to being members of the PNM. You see, Mr. Speaker, that is where we are, they threw out the matter.

They argued today that the Prime Minister—well they changed the Motion “eh”, the Prime Minister should have been here, she should have been in this debate. I do not know why, but I want to indicate to my colleagues opposite that the Prime Minister accepted an invitation from the Government of Canada to undertake an official state visit. That is not a seminar you are going to for today and tomorrow and come back. That is serious business when you go on a state visit. The last time a Prime Minister went on a state visit to Canada—we are told it is Dr. Eric Williams—was sometime in the 70s. Dr. Williams went there. The Prime Minister accepted the invitation and this invitation was issued over a year ago. The acceptance was over a year ago. You cannot change those things. There are things that they put in place for a state visit, enormous planning goes into that.

Mr. Roberts: Correct.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: That is not something you can cancel like that. It is almost embarrassing to cancel that type of appointment.

Mr. Roberts: Not almost, it is.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: You see, Mr. Speaker, so the Prime Minister is in Canada, and what are they discussing in Canada? They are in Canada discussing

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. DR. R. MOONILAL]

Friday, April 26, 2013

issues of bilateral trade and investment; Canadian investment in Trinidad and Tobago, particularly in natural resources and in the energy field. Mr. Speaker, Canada is the second largest trading partner in the Caribbean, a significant country. We estimate investment from Canada in Trinidad and Tobago to be Can. \$1.3 billion. We must abandon that to come and hear today about the bloggers and the columnists.

In this trade mission, they are there discussing business possibilities in the Caribbean and in Trinidad and Tobago, in the area of: information, technology, manufacturing, environment, the creative industries, tourism, financial services. But when you are a Prime Minister, and I said if there is a nightmare, and somebody around here becomes Prime Minister, are they saying that you would take lightly a state visit of this magnitude? You just wake up one morning and say, "Look, I was supposed to go and visit—an official visit, cancel that. It has something in the Parliament about somebody bad talk somebody, I coming to that." That is a degree of recklessness! Then I question whether anybody in this House who speaks like this is fit for office, is fit to become the Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Eventually, we need to start measuring up. If you are aspiring to be Prime Minister you need to measure up.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Correct.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: And if you flippantly dismiss an official state visit to Canada—my friend from Point Fortin who had served as Foreign Affairs Minister understands the importance of these functions. You would have accompanied several ministerial delegations on state functions [*Crosstalk*] You could have tendered some advice to the Leader of the Opposition, assisted him with his knowledge of the importance of state functions like these.

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: Standing Order 36(1)

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: So in explaining the importance of this mission, I want to put on record that they are there to sign agreements and memorandum of understanding on issues of commercial co-operation, national security, education. These are serious issues. So the Prime Minister is there with her delegation attending to this business of Trinidad and Tobago. So one cannot dismiss this. This is part of the responsibility that goes with the office. It is part of the responsibility.

They also argued that the Member for Chaguanas West had brought the country into disrepute and so on, by the adverse commentary and so on, and they quoted at length on these matters, ignoring past experiences, because our memory

today is selective. You know we forget when other matters brought our country into disrepute. You know when matters of the Brian Lara Stadium or matters of UDeCOTT's spending and cost over runs of billions of dollars brought this country into disrepute. We ignore that today. We are not focusing on that, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Member: Very well.

Hon. R. Moonilal: I felt generally, that our friend from Diego Martin West was not prepared for this Motion. And I strangely find the Member for Diego Martin North/East, he came armed with his report—*[Interruption]*

Mr. Imbert: Two reports.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Apparently, two reports and a phone with some information from the bank that you got instantaneously. So, he came much more prepared for this debate than the mover. The mover when asked, what are you quoting from, he said, "I read that in the papers". Am I correct?

Mr. Roberts: Yes.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: I asked him what he is quoting; he read that in the papers. You did not read it? "Then he swing it, he say, what happen you did not read that?" And they are making serious arguments on a substantive Motion. Mr. Speaker, the issue is fitness for office and fitness to lead. It is not something you take lightly. It is clear that matters pertaining to the Member for Chaguanas West have been in the public domain for some time.

Mr. Imbert: Twenty years.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: And within recent time we have had and we have seen all of us in the newspaper, increasingly, reports of one kind or another. In fact, in one daily newspaper they may go on to part 100, if you leave them there everyday, it is a serial now, every day.

Hon. Member: "You laughing at that."

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: But, Mr. Speaker, a Prime Minister and a leader will read that and take note of it. When the Prime Minister read and took note of these things, what did she do and what did she not do? We will examine both. The Prime Minister on getting information that there may be some investigations abroad involving a member of her Cabinet, she properly asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs to enquire through official channels whether this may be true or not and what may be the nature of those developments—properly. You think a Prime Minister—and I want to ask anybody here who wants to be Prime Minister

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. DR. R. MOONILAL]

Friday, April 26, 2013

in a nightmare, what would you have done? Take up the phone and call the FBI? The FBI does not know you, they will slam the phone on you. In fact they might charge you for fraud or something, trying to misrepresent yourself. The FBI does not deal with prime ministers and ministers. They do not operate that way. You have official channels you go through, through your missions, both the visiting mission in Trinidad and Tobago and our mission abroad. The Prime Minister properly used foreign affairs to enquire into these matters, properly. I want to ask, what somebody else would have done? Picked up the phone and called who, Obama?

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: The State Department.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Who in the State Department you know, the telephone receptionist? Who you would call? You know they say these things, everybody is swinging line. Who is in the State Department? “Who you calling? Mr. who, Ms. who? And say who, tell them who you are? Tell them I am the Member for somewhere in Trinidad and we hear something we want to know what you think, you know anything about that?” You think it is a joke. You go through official channels, through your missions and the missions will properly and officially make a request. The Prime Minister did that.

Mr. Speaker, these reports were coming out all the time, every day. The Prime Minister went further to ask the Attorney General to write and enquire from the Attorney General, his counterpart in the United States. We want to find out that too. We want to find out from there anything happening. Mr. Speaker, that was a responsible approach—responsible. What would you have done? Called what, PNM abroad and ask PNM abroad, “what happening, you find out anything?” They would tell you? What would they tell you, how to make callaloo and crab?

Mr. Speaker, you do not operate through party groups and so on in this business. This is serious business when you are enquiring of investigations and so on. No, they would have gone on the blog; they would have gone on the blog and Facebook “and say anybody know anything about that, tell we, call 800-TIPS.” You operate through official channels. The Prime Minister called on her Minister of Foreign Affairs and her Attorney General. Until that time what we were reading were reports in the newspapers. So what we were reading were quotations in the newspaper by reporters. So we were reading reporters.

Mr. Speaker, you know on the 19th we did not have any reporters “eh”, we had a report. On the 19th things changed—from reporters we got a report; a report by an eminent jurist in the Caribbean, and others. A report by a jurist whom Trinidad

and Tobago expressed confidence in, he is Chairman of a Commission of Enquiry. In fact, he is chairman of a commission of enquiry in Trinidad and Tobago over matters involving a coup. So we have confidence, Mr. Speaker, and we got a report, not reporters. The Prime Minister looked at it and then decided some action would have to be taken. Well, what would you do, what would somebody else have done? Read the newspaper every morning, part 10, part 11 and say I need to fire somebody now, you know. But then a former Prime Minister did that with them. They came to Parliament and said somebody had a bank account in the Cayman Islands and we have a file, we hear that. Remember that?

Mr. Roberts: And no file exists.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: And they do not know where the bank account is either. They came to Parliament and said somebody took \$10 million, “where the \$10 million gone?” We will deal with them, “where the \$10 million gone?” “Somebody make a bobol and gone with \$10 million. You know they fired people for that eh; and then take \$5 million to try and jail them for that, from the HDC.”

Mr. Roberts: Correct.

6.15 p.m.

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: Could you give way?

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Give me a minute, please. So what would they have done—[*Interruption*]

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: Right.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: No, I am coming to you. What would they have done in similar circumstances? Tell us your approach in a similar circumstance. If one day, by a nightmare, you are the Prime Minister and an occasion arises where you have newspaper reports and so on, even from abroad—*The Economist* and, what, *Newsday* and so on, you read—in these circumstances, what do you do?

You see, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister approached it from Foreign Affairs, Attorney General. When a report came from an eminent jurist and others, the Prime Minister said, well, she will act. In 48 hours, action was taken. You see, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister then consulted her Cabinet and Members of Parliament. When consulted, maybe another Prime Minister—maybe a nightmare Prime Minister—would have said, “I not consulting nobody. This thing come out Friday morning. By Friday evening, bounce yuh starter.” Move! Maybe that is another approach, I “doh” know. Somebody else would do that.

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. DR. R. MOONILAL]

Friday, April 26, 2013

The Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago today, said, “I will consult with my colleagues; I will speak and I will get the benefit also of their thinking on the matter, a significant matter.” The Prime Minister called in the person who is the subject of these matters and had a discussion. Mr. Speaker, I was not privy to that discussion.

Mr. Imbert: You were lurking.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: So because I was not privy to the discussion, I cannot report on what took place. My friends opposite may have more information. They may have information, you see, Mr. Speaker.

So the Member for Chaguanas West had a discussion. Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister discussed the matter and decided, “We will take action”, and an appropriate communication was made to His Excellency the President, and we know how that went.

But, Mr. Speaker, in the circumstances, the Prime Minister acted with a great deal of responsibility. [*Desk thumping*]

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: Thank you. Will the Member let us know whether he has been informed if this particular matter was discussed between the Deputy Secretary of State and the Prime Minister on her last visit to Washington? [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Mr. Speaker, on that matter the Member for Point Fortin may have to guide me because I am not privy to discussions with the Prime Minister and representatives or officials from the State Department or any other department: agriculture, fisheries, nothing. So I am not privy to those discussions.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker, reported in Trinidad and Tobago, when she came back from the United States, on these matters and took action. You see, Mr. Speaker, the Opposition is making out this case that in other situations the Prime Minister acted swiftly. They do not praise her for that, incidentally, “eh”. But she acted swiftly—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Imbert: She did?

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:—but in these matters, took a long time—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Imbert: That is a fact.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:—Mr. Speaker, as if for all matters you hear and all allegations of any sort and from anywhere, you can act with the same dispatch in all. Maybe that is how they will act. And I want to tell colleagues opposite—God forbid, and some of you happen to find yourselves in a Cabinet led by somebody

there—be careful somebody “doh” write something about you and set you up, and they say, “Allegation! Out! Gone!” Be careful the leader “doh write something bout you and set you up: Allegation! Out! Gone!”

Mr. Imbert: “All yuh does do dat?”

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: That is not how you conduct government.

Mr. Roberts: Correct.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: That is not how you conduct the business of the State, Mr. Speaker. That is simply not how you conduct the business of the State.

Mr. Speaker, there have been cases in this country where enquiries have led to observations and findings, where in one case—I forgot who it dealt with, Mr. Speaker; somebody could remind me—a Member was described as having no discretion and acting without discretion. We expect Members of Parliament—Ministers—to have discretion and judgment.

Mr. Roberts: “Um-hmm.” Correct.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Maybe they could have been fired for that.

Mr. Speaker, may I say that the Member for Chaguanas West indicated today—I do not think Members knew—that two weeks ago or so, the Member offered his resignation. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it may well have been before this Motion was filed—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Imbert: I knew.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:—the Member offered his resignation. The Prime Minister at that time chose not to accept that resignation. [*Crosstalk*] He knows a lot. He knows everything except what is happening in Balisier House.

Mr. Roberts: Correct.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: He knows everything about that. He does not belong there, but he has a couple months left; I will help him out there.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Chaguanas West, in the highest tradition of our democracy and parliamentary democracy, offered to the Leader, the Prime Minister, his resignation. He offered it. On Sunday last, on the 21st, he again offered his resignation. It was accepted, in that tradition. He did not wait for somebody to send a letter of revocation to the President and the next morning he finds out on the six o'clock news, “well, yuh gone”. It did not work like that.

Dr. Rowley: He was not Volney.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Mr. Speaker—or was not—what the fella was in Hong Kong? What was the Ambassador in Hong Kong?

Hon. Member: Alexander Lau.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Alexander Lau. At that time it had no email. He was fired by fax. It had no email.

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: We have no ambassador to Hong Kong.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: “They send a fax and fire him.”

Dr. Gopeesingh: Gift was Foreign Affairs Minister for two days.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Yes. Gift thought he got a gift and he left in two days, Mr. Speaker. But we would not talk about that. This is not about them. They had an ambassador in Canada, he was drunk, came back and became a Minister. We will not talk about that, you see, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to raise some issues pertaining to—

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, I think he is crossing the line, you know. Mr. Speaker—by inference, a Minister in Canada? What is that? Who is that? He is crossing the line.

Mr. Speaker: All right—

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: “Yuh know him?” Who is that?

Mr. Roberts: Tell us who it is.

Mr. Speaker: Continue.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Yes, Sir. Mr. Speaker, the Member for Diego Martin North/East, he probably feels I am not paying attention to him enough, so let me deal with some of the issues he raised. I think he needs some attention. Mr. Speaker, he came today and, of course, in the Motion, what they did in the first and second recitals is that they put the same thing: “adverse commentary international”. So they speak on one, they speak on all, and then they—well, they changed it today to say, “expeditiously”, you see, Mr. Speaker.

So they brought what they believed to be the facts of these matters, all their reports and so on, and attempted—thank God for last evening they got a speech to use as well—to paint this case that adverse writings—and I was so shocked—

Mr. Imbert: “Is not true?”

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Well, let me say, I am stunned that the Member for Diego Martin North/East will refer to the blogs as a source.

Mr. Imbert: Why not?

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: I keep reading somebody named Montrichard and they write a terrible amount of things about the Member for Diego Martin North/East and I do not believe any. [*Laughter*] I do not believe any.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, he keeps doing this. Is not just me. “He just throwing all about.” [*Laughter*]

Mr. Speaker: Once it comes to a Member of Parliament, I will intervene.

Mr. Imbert: Stop it?

Mr. Speaker: Please—[*Crosstalk*]—please, please. Member for Oropouche East, please, do not make any adverse comments on the hon. Member for Diego Martin North/East, please.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, let me say, categorically, I am making no comment on any colleague opposite. I believe nothing I read in the blogs on my colleagues. I do not believe those things. And Montrichard—I believe nothing like that.

Mr. Speaker, so this issue and the Motion, really, is a disguised way of dealing with the conduct of the Prime Minister. That is what it is. They build the case with the Member for Chaguanas West, but it is really the Prime Minister that they are focusing on, and whether the Prime Minister acted swiftly, or acted with diligence on this matter. And I dare my colleagues opposite; tell us what you would have done; how you would have dealt with the matter before us.

Our Prime Minister acted fairly, responsibly, in a diligent manner in the context of engagement, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Roberts: Natural justice.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Natural justice, which today—you know, it is a tribute to the Member for Chaguanas West that he could come in the House today and speak like this, without malice, without hate, with great respect and love for the Prime Minister and his colleagues. It is a tribute to him because, Mr. Speaker, he understands. The Member for Chaguanas West understands. And I want to tell them, I hope you are not planning to put a candidate in Chaguanas West, because if you put a candidate, the PNM will be slaughtered in Chaguanas West. That much we assure you. [*Crosstalk*]

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. DR. R. MOONILAL]

Friday, April 26, 2013

Mr. Speaker, this Motion, in no way, seeks to deal with the Member for Diego Martin West nor his handling of matters. I said it before. But we ask the question here, on fitness to lead, and what can the country expect if someone else leads.

Dr. Gopeesingh: By nightmare.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: By nightmare—what would be their conduct? Because I have heard in the news; I have read in the papers, Mr. Speaker, Members saying the correspondence between the Prime Minister and the President should be public. So what you would do, any time you write the President, go in Woodford Square and read it aloud? Mr. Speaker, matters so sacrosanct, so sacred, correspondence between a Prime Minister and President—sacred matter, confidential, matters involving national security.

And, Mr. Speaker, may I note that the Member for Chaguanas West held the very important portfolio of Minister of National Security; was a member of the National Security Council, and when you are dealing with officeholders, you must exercise caution, consideration. You cannot be operating by “vaps”, thinking that you can simply meet and treat with allegations of all sizes, of all levels, anywhere you find them.

You know, I find it interesting—and I put it out for speculation—you receive allegations in the newspapers, generally, but you receive allegations elsewhere, Mr. Speaker. You could be in a cocktail party having a convivial beverage, someone comes up to you and you believe that person in the know and they whisper something to you about the conduct of somebody else, do you believe that? Do you take that as fact and act on it? Or do you not enquire, investigate, seek to find out what may be the facts in the circumstances, and then act? That is the mature approach that the Member for Siparia adopted in this instance.

So to bring a Motion which was hurriedly amended today because the original Motion was, “disapproval of the failure of the Prime Minister to take action to protect the image and interest of the people of Trinidad and Tobago”, amended, “to act expeditiously”, meaning did not act, I imagine, quickly, fast and so on.

There is also a constitutional issue here, when I read this. As a Prime Minister, as a leader, you take an oath to uphold the Constitution. A Prime Minister carries a very heavy weight, in terms of that oath. It is for every citizen. You protect their constitutional right. Are we suggesting that you get adverse commentary, you believe it is not in the interest and—what?—image and the interest of the people

of Trinidad and Tobago being damaged, and without allowing that person the opportunity to defend themselves, to speak on behalf of themselves, give their case—which is their right—you will just act and violate their own individual right?

But, Mr. Speaker, I am not surprised. In this society we have had governments that have been taken to court and “they lose, they lose”, and the court ruled that the Government acted—a former government acted arbitrarily, unfairly—*[Interruption]*

Mr. Roberts: Hastily.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:—hastily, unlawful. Whether it is in the award of a licence for a radio, in treatment of somebody for promotion in the civil service, governments before have acted in an arbitrary way, without recognizing due process.

Mr. Roberts: “Taxpayers ha tuh pay.”

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: And when you go to court, huge money taxpayers pay. But something is between the lines, and when I read this I put on my glasses because there are a few lines here that are not written and—*[Interruption]*

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the speaking time of the hon. Member has expired.

Motion made: That the speaking time of the hon. Member be extended by 30 minutes. *[Hon. A. Roberts]*

Question put and agreed to. [Desk thumping]

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: So, Mr. Speaker, I was making the point that there are lines between the lines in this Motion and there are dangerous lines here. One line between the lines here is that if power is in someone else’s hand, they will violate the constitutional rights of citizens to the right to natural justice, to a fair hearing.

That is what this Motion is suggesting, *[Laughter]* that we find that the—*[Crosstalk]* No, I want to follow this Motion, it is a dangerous Motion; very dangerous Motion.

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. DR. R. MOONILAL]

Friday, April 26, 2013

6.30 p.m.

There is a dictatorial trend in this Motion and I will paraphrase it for you, because I have read this and I was frightened. The Motion says:

“...adverse commentary...inferences...widespread adverse commentary”—local and abroad—“alleged criminal offences...alleged investigations...”

—act expeditiously, take action quick. That is what the Motion says in a nutshell but that is how dictatorships are made. Nowhere in the Motion, it speaks to rights—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Roberts: Or due process.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:—or due process or hearing. It is a dangerous Motion, from what I believe, respectfully, to be a very challenging mind, Mr. Speaker, that someone could be thinking and linking these words “adverse commentary”, damaged image of country, take action now; that is what they do in a lot of the very backward undemocratic societies where democracy does not prevail. Leaders form judgments without court and principles of law. They decide that you went to London and “you bad talk the country, so you bad talk the country”, there is a report in a newspaper, “you embarrass the image of my land, you come back to the country, dey throw you in jail”—

Hon. Member: Forever!

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:—forever. That is what dictatorships do! They do not recognize constitutional rights and protection.

The Prime Minister is a trained attorney-at-law.

Hon. Member: A Senior Counsel!

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Senior Counsel, and I will say it again because they like to grind when they hear that—“Senior Counsel to boot”. The Prime Minister, with that legal training, understands rules—legal rules which somebody else does not understand because they write a Motion to say “adverse commentary”, “alleged criminal offence”, “take action now”. This is not democracy here, this is the making of a dictatorship, such an obscene Motion.

You see, when you do this, you have to protect the society as well from persons who will make allegations, but when the time comes and you call them, “Please come, bring your facts, give us the evidence”, they bring nothing.

Hon. Dr. Khan: “Yuh doh need that.”

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: “Yeah, because yuh doh need that.” In democracy, in dictatorships, you do not need that. *[Interruption]* This is what affects me, that the Member for Diego Martin West has been a lifetime victim of the use of allegation to undermine in public office—been a lifetime victim of that—and today, you stand to defend that, so you are defending your own removal from a Cabinet. You are defending that you can act on allegations, whether they be small or big and significant as these are, Mr. Speaker, you are defending that. *[Interruption]*

Because, you see, I remember in 2009—it was January 2009—there was an Uff Commission of Enquiry going on and there was someone who made enormous allegations about corruption. I do not know if anybody remembers that.

Hon. Members: Yes, yes.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Mr. Speaker, on Friday, January 23, 2009, one of the persons who made serious allegations of a corruption presented himself at the Uff Commission without unveiling any evidence of corruption.

Mr. Roberts: Correct!

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Who is that? Who is that? Prominent persons! Some people went to the EBC Commission of Enquiry and they said, “‘I doh know this man’. Ah man appeared the next day with ah picture of two of dem.” *[Interruption]* He said somebody was dead.

Mr. Speaker, you have to protect citizens, and I am not talking about public officers alone, “eh”, not Ministers and so on alone. Citizens need to be protected—*[Interruption]*

Mr. Imbert: From you!

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal:—from persons who would say, “somebody dead and dey alive”. “Somebody who go to the EBC and say, I doh know somebody and they actually know somebody.”

Hon. Member: Dey say de ink not good.

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: The ink, yes, they called the ink. *[Crosstalk]*

Mr. Speaker, when they asked someone at the Uff Commission, “I thought you talking about corruption, where is the evidence?”, they say, “No, ah not talking about actual corruption, ah talking about the potential for corruption”. That is what they went with there and they come today to tell us about Japan and Uganda and India and New Zealand, and Mr. Field. Who can forget, Mr. Field? So, one has to be cautious and this is not what leadership is made of.

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. DR. R. MOONILAL]

Friday, April 26, 2013

Leadership, like ambition, should be made of sterner stuff—Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*. You see, Mr. Speaker, leadership must be made of sterner stuff. Leaders are not people who, when the mass comes outside and they go “rah, rah, rah”, you act. It does not work that way. Leaders need sterner stuff, that is why you are critical of leaders because they stand in defence of principles which may be unpopular at the time.

So, we attack the Prime Minister, “she take long to act, man; she shoulda act long time”, but you have to have stern stuff to stand in defence of principles. I am observing today that there may be some in the House who aspire to be Prime Minister and are not made of sterner stuff, to stand up even when it is unpopular to do so in the defence of citizens’ rights, and when you have the facts, you are clear, you act.

The Prime Minister has demonstrated this consistency in the last three years in dealing with matters involving Cabinet Members, Government officials. The Prime Minister has demonstrated a degree of diligence that is unknown in prime ministerial culture in Trinidad and Tobago, and I say that without excuse and apology. [*Desk thumping*] No Prime Minister in the history of this country, including Prime Ministers who may not have been PNM, no Prime Minister has demonstrated this degree of diligence, calculation and the ability to consider matters. What is even sadder is that there are citizens who believe that a dictatorial approach is the best approach. You do not need evidence, you do not need facts, you just act; you get allegations, you act.

So, those of us on this side, we stand against this dictatorial Motion, we stand against the essence of this Motion, not only the wording. When we vote against this, it is not just the wording, you know, it is the essence of it, what it means, its undemocratic character—we stand against that.

The Member for Chaguanas West had his programme last evening. All Members of the Opposition, it appears, were glued to their televisions; they got a speech last night. The Member for Chaguanas West is an able man, he will defend himself, he will take care, he has all his information. There are accusations; there are allegations; there are findings now of a report—Diego Martin North/East has the report. The Member for Chaguanas West started last night. I imagine, Mr. Speaker, he will respond to those issues, they are within his purview. Let us put it this way, they are within his purview; he will deal with them. He has adopted a course of action; we wish him well. We have best wishes for him. He has adopted a particular course of action.

Mr. Speaker, my friend from Diego Martin West did not do that. He came at the mercy of the Member for San Fernando East. You see, the Member for Chaguanas West has taken a very dignified approach to these matters. He has offered his resignation, he has resigned effective, I believe, tonight 12.00 o'clock, from the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago. Who is the last Member to resign in the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago? Anybody knows? [*Inaudible*] "No, you all doh know." [*Inaudible*] "Ah ha!"

So, Mr. Speaker, it has been about 12 or 14 years since we have had this development and the Member has decided that this is his approach, we should wish him well. He has a contribution to our Government in various portfolio areas, he has contributed. In his constituency, there is a case, Mr. Speaker, and he will continue his arguments and so on, and take his case to his constituents and to anybody who would challenge him. We are clear in that. But, Mr. Speaker, we are also clear on the procedure used by the hon. Prime Minister in dealing with this matter. We stand in full support of the Prime Minister in her treatment of this issue. [*Desk thumping*] This otiose Motion stands ready to be defeated by the will of the Parliament.

At another time, I wish I would have the opportunity to speak more on events past, because sometimes, I believe in this country, we forget. We forget 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009—we forget those events. I have a book here of 94 pages—which on another occasion, I will delve into—on events of the years 2003—2010 on the administration at that time, I have my notes here. You see, Mr. Speaker, now is not the time for that.

Now is the time, Mr. Speaker, to declare our support for the Prime Minister, question the fitness of other Members here who may aspire to be Prime Minister in dealing with these complex matters of governance, question that, and to indicate that the Government remains united, stable, harmonious; government work continues!

Hon. Member: Very strong!

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Mr. Speaker, the day after Sunday was Monday, Monday morning "everybody gone" to work. Monday morning at LRC, "people gone" to work, Tuesday morning we worked. The Ministers go to work; government work continues. The party business will take its course, we are sure, and that being what it is, we have no fear. We have no fear in our treatment on this matter.

The country will judge this approach, but they will also judge the approach with those two boys who went for sweetbread down St. James and what did they

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. DR. R. MOONILAL]

Friday, April 26, 2013

do then. They will judge the approach with persons who had allegations of gross, sexual misconduct in state enterprises and fled Trinidad, and what did the administration then do. Because, I intend, Mr. Speaker—I put my friends opposite on notice—to move with my 94 pages throughout Trinidad and Tobago and remind persons of our governance, 2003—2010, because they may forget. Then, compare it with the governance today and ask people whether they would like to go back to 2005, 2007—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Roberts: No!

Hon. Member: Sure!

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: Ask whether you would like to go back, you want to go back to dictatorship; you want to go back to that, to nepotism. “Yuh know, with a straight face, dey accused the Government of nepotism; with a straight face, yuh know.”

Mrs. Mc Intosh: Of course!

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: And you know, nothing drops on their faces?

Mrs. McIntosh: Of course!

Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal: “Everybody forget” who appointed their wife as Minister of Education. “Dey forgot that, yuh know. Dey forget that!” [*Crosstalk*] They come now, they forget all of that, but our job is to remind the country of the sins of the PNM, and that much, we intend to do. Mr. Speaker, I thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

The Minister of Sports (Hon. Anil Roberts): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been at pains on many occasions to let the Member for Diego Martin North/East know that, over the years, he has brought a high level and quality of research to the debate. But today—[*Crosstalk*] not behave—he has delved into the realm of—[*Crosstalk*] Same thing? I cannot understand how out of all the columnists, all of the researchers, all of the people in Trinidad and Tobago, or internationally, that he could have quoted from, he went somewhere, somehow, and dug up Phillip Alexander in a debate that deals with allegations of fraud, corruption, allegations of misappropriation of funds; he dug up Mr. Phillip Alexander.

Phillip Alexander, if you google him, you will see, there are allegations about Phillip Alexander with regard to fraud and corruption with a fair that was supposed to come back in the late '90s and people paid their money and they

never got the world trade fair and they never got back their money. There are allegations about Phillip Alexander at the Edge Nightclub in Long Circular Mall, and his partners claimed that he misappropriated funds from their partnership in the enterprise. “Yeah”, so do not use Phillip Alexander; you have disappointed me. We move on.

6.45 p.m.

I take a different approach from my colleague, the Member for Oropouche East on the issue delving with former ministers in the PNM regime, Franklin Khan and Eric Williams. The allegations, the magistrate, after hearing the evidence—these were men who were hounded out of office.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, this Motion is not about former Members of Parliament.

Hon. A. Roberts: You brought it up.

Mr. Imbert: No, no, we did not bring it up.

Mr. Speaker: “Yeah”, I am saying I know it is not—

Mr. Imbert: En passant.

Mr. Speaker: It is not about former Members of Parliament, en passant.

Hon. A. Roberts: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Motion is about, and we would get into the words of the Motion, a Prime Minister’s failure to act swiftly or expeditiously, as the Motion states. But there are dangers and the debate that has taken place here today, people are making claims, all sorts of claims, about how government should be run, and I am saying with a case that was brought up here, it is an element that has to be taken and noted carefully that when you rush to judgment, when you do not allow due process, when you do not allow for the laws of natural justice to take place and a powerful position—and under our Constitution and the Westminster system the Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has awesome power, power to fire, to hire, to remove, to adjust.

It is a tremendous amount of power and this power must be dealt with in a cogent, sane, thoughtful, intelligent manner as our Prime Minister continues to deal with issue after issue, because if you do not take your time, if you do not investigate, if you do not give people an opportunity to defend themselves from allegations, you may throw away an entire career. And these are examples of people’s careers that were thrown away as politicians because of spurious allegations.

When the case was eventually heard, the Magistrate, Cardinez-Raghubanan, stated in the judgment that the evidence presented was patently false, patently ridiculous and lacked credibility of all sorts. Yet these two gentlemen lost, one was a Minister of Energy and the other was a Minister of Works and Transport. So when we say that Prime Ministers must use their power in this Motion, when allegations come, that they must move swiftly to deal with them, we have to be a bit more responsible than that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Diego Martin North/East said when he goggled the former Minister and Member for Chaguanas West—until midnight tonight, as he said—he got a million hits and when he goggled himself, he got 2,000. Well, this is true because whether you like the Member for Chaguanas West, whether he is your friend, your colleague or you do not like him, you do not want to “lime” with him, you despise him, the fact of the matter is, over the years, in a global sense, he had achieved so much coming from Rio Claro down in Trinidad and reaching up to the second highest position in the world of football. So, whether you like him or not, he is a global figure.

So, therefore, anything written about him, anything stated about him, any allegation made about him will go global and this is why we agree that there was—because of the continuous attacks in the media and so on and columnists and story after story—an impact on the reputation internationally of Trinidad and Tobago, and this is why the hon. Prime Minister acted in accepting the resignation offered by the Member for Chaguanas West. So nobody is disputing that.

Now, the Member for Diego Martin North/East also went through, quite mischievously, to compare different actions and lump all in one. Mr. Speaker, every situation is an—*[Interruption]*

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, I think “mischievously” has a meaning and I certainly did no such thing. A point of order, please.

Mr. Speaker: Yes, I think you should use more elegant language, please.

Mr. Imbert: “Ah mean, talk about the Motion man.”

Hon. A. Roberts: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Diego Martin North/East attempted, in this honourable House, to lump several disparate situations into one. For example, he stated the case of former Minister, Mary King, and he mentioned the former Ambassador, Therese Baptiste-Cornelis and former Minister, Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla and also the Member for St. Joseph and put all of these and said: “You know, all of these things were dealt with swiftly and then there is the issue of Chaguanas West and the hon. Prime Minister moved slowly.” This is not true. Every situation was different. He used the claim and read out from an

organization called GOPAC. I would love to know if he could put on the record what is GOPAC, how many people were there, when was their AGM, how many members they have, when is the last time they met, where they come from, so that we would have known who he was quoting from.

But once again, he brings information to this Parliament that the Parliament has to question the veracity of it. However, it is not allegations. The former Minister, Mary King, admitted that she put her advisor on a tender committee. She admitted that she was at the place where tenders were being opened, while they were being opened. She admitted that she did not disclose to the committee that her son was part and parcel of a company that was tendering. These were admissions. And, therefore, it could be dealt with very swiftly, as opposed to a case where a Member is denying the allegations. So to say and to put the argument that the Prime Minister operated so swiftly and then in this special case she took her time, is totally misleading, Sir.

I would also like to state that it was my understanding, I asked for the *Hansard* for the Member for Chaguanas West and I did not get it, but I was listening attentively, that when he stated that he did not receive a loan or take a cent, he was referring to CONCACAF. *[Interruption]* Well, we will get the *Hansard*. I asked for it and we would double-check before I am finished. Now, if that was so, the Member for Diego Martin North/East—and this is why you must be very careful when you are discussing because FIFA is a different organization, separate and apart from CONCACAF. So getting a loan, that he was reading from and quoting from FIFA, from Dr. João Havelange and then trying to get it to be turned into a grant, that is FIFA. That is not CONCAFAF. So the Member never showed me an element in the report where they said that the President of CONCACAF, who was Mr. Warner, took a loan from CONCACAF. We have never seen that.

Also, moving right along, “we doh want tuh be too long”.

Mr. Imbert: We have about 23 pages. “You talking nonsense.”

Mr. Speaker: Please, Member for Diego Martin North/East.

Mrs. Khan: “He ain retire yet.”

Hon. A. Roberts: Now—*[Interruption]*

Mr. Speaker: Please, Member for Diego Martin North/East, you cannot be using that kind of language across the floor, please.

Hon. A. Roberts: I listened intently to the Member for Diego Martin West and I share my colleague from Oropouche East’s opinion, that if it is one human

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. A. ROBERTS]

Friday, April 26, 2013

being in this entire Parliament whom I thought would have understood how serious spurious allegations, how painful they could be, how costly they could be, how time-consuming they could be, I thought it would have been the Member for Diego Martin West. I am not going into the details but everybody knows—*[Interruption]* excuse me. Could you? “Yuh want tuh take notes, Mr. Speaker?”

Mr. Speaker: Yes, Member for Port of Spain North, allow the Member to speak in silence. Continue hon. Member.

Hon. A. Roberts: “Well ah trying but it look like ah will have tuh take a hour and 15 minutes.”

Mr. Speaker: You have my protection.

Hon. A. Roberts: Thank you, Sir. So I would have thought so. But the Member for Diego Martin West, in his contribution, spoke about when I was a PNM back in 1999/2000/2001, when the then UNC were constructing stadia, I categorically remember being unable to attack them because they built four stadia for \$275 million. I could not believe when the Member for Diego Martin West brought, in his contribution today, that four stadia, the Mannie Ramjohn, the Ato Boldon, the Larry Gomes and the Dwight Yorke Stadium were built under the then UNC. I was a PNM, so that did make me happy at that time. I find they did well but, “yuh know”, we could not find any holes in it. We could not question it. So I am shocked here we come to debate.

The Member for Chaguanas West who back then was in charge of CONCACAF and President and in charge of getting the World Cup 2001 here and in charge of, along with the government and so on, as he said, constructed stadia, but they constructed four with a seating capacity overall of 47,000 people, but the Member for Diego Martin West sat in a Cabinet of the Government that built or attempted to build and never completed the Brian Lara Stadium in Tarouba that is now \$1.1 billion and possibly another \$200 million is needed to finish it off, but he sat there and tried to cast aspersions on the Member for Chaguanas West for building four stadia for \$275-odd million. I could not understand that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Diego Martin West referred to FIFA as a mafia. I will not join him in that description but what I will say is that everybody in the world knows that FIFA, just like the IOC—if anybody read the book, *The Lord of the Rings*—they do not conform to the norms of corporate governance and structures of a government as occurs here in Trinidad and Tobago. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago, the public service, the Parliament; everybody is governed by a set of procedures, conventions, rules, processes,

procurement, financial, from the Ministry of Finance, all sorts of rules and we have a total governance structure to ensure propriety, transparency and accountability. FIFA never had that.

All of a sudden, in 2010, 2011 and now, we are trying—and on that side and this is why this is an important debate—to compare FIFA’s activity using a benchmark and a yardstick of governance in the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. They do not compare, as stated by the Member. So, to make that comparison and to attack FIFA’s goings-on or a former member of FIFA, based on a yardstick that we utilize in governance makes no sense.

We must understand and the Member for Diego Martin North/East was brilliant in saying it. He said the Prime Minister acted swiftly, Mary King; swiftly, Cumuto/Manzanilla; swiftly, St. Joseph; swiftly, Therese Baptiste-Cornelis. This is not the norm. This is not the norm in the history of Trinidad and Tobago and its Prime Ministers. So the Prime Minister, when you read this Motion, the evidence, the debate, the points brought across by the Opposition, the Member for Diego Martin North/East especially, shows that they themselves should vote against this Motion because their evidence that they have brought forward shows that the Prime Minister deals with issues, with due process, allows and discusses with consultation and deals with issues expeditiously.

We must remember Minister Warner resigned in the best class, the best tenets of Westminster and it was accepted eventually by the hon. Prime Minister, as much as it may have hurt her heart, as much as she had, as former Minister Warner is not before the courts or any charges but she took the overall picture. She consulted and the Prime Minister acted with strength, integrity and intelligence, just like she acted in all other cases.

But this Motion shows that the Prime Minister acts decisively. And other examples in this country, for example—*[Interruption]* “no, no doh gih meh no time. Dis is a very serious thing. Yuh see, is not ah joke. Is not ah joke, Member for Port of Spain South. So, please just try to listen. This is a very serious thing. Today fuh me, tomorrow fuh you yuh know.” So let us be very serious. It is a serious Motion brought by the Member for Diego Martin West.

Now, for example, in a serious issue as the population, as the Member for Diego Martin West, as the round table has said that section 34 was a serious issue, the Prime Minister decisively acted within 19 days—19 days to deal with a critical matter like that involving independent institutions of the highest order—but in 19 days she acted.

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. A. ROBERTS]

Friday, April 26, 2013

“Mr. Speaker, dey have ah issue going on now, somewhere in some house, where even all those Members are witnesses, and more than 19 days passed, 22 days, and they cannot come to a conclusion on who hit who and who slap who and who beat who.” They cannot! But it is 22 days—[*Interruption*]

Miss Mc Donald: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker—

Hon. A. Roberts: But they are saying the Prime Minister.

Miss Mc Donald:—36(5) and 36(1).

Hon. A. Roberts: What? What is that?

7.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Well, I think that the relevance of that—

Hon. A. Roberts: Okay. Mr. Speaker, the relevance is, this Motion says, and I quote: “the Prime Minister did not act expeditiously with respect to the ...Minister of National Security”—expeditiously. I am showing that the Prime Minister on every occasion—and each situation is different—she allows natural justice to take place, she goes through the process, consultation, information gathering, and then she acts.

So if that side is saying that this Prime Minister, our Prime Minister, acted slowly, I am giving an example that is going on now, that is under their purview, and under the purview of a Prime Minister in waiting. Twenty-three days have passed and that issue has not been dealt with expeditiously or otherwise. So this is the point, and if they cannot understand it, I will speak to the people.

Former Prime Minister, Father of the Nation, Dr. Williams, under his Cabinet “ah man went and take his son out ah jail”. He did not act expeditiously and when he eventually acted, it was for a short time because “de” man came back in.

Also with the issues of O’Halloran and Prevatt, Lock Joint, BWIA, Tesoro, up to now there has been no action by that former Prime Minister. So, to call our Prime Minister, to bring a Motion against our Prime Minister for not acting, when she has acted strongly and firmly in every single issue, this Motion—what word was that Oropouche East, can I borrow?

Dr. Moonilal: Otiose.

Hon. A. Roberts: Otiose—is totally otiose. I learned something today.

Miss Mc Donald: What about Utara Rao?

Hon. Member: “What about de 10 per cent?”

Miss Mc Donald: And Calder Hart.

Hon. A. Roberts: Now, while, Member for Port of Spain South, you may think this is a joke—I will now get into the substantive Motion—this Motion here, Mr. Speaker—*[Interruption and crosstalk]*

Mr. Speaker: Continue, hon. Member.

Hon. A. Roberts:—this Motion and this debate one really about what is the benchmark for a Prime Minister to act, whether it is this Prime Minister or another Prime Minister, maybe you Member for Port of Spain South. What is the benchmark? When should a Prime Minister act? The Member for Diego Martin West in his presentation gave us examples and stated that a Prime Minister should act if “something just pop out” and some allegation comes out, the Prime Minister—he gave examples of Prime Ministers acting.

Is that what we want in this Parliament? Is that what the people of Trinidad and Tobago want? I do not know. Let us find out because, is it that we act when somebody is found guilty, because on that side they have said on countless occasions, the DPP, the court system—“they blame de Government even though de Government has no control over the DPP’s office, the police and who charge who and who go to court, Government has no control over that, those are independent institutions. But over here they always tell me and tell de Government, what happen, Calder Hart eh geh charge. Rao eh geh charge. Nobody eh geh charge!”

So is it their position—you see it is a moving—the benchmark moves, it is a moving goalpost all the time. Is it the idea and the belief of the Parliament that a Minister or Government Minister or MP must be fired or removed when they “geh charge”? Is that it? Or is it when they are found guilty? Or is it when they got charged as we saw with the former two Members that we spoke about? Or is it when a commission of enquiry report comes out, because we had the Uff enquiry? We had many enquiries. Is it at that point when there is need for a commission of enquiry that a Member of Parliament or a Minister should be fired? Should it be when a file is sent to the DPP? If that is so, based on two misleading articles in the *Guardian*, I should have been fired because the two articles came out and said: Minister of Sport by the DPP. “De Integrity Commission come and say what all yuh talking ’bout no truth to dat.”

But according to this benchmark here, if it is one that the Opposition wants, I am trying to figure out at what point are they saying that a Prime Minister must act to fire a Minister and remove a Member of Parliament. Not remove a Member

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. A. ROBERTS]

Friday, April 26, 2013

of Parliament because they cannot do that, but to fire a Minister out of the Cabinet or to take action. Is it when there is an Integrity Commission investigation? Is it when somebody makes a complaint there is investigation; because many of us here on this side or on that side, before it is investigated, whether it is an accusation with merit or not, is it at that point that a Minister gets fired?

You see it might be us now, it might be you next week, it might be you next year' "ah" mean, God forbid, but it might be. So you see this debate is not "ah" joke. It is a serious thing because if somebody wants to get rid of one of the Ministers on that side, if you all ever form the Government, is it that they just have to send a report to the Integrity Commission and your Prime Minister will fire you? Is that what we are saying? I just want to know. We have to get it clear.

Is it when allegations are made by a Member of Parliament because we have seen—and we looked at the tapes, we love "de" Channel 11, and we see "ah" former Prime Minister attacking a Member, making accusations across the floor under parliamentary privilege? Are we to fire a Member, a Minister, when a Prime Minister makes allegations across the floor? These are all questions the population has to understand and decide. This issue is not a joke issue about oh, let us take glee and pleasure, Chaguanas West gone, that is not the issue, it is a bigger Motion a very important one, with all due respect.

Is the benchmark for a Minister getting fired when the allegation is reported in the media? So if there is an allegation reported in the media 100 times, what is the benchmark, 100 articles if we google it, 50, 10, one article? At what stage do we fire a Minister, one article in a newspaper? Where is it? Because I can say Port of Spain South, Diego Martin West, today Diego Martin North/East and Point Fortin have on occasions for the last 10 weeks had a good time—"you see I am a fella my back broad. They have had a good time throwing words about one article in the *TnT Mirror* where they did not state anything or any name but they put 'loud mouth' and dey take joke. De minister, you, me, D'Abadie/O'Meara, right. One article, I wid two Spanish and smoking weed in ah—in somewhere."

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, this Motion is not about the Member for D'Abadie/O'Meara, even if he is speaking.

Hon. A. Roberts: What?

Mr. Speaker: "Yeah", I sustain.

Mr. Imbert: "Doh talk about yourself."

Mr. Speaker: Let us move on. It is not about you.

Hon. A. Roberts: Mr. Speaker—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: I know. I know. It is not about you.

Hon. A. Roberts:—it is not about me. It is about all of us. Mr. Speaker, I am linking it. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Please! Please! Please!

Hon. A. Roberts: “I not talking ‘bout me.”

Mr. Speaker: Members, please! I understand where you are going but I want to sustain the point that the hon. Member has made. We are not dealing with you or anybody else.

Hon. A. Roberts: All right, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: We are dealing with Chaguanas West in the context of those recitals and I am saying stick to that, please. Continue.

Hon. A. Roberts: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The substantive Motion deals with a Prime Minister, in this case our Prime Minister, the Member for Siparia and her—well, “huh”, in the words of the Member for Diego Martin West—her failure not to act expeditiously.

Miss Mc Donald: You said “dat” already.

Hon. A. Roberts: No, I am quoting, so I am quoting your Motion. “Doh” quote your Motion? [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: “Yeah”, but please, Member for Diego Martin North/East and Member for Port of Spain South—[*Interruption*]

Hon. A. Roberts: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Speaker:—allow the Member to speak, please.

Hon. A. Roberts: Now, this is the key [*Interruption*] point, Mr. Speaker, here this evening, and they could keep talking and interrupting as much as they want, I will just take a little longer, no problem. But the issue is, at what level, at what time, at what place does a Prime Minister take action? Our Prime Minister has shown in every instance on an individual basis that she has not only allowed everybody the opportunity and principles of natural justice, but she has acted decisively. So do not bring a Motion here to bring the Prime Minister’s action and make statements that she is afraid of anybody or she cannot do this; she can, she has and her track record speaks for itself.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will just ask—and I am not going to be long—this is the report [*Holds a sheaf of pages in his hands*] of the Integrity Committee, report of investigation. I have read through every word and I am glad that the Member for North/East read through it. I can tell you that what I have read here in this report,

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. A. ROBERTS]

Friday, April 26, 2013

there is no—the Member for Diego Martin West stated in his presentation that the report says there was misappropriation of state funds in here. This has nothing to do with state funds of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. It deals—that is what—the Member for Diego Martin West said that. It does not deal with state funds or Trinidad and Tobago funds. This report was very specific and deals mainly with the former Member for Chaguanas West in the Centre of Excellence issue.

Now, I am not going into all of these issues, but I am going to ask here publicly because while Port of Spain—the Member for Point Fortin can laugh—I am going to ask the Law Association and people of independence to go through this. It is very important, Mr. Speaker, because when you see a report like this, you must understand that having read through it, there are certain things that do not—I am not a lawyer but they just do not sit right, they do not sit with the laws of natural justice and due process.

For example, first and foremost, if you understand the situation and the history of FIFA and the involvement of the Member for Chaguanas West and Sepp Blatter to just—they were friends and they fell out. FIFA is a law unto itself. Now, what happened at that time is, and in this report this is where I ask the legal fraternity to go through and see whether the process, whether it is fair, whether it will constitute findings. The Member for Diego Martin North/East used strong terms; “findings” is a very strong term. Now, findings can come about based on certain procedures and abilities.

One of them, for example, a person must be able as stated by the Member for Diego Martin West to face their accuser and if “dey say something, dat de other person should be able to challenge”. For example, the Member for Diego Martin West said that in Pierre Road last night, the Member for Chaguanas West made some statements that are unchallenged and, therefore, he questions the veracity of the statement, fair enough. But if this report as stated here is also unchallenged by the Member for Chaguanas West, the former CONCACAF president, and there are gaps in the information, then we want to know, as it is a public document, we want to know from independent legal minds who go through this and give us an analysis of the report.

For example, in this report nobody—the 38 witnesses were not sworn in, so all the testimony was not under oath. What are the ramifications of evidence given not under oath? I do not know. I am asking for an independent panel to go through. What are the ramifications of (a)—[*Interruption*] “ah”?

Mr. Imbert: Wrap up.

Hon. A. Roberts: No, you see—*[Interruption]*

Mr. Speaker: Just ignore Diego Martin North/East—*[Inaudible]*

Mr. Imbert: “Wrap up nah.”

Hon. A. Roberts: North/East—

Mr. Speaker: Continue.

Hon. A. Roberts:—the Member for Diego Martin West made a pertinent point, he said that the former Minister last night made or presented evidence that was unchallenged. That is a serious point, that is true. But the same thing must be said in this case, the evidence put forward went unchallenged. No witnesses were cross-examined, they were not even told who the witnesses were and they were not sworn under oath. Is that evidence?

We need a legal mind or independent minds to tell me and the country, what is the difference between why do we have to swear on the Bible when we go into court to go under cross-examination and so on? And what is the difference in testimony given under oath as opposed to not doing so, Member for Port of Spain South? You could enlighten me, these are questions, because unlike some other people, I read through it. Furthermore, what are the principles of natural justice? You have a war with Sepp Blatter and the former Minister, you have a war. The person who was chosen after the Member for Chaguanas West resigned to replace him, Mr. Webb was put there by interim not elected was selected by Sepp Blatter.

This selected person chooses some individuals, pays their salaries, provides them with all the witnesses necessary, provides them with 60 or 70 per cent of the information because the report says and categorically, that no documents, no records from their four offices of CONCACAF, Guatemala, New York—I think Miami and Trinidad and Tobago. This report says that no information was taken from the Port of Spain or the Trinidad and Tobago office, no statements were given or taken and evidence presented by the former president. So, there are gaps in the evidence presented. So I am asking, if all the evidence was there, does it give the report more credibility? Or if there are gaps is there less credibility? And legal minds would let me know.

7.15 p.m.

Furthermore, all of this was done—*[Interruption]* The committee—Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: Please Members, allow—

Hon. A. Roberts: Let me also be quick. I do not want to spend much time on this, but I would love—I just wanted to go on record that I am asking the Law Association, some independent legal minds, not from our side and not from your side, to go through it—

Hon. Member: From FIFA.

Hon. A. Roberts: And not from FIFA—some independent—Trinidad and Tobago Law Association, whoever to go through it and give us a report on their opinion of the report.

Furthermore, this report also—[*Laughter*] Yes laugh, it is a big joke. It is okay. This time for him; maybe next time for you, you know. We have to be very careful. This is a serious thing.

Mr. Speaker, furthermore, this report—[*Interruption*] Oh my goodness!

Mr. Speaker: Member for Point Fortin, I am hearing your voice. You are shouting across the floor; please!

Members on both sides of the House, could we have some silence and allow the Member for D'Abadie/O'Meara to speak in silence. Continue hon. Member!

Hon. A. Roberts: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just mentioning some of the possible weaknesses in any report because it is a very serious matter when you are coming to findings of fact and coming to conclusions that somebody committed fraud and misappropriation. These are serious things.

In this jurisdiction, to get convicted or to go through the process to get convicted of fraud, you have to—it is a very difficult thing. You have to present documents; you have to swear affidavit; you have to go witness in the box, cross-examination, lawyer on “yuh”—this report—all of those tenets of jurisprudence and natural justice are not here, so I am asking independent people to tell me. I want to know too just like everybody. I want to know. Information is king. How did it come about? What is the weight of it?

Furthermore, from September 18 to April 18, six [*sic*] months, this committee of three, as they state here, they went through four terabytes. Now, I did not know what a terabyte is. “I thought that is Jurassic Park so I ask my girlfriend what dat is. They say on a normal laptop like dat ting, —yuh could correct me, Diego Martin North/East—on dat iPad and so on, you may have about 20 megabytes and yuh pack it up with music and information and documents and so on.” [*Interruption*] How much?

“Twenty gigabytes? Okay, 20 or 100 gigabytes and then they say a terabyte is a thousand gigabytes. Now, I understand a thousand gigabytes. This report here—ah comin to deal with the 100 million, just now, Diego Martin Central, doh worry. Ah comin to deal with it. This report says that they investigated four terabytes of information. Dat is 4,000 gigabyte. Dey went through dat. They went through another 1.6 terabytes from another office. that is 5.6 terabytes. They interviewed 38 persons; all in the space of six months.”

Mr. Speaker, in six months, “I doh know”, but I have checked out investigations even into small matters and I have never seen a report and come inconclusive in six months. They are fastest in the world. I am just saying that is very impressive.

Furthermore, it even states in here that they were told—somebody was told—that due to timelines—because you must remember that they decided that this report must come out for a CONCACAF Symposium or congress and they had a deadline date. So September 18 to the congress, this report had to come, come hell or high water. So I am asking, in their rush to create a report, was there the possibility of something? I want independent law association and legal people to go through it and report to us. I want to know, you want to know and the population wants to know.

Furthermore, in here, just the last point on this because I have to move on to the more important part, the taxpayers’ money. I came here to deal with the taxpayers’ money and I will deal with that. In this report—[*Interruption*]

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: He came here to deal with that and not the Motion?

Dr. Khan: Forget her! Forget her!

Dr. Griffith: Carry on!

Hon. A. Roberts: Mr. Speaker, in this report, a Mr. Sands, who was a Member of FIFA and CONCACAF and so on for 15 years, was then elevated, when Jack Warner, the Member for Chaguanas West and—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Member for Port of Spain South, please! If you need to talk to the leader of the House, could you do that behind my Chair. Continue hon. Member.

Hon. A. Roberts: When the former President of CONCACAF, the Member for Chaguanas West, resigned and Chuck Blazer, who was the General Secretary, Sepp Blatter put Webb as the President and a fella called Sands as the General Secretary.

In this report here—because you would have seen reported in the media that shredding of documents was going on—I am sure everybody, when they saw that shredding of documents, that is a serious thing. “Shredding of documents has implications, innuendo, when yuh shredding documents, it means you want to hide someting; somebody tief someting; you want to hide uh trail of wrongdoing.” So obviously, the media, the population, the world grabbed on to this word, this “shredding” of documents.

You know, Mr. Speaker, when you read through this, talking about shredding of documents, let me tell you what happened—and this is in the report. Mr. Sands came here, this is his witness statement here; he asked the Member for Chaguanas West to come and talk to him to get some information on the Centre of Excellence and to discuss all these matters. This was after the Member for Chaguanas West had resigned from FIFA in June of 2011. Right!

Now, Mr. Speaker, Sands said that he came in September 2012. Let me repeat that. The Member for Chaguanas West resigned from FIFA in June 2011. Sands says here that he came to meet with the Member for Chaguanas West in September 2012. The Member for Chaguanas West, who had so much to hide, after resigning, met with Mr. Sands at the Ministry and then took him to Edward Street to show him where the office of CONCACAF used to be, on the corner of Edward Street and so on. Mr. Sands said, on arrival at that office in September 2012, he saw shredding of documents going on.

Dr. Khan: He is a mad man.

Hon. A. Roberts: Shredding of documents going on in 2012, “a year and four/five months after a man resign. So let’s go through logically, because I am a logical person, I aint too bright. So I resign; bacchanal in FIFA. I resign in June 2011, right, but ah get so busy, ah forget to shred documents for a year and five months. Ah have documents, you know—[*Interruption*] Mr. Speaker?”

Mr. Speaker: Members, Members, Members! I am appealing to you again. Member for Port of Spain South, Members on the Government Benches, could you allow the hon. Member for D’Abadie/O’Meara to continue? Continue, hon. Member.

Hon. A. Roberts: “Mr. Speaker, so here it is that June 2011, a man resign, another man come to investigate and talk to him a year and five months after, September 2012. De man who dey accusing take de man who investigating to ah building that used to be de office. De man say he see documents getting shredded ah year and five months after. If dat seem logical to them, well okay; but dis is why I ask that this report be dissected by independent people; not by me; not by

anybody on this side because da is we friend, da is our colleague, dat is our comrade; not by anybody on dat side because we know why; but some independent people with legal minds to go through and give us a report, please.”

But here we are now, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Diego Martin West and many speakers, very important, because taxpayers’ money and ensuring that taxpayers’ money is not misappropriated in any form or fashion is very important. So, here we go.

Over the years we have heard many things. We have heard many stories and, hopefully, today we will get a modicum of the truth. For example, on Friday, April 11, former Minister Gary Hunt gave a figure. You see what happens when you do not have facts? Figures are bandied about. Some of the figures people would hear—\$205 million.

You hear, Gary Hunt says, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, in the 2000 World Cup effort, gave \$88 million. You have here, in a Lasana Liburd article, that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago gave \$173 million. It was received by Trinidad and Tobago public and private sector, sorry, \$173 million, and then \$32 million extra from the PNM Government for the rewards, so that takes you up to the \$205 million figure.

Miss Mc Donald: Mr. Speaker, I rise on 36(1). This is irrelevant.

Mr. Speaker: “Yeah”; no, no, he is responding to allegations that have been made earlier. Continue!

Hon. A. Roberts: “Mr. Speaker, I doh know. I really—this is taxpayers’ money we talkin about. The entire Motion, the entire contribution of Diego Martin West was about taxpayers’ money; and it was a terrible sin and you must never do that and we agree. So I am not sure if Port of Spain South is following. Is taxpayers’ money. So here is where the \$205 million figure comes early; not in a Camini Maharaj exposé, here. It’s been around, \$205 million.”

We have here Roger Boynes, former PNM Minister of Sport, \$78 million given to football for the 2006 World Cup. So far we have \$88 million; we have \$78 million; we have \$205 million, right.

Now, in this Parliament, the former Minister of Sport and Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann’s West [sic] read a statement into the *Hansard* into this House and he stated:— [*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: Port of Spain North/St. Ann’s West?

Hon. A. Roberts: The former Minister, Ma’am. Oh God, “allyuh” pay attention, please. [*Interruption*] The person you replaced.

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. A. ROBERTS]

Friday, April 26, 2013

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, state corporations, private sector and FIFA contributed the total sum of \$205,690,113.50 to the Trinidad and Tobago Football Federation for the national senior team's participation in FIFA World Cup 2006—\$205,690,113.50. That is the \$205 million that we are hearing about.

Now of that amount, \$60,387,000 came from the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs. The sum of \$28,387,000 was contributed for preparation and participation of the national team for World Cup 2006 and \$32 million as rewards to the national senior team and technical staff.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the speaking time of the hon. Member for D'Abadie/O'Meara has expired.

Motion made: That the hon. Member's speaking time be extended by 30 minutes. [*Hon. E. McLeod*]

Question put and agreed to.

Hon. A. Roberts: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, so here we have the figure of \$205 million and then the—[*Interruption*] “Pshaw! Ahh!”

Mr. Speaker: Please Member, I am hearing you disturbing the proceedings.

Hon. A. Roberts: The Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, from *Hansard*, the statement of the former Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs, Gary Hunt, states that \$60 million of government's taxpayers' money—this is what the Member for Diego Martin West was talking about, very important, taxpayers' money—\$60 million went in, \$28,387,731.50, to preparation and participation of the national senior team for World Cup 2006, as well as \$32 million after the world cup. So we played Sweden, “we draw”; we lost to England 2:0; we lost to Paraguay and we came back home and the PNM gave the players good reward, a million dollars each and so on. That was \$32 million. Each and every one got.

7.30 p.m.

Now, the problem with this statement, Sir, is that when you leave to innuendo or when you use words like “to the TTF”, it means—and people are left with the perception—that that money went into the TTF and, therefore, anybody with nefarious means had the opportunity to shift it, to move it, to take it, to abscond with it. Unfortunately, the \$32 million did not go to the TTF. It went directly to each player and staff who all got their money; who all got their money. [*Crosstalk*] Yes—and go and tell Simmons that—that is the attitude. It is taxpayers' money.

Now, furthermore, this document put in the *Hansard* by former Minister Gary Hunt says that for the world cup campaign TSTT put \$15,357,000; National Gas Company put \$500,000 [*Interruption*—taxpayers' money, right! No problem, taxpayers money—\$15 million TSTT; \$500,000 National Gas Company—I do not know why the Member for Port of Spain North/East is so worried—TSTT okay. TSTT you say it is taxpayers' money; that is all right, count it there, taxpayers' money; National Lotteries Control Board, \$5 million; Petrotrin, \$1 million.

Hon. Member: Taxpayers money!

Hon. A. Roberts: Okay, very good. Let us go in chorus now. Now, the problem with that is that here the national lotteries \$5 million was not for the world cup effort. It was given by Louis Lee Sing who was the chairman at a Marriott press conference—\$1 million a year for the development of youth children's football. So, that \$5 million should not and cannot be here.

He went on to say, the private sector contributed—you see this, this is big money. You see, the \$205 million is all they keep saying—and \$205 million, plenty money disappeared! It disappeared! The facts of the matter are this: they passionately stated, Gary Hunt—the private sector contributed the sum of \$88,165,000 to the Trinidad and Tobago Football Federation broken down as follows for the world cup 2006 preparation: Atlantic LNG contributed the sum of \$3 million toward the payment of salaries for the team's technical staff for the period September 2005 to December 2005.

That \$3 million was not for world cup 2006. That \$3 million was for the qualification period. So, you see, where all of this comes from is the court case and the Soca Warriors—the Soca Warriors getting—this is where the genesis of this came—that Jack Warner went—Chaguanas West, but he was not MP then—to the players and say, “We give yuh 50 per cent.” So, therefore, the players said, “Listen, give us this and give us that and, therefore, a figure came out, and this \$205 million came out. But when you check it, the players were due what was prepared after qualification.

We qualified in November 2005 as we played against Bahrain and Dennis Lawrence scored. So, that \$3 million here under “Atlantic”—you see why you must not—you must come to Parliament with facts—mislead. That Atlantic money, \$3 million, was for the team's technical staff and salaries for September 2005 to December 2006. Not applicable to the world cup effort whatsoever with 2006 qualification. BHP Billiton, \$150,000, BUSTA, \$1 million, Titan and so. But they also included in here a part that is put in the *Hansard*, Adidas, \$72,450,000 over four years.

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[HON. A. ROBERTS]

Friday, April 26, 2013

Mr. Speaker, this statement is headed and was put into the *Hansard* of Trinidad and Tobago which forms a basis of fact and credibility, states that funds contributed toward FIFA World Cup 2006, in there is \$74 million from Adidas for four years for sponsorship of Trinidad and Tobago's footballers—whether it is the senior team, the B team, the Olympic team, the girls team, the under-15 team, the under-17 team, the under-13 team with boots and so on. The former Minister came in here and included that as money—\$72 million as money for the World Cup 2006 effort. That is not true, Mr. Speaker, because if you put this in there and I am a player, I then say, “Well, I have to get 50 per cent of that.” It is not true.

Moving on: “Leh meh give yuh the true position of taxpayers' money”—this is very important—for World Cup 2006, and listen carefully.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, this matter is sub judice. This whole issue about how much money was paid, who collected what is before the court as we speak. He should not be commenting on it.

Mr. Speaker: Okay. That is a fact.

Mr. Imbert: And stating things as facts.

Mr. Speaker: Wait, wait, wait, Member, please. [*Laughter*] Hon Member for D'Abadie/O'Meara, Minister of Sport, that matter I am advised is before the court, and I would like us to stay away from that as far as possible, please.

Hon. A. Roberts: Mr. Speaker, while the Member for Diego Martin North/East has stated that it is before the court, the issue in this Motion that was brought up by the Member for Diego Martin West, the substantive issue was the misappropriation of large sums of taxpayers' money by the Member for Chaguanas West and former special advisor to TTF—[*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Please, please, Member. Let the Member continue.

Hon. A. Roberts:—therefore, I have to put on record the actual amount of taxpayers—

Mr. Imbert: No, that is the exact matter that is sub judice; the actual amount of money and who it went to. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: All right. Member, let us not go into an area that could prejudice a matter that is currently before the court. Do not go into details as you are going, because I am saying we could have a real and substantial danger of prejudice. So I am saying, we can make reference, but we cannot go into details that can, as I said, pose a danger, real and substantial, in terms of the outcome of a matter that is currently before the court. That is all I am advising you to do.

Hon. A. Roberts: May I ask for clarification, Sir?

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Hon. A. Roberts: The judgment has already been handed down therefore, this matter is not before for description and evidence of money. The judgment—
[*Interruption*]

Miss Mc Donald: The Speaker ruled. You cannot talk—[*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: All right! All right! Member, Member, may I suggest that we move on and not dwell on that matter any longer. Let us move on, please.

Hon. A. Roberts: Yes, Mr. Speaker, you see, I can understand the angst at not wanting to hear the truth. They brought a Motion to hear the truth, and when they hear the truth they do not want to hear it because the innuendo out there—the *Express* articles, the media, the continuous “barragement” of false information is why we are here today. So, I would not tell the truth, but suffice it to say, Sir, that what they are spewing and what they are stating is totally fallacious, and the facts are here from the Ministry, from the permanent secretary, from the public servants, to show the quantity of public funds—[*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Please, please, please, Member for Port of Spain South, this is about the 25th time I am hearing your voice rocketing across the Chamber. I have appealed to you on my legs. I have sat here and asked you, please, please, and you are just ignoring me. When you ignore me like that, you disrespect the House and you are the Chief Whip. Please, lead by example. Hon. Member, continue.

Hon. A. Roberts: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I will wrap up. So, it is sub judice. So when they talk about it and they read about it and all the figures are put out in five part piece in the *Express*, it is not impacting, but here in the Parliament where people elected me to come here and represent the people, Sir—[*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: I have ruled.

Hon. A. Roberts: “But a-a!” I am trying to go, but they want to talk about me. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: I have ruled. I have ruled on the matter, let us move on.

Hon. Member: You are disrespecting the Chair.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I have ruled on the matter, let us move on, please.

Hon. A. Roberts: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, truth hurts.

Mr. Speaker: Please, Member, please.

Hon. A. Roberts: Mr. Speaker, so today, we are here today and we can see—
[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Member for Port of Spain—[*Interruption*]

Hon. A. Roberts: Poor fellow. Mr. Speaker, this Motion as stated by Oropouche East—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Member for Diego Martin North/East.

Hon. Member: Put the Member out.

Mr. Speaker: I do not want to put any Member out of this Chamber tonight. Please, please, Members. Members, could you have—I am not in the mood to do that as yet. [*Laughter*]

Mrs. Khan: “Yuh know who going first.” [*Laughter*]

Mr. Speaker: I am asking Members and so on to abide by the ruling of the Chair, and allow the Member to speak in silence. I am appealing to the Member for Diego Martin North East in particular. I want to refer to the member for Port of Spain South, again. Please. Hon. Member could you, continue.

Hon. A. Roberts: Mr. Speaker, this Motion is otiose to borrow—did I pronounce it correctly, Member for Oropouche East?—at best, but it brings up a serious issue about the benchmarks and the standards of Prime Ministers present and future to hold when dealing with Members of their Cabinet and Ministers of Government. What level and at what stage should a Minister be fired?

We have heard many permutations, many positions—whether it is an allegation, a news report, a hundred news reports, a million Google hits, how many people do not like you, who hates you, who loves you—we would like to know, as Members of Parliament who represent the people, at what stage does a Member deserve to be removed from a Cabinet? Because in this instance of this Government—the Government of the People’s Partnership—the Prime Minister has shown on several occasions that after due process, after all laws of natural justice, consultation and evidence gathering, that she is strong enough; she has the motivation to provide good governance to deal with issues, unlike previous administrations. Unlike previous Prime Ministers, our Prime Minister has taken decisive action; will continue to do so. And, Mr. Speaker, with those few words, and having the opportunity to put the truth on the table while some may be upset, I say to you that this Motion will go, as all the others brought by the Member for

Diego Martin West, where the sun shall not shine on it again under the rising sun or any future sun as that Member for Diego Martin West, once again, has failed to make any Motion of sense, of potence or potential brilliance. Once again, he has failed so to do.

Mr. Speaker, God bless! Thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: I think I will now call on the hon. Member for Diego Martin West.

Dr. Keith Rowley (*Diego Martin West*): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the moments of disruptions and disturbances, it is my view that we have had a useful debate. It is clear, Mr. Speaker, not unexpected, that Members of the Government would vigorously support any perceived attack on the Government or, particularly, on the Prime Minister. So, let us take that for what it is.

However, Mr. Speaker, maybe I should start with the last speaker first who clearly was unprepared and either forced his way into the debate or was invited in [*Laughter*] and sailed closely to the Standing Order of tedious repetition.

Miss Mc Donald: Yes.

Dr. K. Rowley: But within all of that there were a couple of kernels which require attention, and the one I want to address is his thesis that this report done by Sir David Simmons and his team is really an irresponsible piece of work that is rooted in violations of the principle of natural justice.

Mr. Imbert: Imagine that!

Dr. K. Rowley: And he gave a lot of legal advice to Sir David Simmons as to how he should proceed to protect people's rights when he wants to make findings.

7.45 p.m.

So what I think we should do, Mr. Speaker, and maybe I should do it myself as a favour to Sir David Simmons, is to send him a copy of the *Hansard* of my friend from D'Abadie/O'Meara, so that Sir David Simmons would know how to conduct himself in the future. And that really brings me to the point, that whenever the Commission of Enquiry into the 1990 Coup comes to an end and a report is presented under the hands of Sir David Simmons, we would know exactly where to throw it. He, initially, was not attacked by the Member for D'Abadie/O'Meara. Sir David Simmons work was attacked by the Member for Chaguanas West first who described it as baseless and malicious.

Miss Mc Donald: And vacuous.

Dr. K. Rowley: This is how the Government responds to the synopsis of an outstanding jurist who looked at all the situations and presented his findings to the authorities. So while we understand—and I have no problem with my colleagues on the other side, none whatsoever; I have no problem with them getting up vigorously—I have done it before myself—getting up vigorously and defending your Government and your Prime Minister. That is what the debate is about; it is called the cut and thrust of politics, cut and thrust of debate. But if you are to be taken seriously, you cannot really take the position that notwithstanding the distinguished career of Sir David Simmons, he just took leave of his senses because Jack Warner was involved and decided to ignore the tenets of natural justice.

Mr. Speaker, let me read for you a page of this document, because a lot of time was spent by my colleague from Oropouche East, and more so, from D'Abadie/O'Meara, and I am not sure if it was done today, but, certainly, by the Member for Chaguanas West in another forum—

Mr. Imbert: No today.

Dr. K. Rowley:—belabouring the point that the report is not worth the paper it is written on.

Miss Mc Donald: Exactly!

Dr. K. Rowley: And my friend from Oropouche East who in fact—I am sorry I did not have him on my debating team in school because he would have been an excellent member of my team. Because what we used to do then was that you would hand a piece of paper, blind, to team A, and say, “Team A, you are opposing; team B you are defending”. It had nothing to do with what you believe, you just had to debate based on what you were handed. And he did a very good job. He made a lot of points, took a lot of time and very eloquently, and sometimes very humorously, spoke about his colleague from Chaguanas West not being afforded the opportunity to respond. And they all are on that vein, because the Member for Chaguanas West, himself, came out and said—he said they knew where to find the information and therefore they should never have been wrong in their findings.

Let me read for you a letter from January 29, 2013. This letter is addressed to the Chairman of this committee—the Integrity Committee report of investigation. This was the Integrity Committee which Sir David Simmons headed, and, of

course, we were told that this work was going on. The whole world knew this work was going on, and, I dare say, the whole world had an interest in this matter because football is a worldwide sport, and more than a sport, it is human beings carrying on in a kind of way that we all enjoy and sometimes it gets to the point where wars are declared based on the scores.

However, Sir David Simmons would have written, notwithstanding all that you have heard from my colleagues on the other side, who out of duty and loyalty, not out of any principle of what is right or wrong, decent or indecent, it is out of duty to their colleague and loyalty to the Prime Minister. Sir David Simmons wrote to the Member for Chaguanas West in his capacity as the former head of CONCACAF. Listen to the response he got from him:

Dear Sir Simmons,

Your letter dated January 21, 2013.

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of January 21, 2013, in which you requested information related to CONCACAF.

As you are no doubt aware, I resigned my position as President of CONCACAF on June 20, 2011, and at that time declared, publicly, that I will also relinquish all ties with football-related activities with CONCACAF and otherwise.

Having done so, I have no documents or record in any form in my possession or otherwise which would allow me to respond to matters contained in your letter.

With reference to your request for a meeting at some later date—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Leader, we have a Procedural Motion that we have to deal with here.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

The Minister of Housing and the Environment (Hon. Dr. Roodal Moonilal): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 10(11), I beg to move that this House continue to sit until the completion of the matter before it.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: Continue, hon. Leader of the Opposition.

PRIME MINISTER'S FAILURE TO ACT (RE. FORMER MINISTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY)

Mr. K. Rowley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was just saying that after a lot of effort was put into making a case that the Member was wronged, and that the

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[DR. ROWLEY]

Friday, April 26, 2013

work of Sir David Simmons was substandard and unfair, I was quoting the response from the MP for Chaguanas West responding to a request to participate, to cooperate, to assist, to protect himself. He said:

...I have no documents or records in any form in my possession or otherwise which would allow me to respond to the matters contained in your letter.

With reference to your request for a meeting at some later date, I do not believe that such a meeting is necessary, nor would it provide any additional information.

In other words, I am flatly refusing to have anything to do with anything which you are working on.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that might be so, that is his position, but after you take—
[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: What is the date?

Mr. K. Rowley: That is dated January 29, 2013. Mr. Speaker, a person who is in jeopardy where a finding can be made takes this position, and then when a finding is made against you supported by substantial information and/or evidence, you get your friends in the Cabinet, your colleagues in the Cabinet to come and keep me here whole night—[*Desk thumping*—to say that you have not been given the opportunity to [*Inaudible*]. And the night before, the same documents you did not have in any form or fashion, you have a whole fleet of documents to make a production on television to ask the young lady, “Read! Read! Read!”. [*Laughter*] I have to come to the conclusion now, as I suspected then, that some of those documents last night were fabricated. [*Desk thumping*] Because if a colleague of ours, a senior Member of our Government, is writing to a commissioner who is heading a commission of enquiry, a serious matter, where already across the world serious allegations were made against him for misconduct—what manner of man is this?

You have misconduct being made against you by people who you would say are irresponsible; they are persecuting you, “dey doh like yuh because yuh black”, because “yuh” from Todds Road, because “yuh” successful—come on, Mr. Speaker. And then Sir David Simmons, one of the most highly respected Caribbean citizens, gives you the opportunity, as my colleague for D’Abadie/O’Meara says, it is a requirement in law, and you write him and tell him: “I have nothing in any form or fashion which could assist you”. And he said,

“Okay, let us have a meeting”. He said, “A meeting is not required”, and then you come here and have them telling me that my Motion is a waste of time, because the report is a waste of the time and it is unfair. I want the population of Trinidad and Tobago to come to their own conclusion on this matter that I have just mentioned. [*Desk thumping*]

Then, Mr. Speaker, under our Standing Orders, a Motion like this, if it is going to be filed or it is contemplated, the person contemplating it has to be cognizant of the Standing Orders. I gave you 12 days’ notice, or approximately, but it could not be less than 12 days. So, driven by what was in the public domain, building up to a level of unacceptability and the reaction from the Government, very similar to what we heard here today, which is, “Dis is not a problem. No big thing. Leh we go dong de road like dat, what yuh all talking bout, da is football”. When I saw that being the position of the Government I decided to file a Motion to call the Prime Minister to account, and the Motion was filed on April 12. But today I am being told that two weeks ago the Member for Chaguanas offered his resignation.

Hon. Member: Secret.

Dr. K. Rowley: So let us put those two things together. Operating independently and not knowing about that, I filed a Motion so that the House could do what we did today. So the population could get a deeper insight into what we are dealing with and what risk we face.

My colleague from Oropouche East spent a lot of time saying that the Motion was a waste of time, and he wanted to know what on earth we would have talked about, had we not updated the Motion to speak about things that happened after the filing. But, Mr. Speaker, on one hand, he is saying he has no idea what I would have spoken about had there not been the meeting last night and had there not been this report coming out subsequently, but clearly, there was a lot to be spoken about because it was so disturbing to the Member for Chaguanas that he offered his resignation—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Imbert: Two weeks ago.

Mr. K. Rowley:—two weeks ago. So, clearly, two weeks ago the circumstances of public disquiet were such that we are being told out of their very mouths today that he offered his resignation two weeks ago, but the same mouth is asking: what would the Leader of the Opposition talk about? I would have talked about the components that drove him to offering his resignation. [*Desk*

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[DR. ROWLEY]

Friday, April 26, 2013

thumping] Because as we spoke here today, Mr. Speaker, talking to you, this matter did not suddenly come upon us, and, in fact, the Motion recognized that. The tenet of this Motion was that we were having this problem climbing, climbing and climbing, and we really have to do something about it.

They all focused on the firing of a Minister, but in attempting to trash the Motion they did not look at the lettering of the Motion. The Motion simply talks about appropriate action to protect the image. What appropriate action? As a matter of fact, I might have been saying, "Fire the Minister", and if I was saying that I would have been in very good company with their colleague from St. Augustine, because he and his party, which is part of the coalition that is running this country, they were calling for the firing of the Minister.

The Motion says appropriate action; it may very well be, Mr. Speaker, that if the Prime Minister was doing as if she knew that there was a problem, and that she was on top of it and it would play itself out in a particular way, this Motion may never have been filed. The Prime Minister could have given comfort to the population that she was concerned about what was building up in the society and in the international community about her Minister and us.

But instead, one got the impression that the Prime Minister was prepared to bury her head in the sand, like this was not happening, and "If we keep quiet, it will go away."

8.00 p.m.

In instances when there was enough information to cause us to be disturbed, she was belligerently saying, "I stand by all my Ministers." So even as information was coming to us that all was not well and that this Minister was saying one thing on Monday, another thing on Tuesday, something else on Friday and the three ends could never meet, she was saying, "I stand by my Ministers."

When there was sufficient information to cause us to believe that a Prime Minister should be concerned and should be paying attention to these developments, I decided to bring a Motion to this House so that the people of this country could get some details on this matter. What happened in the meantime?

After the filing of the Motion, the situation became one that even to the Prime Minister herself it was no longer tenable to continue to defend as she was defending before. Her own words, "I defend all my Ministers." Come April 2013, and she could not stand on that position, she had to ask the Minister, or accept from the Minister, his exit from the Cabinet. [*Desk thumping*] On that basis alone, Mr. Speaker, the substance of the Motion has been proven: that the Prime Minister was tardy in treating with this matter. [*Desk thumping*]

And then, even as the bulk of the debate today talked about the matters relating to the suitability of the Minister in the first place, there is something that I took very careful notice of: neither the former Minister from Chaguanas West, nor my colleague from Oropouche East, nor my colleague from D'Abadie O'Meara, not one of them was able to take issue with the major concern of this Motion, which is: notwithstanding what may have happened in the FIFA empire and how the truth or untruths would play out there, with respect to the specifics of public moneys of Trinidad and Tobago, not one of them engaged the issue of public moneys going to the TTFB finding itself into the corporate body owned by Mr. Jack Warner and his interests. [*Desk thumping*]

We had the ridiculous argument of my colleague from D'Abadie/O'Meara who was trying to make a case of accuracy, that it was not \$205 million that went to the TTFB; it was not \$78 million. If it was \$1 million and it went to the TTFB and it ended up in the private business of Mr. Warner, a Minister of Government, where he had corporate control and general direction, and as my colleague from Diego Martin North/East pointed out, where he was in fact signing the cheques—if it was even \$10, it would have been a problem. [*Desk thumping*] So I do not know why my colleague from D'Abadie/O'Meara kept us here whole night trying to prove it was not \$205 million, it was \$201 million. [*Laughter*]

Then he went further to seek to make a distinction between the use to which the money was to be put, based on what the source was saying. Look how long we had to listen to him, sailing close, close to tedious repetition, to say that somebody said that the money from Atlantic LNG was for this, and the money was for that and the money was for the other. That is not the problem; he missed the problem completely. The problem was that these moneys were originating from the state sector—equals public money. They were going to the TTFB for whatever purpose, but the information in the public domain, which stands unchallenged at this point tonight, is that some of those moneys—I do not know how much—significant sums of those moneys leaked into the private empire of the Member for Chaguanas West. [*Desk thumping*] That is the sum total of his concerns.

The effort put out by the Member for Chaguanas to lead us away from that, is the basis on which I have repeated over and over today that in assessing these matters and treating with them from the point of view of prime ministerial appointment to the Cabinet, that character matters. They did not agree. We had a long discourse today about somebody's lack of suitability for prime ministership.

Mr. Speaker, I will simply say to my colleague from Oropouche East that you might have a long journey, but as you make each step do not confuse walking for

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[DR. ROWLEY]

Friday, April 26, 2013

running, and you have no crystal ball as to how far we are going to get. [*Desk thumping*] [*Interruption*]

Mr. Roberts: Is the Member aware that the TTF—I know some people mix it up with TFA—is a company registered in the Register of Companies for Trinidad and Tobago?

Dr. K. Rowley: I have no idea what is the relevance of what you are talking about. [*Laughter and crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker, having deliberately, and I dare say, strategically refused to cooperate with investigations into these and other matters, but specifically where public moneys were at risk and there is a need, and that need remains to find out what happened to those public moneys, [*Crosstalk*] we have the Member coming here, even today, he has not changed his position where he said that nobody— [*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Members, I would like to hear what the Leader of the Opposition is saying, and I am being disturbed, so I ask Members to observe Standing Order 40(b) and (c). Continue, hon. Member.

Dr. K. Rowley: I was talking about the deliberate and strategic reaction of the Prime Minister's—I will not say protégé—but the Prime Minister's Minister, where, knowing what he has done, knowing what was being done, knowing what was at risk of public interest, tells us with a straight face, “Nobody ever put a question to me,” and according to my colleagues on the other side, we have to accept that as a total, either exoneration or lack of any wrongdoing on the part of the Member. Mr. Speaker, we cannot accept that. We would have preferred to have heard that there was cooperation and the cooperation resulted in a finding that there was nothing to worry about, and maybe we would not have been here today at all.

It is not one thing that happened. We take careful note of the fact that serious allegations were made against a Minister of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, with respect to moneys that were directed to the suffering people of Haiti, [*Crosstalk*] and all we have got from that is a flippant dismissal by the Minister—a flippant dismissal. I saw a high-ranking official from Haiti responding to a question put to him about this matter, and he was purporting to confirm in contradiction to the Member for Chaguanas West that significant sums of money aimed for hungry, suffering people in Haiti, did not reach them.

When I look at the number of instances where even today we were able to contradict statements made, even today, by the Member for St. Augustine, it bothers me. I am asking myself, “What if he was also wrong about the money for

Haiti?" Mr. Speaker, in Haiti there is something called dirt pie, where they dig up dirt in the drain, dry it and serve it as biscuits. I would hate to want to know that any colleague of mine in this Parliament can be properly accused of depriving them of resources that could have given them a pie made of flour as against one made of earth.

Hon. Member: *Haiti I'm Sorry.*

Dr. K. Rowley: In defending what has happened, the defence itself raises questions, because I do not want to go into the details, but we have seen enough to understand that what passed for what a colleague of mine called "FIFA ethics" should not be allowed to become the ethics of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*] That is all we are saying.

My colleague from D'Abadie/O'Meara today made it quite clear that FIFA is a law unto itself—those were his own words—and therefore they govern their business, certainly not according to standards that the average person would accept. If FIFA's business was crafted within an empire where it is a law unto itself, the bottom line of that, today 2013, FIFA's biggest problem is not football, but it is trying to eradicate the cancer of corruption which is the culture of the organization. [*Desk thumping*] All we are saying is that having been exposed to those FIFA ethics, we must reject them as the standards being offered to us for the governance of Trinidad and Tobago. Statements and actions of the Member for Chaguanas West indicate that left unattended, it could easily become so.

The defence put up by his colleagues worry me. They talk about being surprised that I am the one who is prosecuting this Motion. Mr. Speaker, where is the parallel? Where is the parallel. The parallel is this: they are saying because I was persecuted by my own government I should be so softhearted and so bleeding heart that anybody who appears to have questions to answer, I would be coming forward and saying, "I know about that, and therefore you should be allowed to go free"; no. As a matter of fact, if they want to learn anything from me, do not try to learn and expect me to give a pass to anybody, because I too was persecuted.

What they should learn is that you must be able to challenge your own government, if you have to and if the circumstances warrant it. If you could do that, then you would have learned something. But instead, what we could have heard here today is a recognition that things did not go right; things are not going right. Nobody is asking anybody to persecute anybody. But this burying your head in the sand and trying to pretend that you do not know right from wrong, that

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[DR. ROWLEY]

Friday, April 26, 2013

is what is damaging this country at this point in time. It is this persistent attempt to pretend that we do not know right from wrong, which is the hallmark of this Government. [*Crosstalk*] That is what is damaging Trinidad and Tobago at this point in time. [*Desk thumping*]

8.15 p.m.

And if this Motion achieves nothings else—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: “Uh-hmm.”

Dr. K. Rowley:—it achieves a presentation to the faces of the people of Trinidad and Tobago that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago is not prepared to learn, and is not prepared to do right by the people of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*]

Because I do not know why they see it fit to have to defend the indefensible, and while they are doing that, they are not prepared to protect or to show any interest in protecting the public purse. Not one of them spoke about the need to find out what happened with our moneys that went to the TTF. [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. Member: “They only saying, it good, everything good.”

Dr. K. Rowley: As if by telling—Mr. Speaker, you had to stop my colleague from D’Abadie/O’Meara who was going to give us the exact figure, as though the exact figure—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: Mattered.

Dr. K. Rowley:—somehow would change the issue.

Hon. Member: More election money.

Dr. K. Rowley: It is not the X, what X is, it is whether in fact it was used for the purpose for which it was given to the organization, and whether in fact the allegations that they were misappropriated, whether there is any fact in that. They show absolutely no interest in that. So they miss completely—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: Pick up drop.

Dr. K. Rowley:—any interest in the Motion’s benefit because when we leave here tonight we know how they will vote. They will vote in defence of their Prime Minister, as if she is the Prime Minister of the cabal. Let me remind you all, [*Crosstalk*] she is the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, [*Desk thumping*] and when it boils down to settling of the wagons, only by the cabal in office, then her days are numbered, and it does not matter what my colleague from Oropouche says about who is suited for office, that may not be within his control. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to carry this on too much longer because I think we have been able to make the point that we wanted to make, but let me just address one final point, and that is this. It is that it may very well be that as they praise themselves and they praise the Prime Minister for acting with such alacrity, one Member described it in terms of hours, another one described it as being in her DNA, but it is a worrisome fact that we “cyar” run from, and we will still be feeling for the answers as we go out of here tonight, and it is this: suppose there was not that meeting at the US State Department with that US official, could I surmise that the Government, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and their supporters would still have been acting in full defence of a retention of the Member for Chaguanas West in the Cabinet? [*Desk thumping*] Until we know the answer to that, we do not have a good understanding of our current circumstance.

Because nobody in Government who spoke today spoke on the grounds that the Minister's removal from the Cabinet was based on a principle that his conduct was unacceptable and therefore had to go. [*Desk thumping*] Not one of them! [*Crosstalk*] And more worrisome is that the Prime Minister herself when she did speak and having acted, she spoke in the context that is was to prevent a distraction, not that the principle of wrongdoing—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: “Uh huh.”

Dr. K. Rowley:—featured in the decision.

Hon. Member: “Uh huh.”

Dr. K. Rowley: So if the population, especially the journalists who they despise, who they threaten, who they terrorize, if they had not kept this issue in front of the population, where it was clear that there would be a serious political price to pay, then the Prime Minister may never have acted.

Hon. Member: Okay.

Dr. K. Rowley: But then I have to surmise, suppose it is, as it is very likely to be so, that the Prime Minister acted only as a result of the conversation in that room in Washington. The people of Trinidad and Tobago had better pay attention to that—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: “Um-hmm.”

Dr. K. Rowley:—because you see there are very many ways for countries like ours to feel the heat when governments lose their way and run afoul of metropolitan countries. We have too much at stake to not know the truth of this

Prime Minister's Failure to Act
[DR. ROWLEY]

Friday, April 26, 2013

matter, and we have too much at stake to rely on loyalty to colleague and love of Prime Minister as expressed by those who spoke today. Mr. Speaker, this Motion will end now, the issue will not go away.

Hon. Member: “Uh-huh.”

Dr. K. Rowley: Let us go to the vote. I beg to move. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre and hon. Minister of Labour, Small and Micro Enterprises and Acting Prime Minister.

The Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Labour, Small and Micro Enterprise (Hon. Errol Mc Leod): Mr. Speaker, I rise to defend the institution and office of Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*] I think that it is important for us to recognize that we must first establish what our own position might be with regard to conduct and deportment of oneself. In other words, I am suggesting that if—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Please, please. Members I am hearing you; Members on the Front Bench there.

Hon. E. Mc Leod: I am suggesting that if we live in glass houses, we should be careful about the stones being thrown by our good selves. I want to suggest that the Prime Minister's Office is of the view that we here are wrong to challenge or to treat dismissively the Simmons Report. Is that the name of the jurist?

So I think that enough has been said, and perhaps more might be said about the issues relating to the former Minister of National Security, Member of the Chaguanas West constituency. I am not going to deal with that at all, but I think that it is ridiculous for us to blame the Office of Prime Minister for not taking any action, and then when she has taken action to talk about her not having taken action expeditiously.

I think it was three weeks—was it not?—three weeks to a month ago, that the hon. Prime Minister, recognizing some measure of public disquiet, asked the Attorney General, and she also asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to contact their counterparts in the United States of America to get information that will form the basis on which she would act.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Diego Martin West talked about the recognition of wrong, and if we will do nothing that will identify one's recognition of wrong. The resignation of the Minister of National Security from the Cabinet, the acceptance of that resignation could only have been based on the Prime Minister's

recognition that something went wrong and for that, you would have your offer of resignation accepted.

I do not know that we should want to blame the Prime Minister, except if we have particular ambitions for which we are not yet quite ready, if ever we are going to be ready. It is wrong to say that the Prime Minister sat there and was fully cognizant and knowing of the wrongs that were being committed or that had been committed however long ago. Something had [*Crosstalk*] to trigger—no, I do not expect him to listen either. [*Crosstalk*] Ha ha. I do not think he would listen.

You see, Mr. Speaker, one aspiring to high office must develop the mechanisms by which one prepares oneself for such high office, and among those mechanisms one might consider the consolidation of one's leadership of the organization to which one belongs, and I do not know that is the case with the hon. Member for Diego Martin West.

While he may have been preparing for this debate today, on the weekend, if he was not otherwise occupied, there was a particular activity taking place in his own party and about which he perhaps did not know at that time. Does he know that a screening exercise was taking place for candidates for the local government elections, and one against whom he may have thrown a look-it Les Coteaux spirit lash, was conducting that screening? Yes, you will find out if you do not already know that that was taking place at Paria Suites in south Trinidad.

Dr. Moonilal: Wow!

Hon. Member: “Hmm.” [*Crosstalk*]

Dr. Moonilal: Probably he was considering Jack Warner. [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. Member: What is he talking about?

Hon. E. McLeod: No, you would not know what I am talking about.

8.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the mover of this Motion certainly had a difficulty determining how he must attack again. I mean, this is the second occasion that the Member has brought a Motion here to deal with the question of the Prime Minister's suitability for the leadership of this country, Trinidad and Tobago, and in his desperate enthusiasm the Member allowed himself to be driven into realms of obscene indiscretion, very much against the advice of his own colleagues and he winds up being an ordinary “bobolee”. I cannot understand how one—

Hon. Member: [*Inaudible*]—should put him out. [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. E. Mc Leod: I should take that back.

Mr. Speaker: Yes, yes, honourable. Please, please please.

Hon. E. Mc Leod: I am terribly sorry, Mr. Speaker.

Dr. Moonilal: Take away ordinary. [*Laughter*]

Hon. E. Mc Leod: Sorry about that, Mr. Speaker, and my apologies to you.

Mrs. Mc Intosh: From the acting Prime Minister.

Hon. Member: What is wrong with that?

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: Shame! Shame!

Hon. E. Mc Leod: You know none of you can claim that you ever had an opportunity. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Members, please!

Hon. E. Mc Leod: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's absence—and that has been explained—is as a result of a commitment to an invitation extended by the Prime Minister of Canada. And the Prime Minister expressed, not for the first time, confidence in those colleagues whom she would leave here as she travels abroad doing important business on behalf of Trinidad and Tobago. And the instability, Mr. Speaker, about which the Member for Diego Martin West spoke when he moved the Motion in his first round of presentation, that instability about which he spoke, and which he said had been existing for the last three years, and the lack of confidence that the population has been expressing in the Government now in office, really, is a figment of his imagination as he tries to access the office of Prime Minister.

Mr. Speaker, one remembers—and I do not know that I would necessarily be going outside of the Standing Orders in this case—the period, I think 2003—2006 or thereabouts, when the Member for Diego Martin West would not have attended even meetings of his Cabinet in the absence of the then Prime Minister so that he would not have to sit under the acting leadership of then Senator and who was present in the House this afternoon, Sen. Joan Yuille-Williams, I think. What does that say about the particular Member's attitude to working with others and engaging in the promotion of team efforts as we address the issues affecting us one way or the other?

Mr. Speaker, you hear suggestions about wrongdoing and aspersions being cast, and people expressing in different ways, the wrongdoings of others, some of them 40 years ago. I mean, I am ashamed really, to repeat some of what was said here about people's behaviour, especially when such people will come and want to instruct others as to how we should conduct ourselves.

I think we have to first organize our own attitudes. We have to first establish proper codes of conduct to which we will subscribe if we want others to fall in line, if we want others to follow us and to do things in a manner that we can be proud about. Allegations of one having committed this, that or the other, depending on the strength of those allegations we should be careful as to how we respond to them.

It is our view on this side that the Simmons Report, the chronicling of all of these allegations that have been made against the former Minister of National Security, and when one hears that the police, the DPP and some other institution have been invited to pursue these matters, I think that we should allow that to take its course and not to prejudice those issues by the things that we will say in this Parliament.

So that the first parts of the Motion that deal with the former Minister of National Security, I will avoid responding to at this time and to merely state that we have confidence in and support for the positions adopted by the hon. Prime Minister in relation to her dealing with the issues that led to former Minister of National Security offering his resignation, which resignation has been accepted, as the Prime Minister recognized that something was not right and that certain action needed to be taken.

I am certain, Mr. Speaker, that we have not heard the last of this. I am quite certain that the Prime Minister will very adequately, very competently, defend herself, but I thought that I will be remiss in my own responsibility, having been entrusted with care for the chair, one might suggest, I will be remiss in my responsibility if I did not get up and end this debate with the suggestion that the Prime Minister is not culpable at all, and that it will be insidious for us to want to apportion any blame to her or her office.

Thank you for the opportunity, Mr. Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

Question put.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Leader of the House, before I call on you to move the Motion—

Hon. Member: Division, division.

Mr. Speaker: Is that an afterthought? “Oh”, you want—

Dr. Rowley: We call for a division. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker:—a division. All right they want a division, continue.

The House divided: Ayes 10 Noes 20

AYES

Mc Donald, Miss M.

Rowley, Dr. K.

Cox, Miss D.

Hypolite, N.

Mc Intosh, Mrs. P.

Imbert, C.

Jeffrey, F.

Browne, Dr. A.

Hospedales, Miss A.

Gopee-Scoon, Mrs. P.

NOES

Moonilal, Hon. Dr. R.

Mc Leod, Hon. E.

Gopeesingh, Hon. Dr. T.

Peters, Hon. W.

Rambachan, Hon. Dr. S.

Seepersad-Bachan, Hon. C.

Khan, Mrs. N.

Roberts, Hon. A.

Griffith, Hon. Dr. R.

Ramadharsingh, Hon. Dr. G.

De Couteau, Hon. C.

Khan, Hon. Dr. F.

Douglas, Hon. Dr. L.

Indarsingh, Hon. R.

Samuel, Hon. R.

Roopnarine, Hon. S.

Ramdial, Hon. R.

Alleyne-Toppin, Hon. V.

Seemungal, Hon. J.

Partap, Mr. C.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, with a division of 10 Members voting for the Motion, 20 Members voting against the resolution and no abstention, the Motion has been defeated by majority vote. [*Desk thumping*]

Motion negatived.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mr. Speaker: Members, before I call on the Leader of the House to move the Motion for the Adjournment, I would like to revert to announcements.

I have received communication from Mr. Herbert Volney, Member of Parliament for St. Joseph, who has asked to be excused from today's sitting.

Hon. Member: "I thought he resign." [*Laughter*]

Mr. Speaker: The leave which the Member seeks is granted. The hon. Leader of the House.

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Housing, Land and Marine Affairs (Hon. Dr. Roodal Moonilal): Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to a date to be fixed.

Question put and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 8.44 p.m.