

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 09, 2018

The House met at 10.00 a.m.

PRAYERS

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, Mr. Rushton Paray, MP, Member for Mayaro, has requested leave of absence from sittings of the House from November 09 to 24, 2018. The hon. Randall Mitchell, MP, Member for San Fernando East, Mrs. Glenda Jennings-Smith, MP, Member for Toco/Sangre Grande and Mr. Prakash Ramadhar, MP, Member for St. Augustine, have requested leave of absence from today's sitting of the House. The leave which the Members seek is granted.

PAPERS LAID

1. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Consolidated Financial Statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Unit Trust Corporation for the year ended December 31, 2017. [*The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis)*]
2. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2011. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
3. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the San Fernando City Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2006. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]

4. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Financial Statements of the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation for the year ended September 30, 2008. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
Papers 1 to 4 to be referred to the Public Accounts Committee.
5. Audited Financial Statements of Caroni (1975) Limited for the financial year ended June 30, 2018. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
6. Audited Financial Statements of Portfolio Credit Management Limited for the financial year ended December 31, 2017. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
Papers 5 and 6 to be referred to the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee.
7. Ministerial Response of the Ministry of Finance to the Third Report of the Joint Select Committee on Finance and Legal Affairs on an Inquiry into Commercial Banking Fees in Trinidad and Tobago. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
8. Ministerial Response of the Ministry of Trade and Industry to the Seventeenth Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Examination of the Audited Financial Statements of the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards for the financial years 2009 to 2013. [*Hon. C. Robinson-Regis*]
9. Draft National Policy on Sustainable Community Development for Trinidad and Tobago. [*The Minister of Community Development, Culture and the Arts (Hon. Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly)*]

Petrotrin Vesting Order

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Mr. Deputy Speaker, with regard to Paper No. 10 that will be laid on Wednesday, that is, the Petrotrin Vesting Order. That would be laid on Wednesday.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Administration and Appropriations Committee

(Presentation)

Dr. Lackram Bodoë (Fyzabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to present the following reports:

Pension/Gratuity to Retired Public Officers and Contracted Employees

Interim Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee on an Examination into the Processing of Payment of Pension and Gratuity to Retired Public Officers and Contracted Employees.

Ministry of Public Administration and Communications

Eleventh Report of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee on the Examination of the administration and expenditure of the Ministry of Public Administration and Communications.

URGENT QUESTIONS

Jerningham Government Primary School (Closure of)

Mr. Fazal Karim (Chaguanas East): Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To the Minister of Education: Is the Minister aware that the Jerningham Government Primary School has been closed since September 25, 2018, due to a sewer problem and state when this problem will be

repaired and school reopened?

The Minister of Education (Hon. Anthony Garcia): Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To answer the question directly, yes, I am aware that the Jerningham Government Primary School has been closed since September 25th.

To answer the second part of the question, I wish to inform the Member that WASA has been contacted and they have assured us that they can complete the job within one week. Thank you.

Mr. Karim: Will the hon. Minister indicate how will the loss of teaching and learning time be made up for all students attending this school?

Hon. A. Garcia: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on several occasions I have had the opportunity to state that in consulting with our teachers, we have been assured that every bit of time that has been lost by our students will be made up. I have abiding confidence and faith in our teachers, and they have assured us that everything will be done to ensure that our students are not deprived of an education, which is their right. Thank you.

Mr. Karim: Will the hon. Minister be able to state if any classes are being held outside of the current school in any other location, and which are these classes?

Hon. A. Garcia: No, I am not aware that classes are being held outside the current location at the moment.

Leptospirosis Disease

(Relation to Flooding) Mr. David Lee (Pointe-a-Pierre): On behalf of the Member for Oropouche West, to the Minister of Health: In light of the recent comments made by the Chief Medical Officer indicating three suspected cases of leptospirosis, could the Minister indicate if these cases

may be related to the recent flooding?

The Minister of Health (Hon. Terrence Deyalsingh): Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and thanks to the Member for this most pertinent question.

Leptospirosis is caused by a bacteria *leptospira interrogans*. The incubation period for leptospirosis could be as short as two days to up to 30 days. At this point in time it is difficult or impossible to state if these cases that the CMO was speaking about was due to flooding. What I could tell the honourable Chamber is that after a flood there is always expected to be increased cases, whether suspected or confirmed, of leptospirosis.

Leptospirosis is transmitted through broken skin via the bacteria that dwells in the rats, cattle, dogs, cats. It can be in soil, it can be on tin cans that you handle. So it is impossible at this point in time to say conclusively whether it is due to flooding. That is the answer I have for you. Thank you very much. [*Interruption*]

Dr. Bodoë: Thank you for that answer, Minister. Minister, can you indicate whether there has been any reported deaths from leptospirosis in 2018, regardless of the flooding; and this is generally?

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: I have no confirmation as we speak now because I only got this question about 10 minutes ago. That we have any confirmed deaths of leptospirosis for 2018, I can find that and get it back to you. What I could say, just in fairness to everyone concerned, after we had the flooding in San Fernando last year we had about 14 suspected cases of leptospirosis. So it is not farfetched to make a link between flooding and leptospirosis, but, you can get leptospirosis through regular gardening, especially if your hand has a cut and you put your hand into the soil where rodents, cats, dogs have

urinated, because the bacteria stays there for a very long time, as you well know. Thank you very much.

Dr. Khan: Hon. Minister, could you indicate what other public health methods are being used at present for the post-flood disease outbreaks to decrease them?

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Yes, thank you. So we are attacking this from all areas. You would have seen a recent press release where the public health inspectors visited and conducted over 17,000 site visits for food operators, homes and so on. Insect Vector has gone in post-flood and done vector control to make sure that cases of Zika, dengue, chikungunya do not explode.

We have actually mounted community-based activities via loudspeakers and fliers to indicate to people in the affected communities what they should expect, what they should do, and how they could work with us. We have also set up mobile clinics in many of the flood affected areas, from St. Helena, Madras Road, Greenvale, Sangre Grande; Eastern RHA did a whole outreach. So we have tackled it from a policy perspective being driven by the RHAs.

I must also commend the private sector physicians who did some excellent work, and also the Trinidad and Tobago Medical Association. So it was a team effort between Government and private citizens. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Recent Couva Fire Victims
(Assistance from Ministry)**

Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh (*Couva South*): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To the Minister of Social Development and Family Services: Could the Minister inform this House what assistance would be offered to

the 11 fire victims who suffered during a fire on the 6th of November, 2018, at Baksh Settlement No. 1 of Deonarine Junction, McBean Couva? **-The Minister of Social Development and Family Services (Hon. Cherrie-Ann Crichlow-Cockburn):** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The services available to victims of natural or manmade disaster from the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services upon completion of needs assessment are as follows: household items of up to \$10,000; a clothing grant of \$1,000 per person so affected; school supplies of \$1,000 for persons at the secondary school level and \$700 at the primary school level; house repairs of up to \$20,000 dependent on the needs of the family and as deemed applicable; rental assistance grant of \$2,500 per month for an initial period of three months if alternative accommodation is required, and up to a maximum of 12 months; emergency food support; counselling services.

Officials of the Ministry made contact with the family at Baksh Settlement in McBean with a view to conducting initial damage assessment and determining the needs for counselling support. The family however indicated that counselling services were not necessary at this time.

The Ministry has noted that the breadwinners of the various households were all self-employed tradesmen who lost their means of generating an income. The Ministry will therefore explore the services of the Seed Grant to the affected individuals, and to provide the necessary follow-up action on the various grants and other services from the Ministry. The details of the matters concerning the affected families have been referred to the Social Welfare Division and the National Social Development Programme respectively, to be processed in accordance with established procedures. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Supplemental, Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Hon. Minister, can you indicate whether persons will be denied assistance if they have already been allowed by their families to receive furniture? If they have received furniture in the interim, would they be denied a grant as a result, those who have lost that is, in the flood?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member, I will not entertain that question. Member for Couva South, question No. 4.

**Balmain Main Road
(Collapsed Roadway)**

Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh (*Couva South*): Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To the Minister of Works and Transport: Could the Minister inform this House when repairs will commence to the collapsed roadway on the Balmain Main Road between the Balmain Bridge and Camden junction, which is utilized by thousands of commuters of Couva and stakeholders of the Port of Point Lisas and the Point Lisas Industrial Estate on a daily basis?

The Minister of Works and Transport (Sen. The Hon. Rohan Sinanan): [*Desk thumping*] Mr. Deputy Speaker, a contractor is expected to be on board for the temporary shoring up of the Couva road by the end of November. Work is expected to be completed by the second week in December. Currently the tendering for the Geotech investigation on the landslip is under way. This will guide the designs for the permanent structure. The tender for the permanent work is expected to be commenced by April 2019. Thank you.

PRIME MINISTER'S QUESTIONS

Amb. Christopher Thomas' OAS Report

(Laying in Parliament)

Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*): Mr. Deputy Speaker, could the Prime Minister state when the long-promised Organization of the American States (OAS) report by Amb. Christopher Thomas will be laid in Parliament?

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no long-promised OAS report. There is a report which was done by former Ambassador Christopher Thomas, and it is Government's intention to send that report to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament, and we intend to do that within a week.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member for Oropouche West. Leader of the House. My apologies, Chief Whip. My apologies.

**Consultation with Venezuelan Officials
(Influx of Illegal Immigrants)**

Mr. David Lee (*Pointe-a-Pierre*): Question No. 2 to the hon. Prime Minister, on behalf of the Member for Oropouche West. Could the Prime Minister indicate if he has had any consultation with Venezuelan officials to treat with the influx of illegal immigrants to Trinidad and Tobago through our porous borders?

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago comprises Ministers other than Prime Minister, and on this particular matter I have had no direct consultation with the officials in Venezuela. But I am aware that the Ministry of National Security and the Minister of Caricom and Foreign Affairs are in constant communication with their counterparts and colleagues in Venezuela.

**OWTU/Petrotrin
(Memorandum of Understanding)**

Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh (*Couva South*): To the Prime Minister: Could

the Prime Minister inform this House if the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Oilfields Workers Trade Union (OWTU) and Petrotrin on April 03, 2018, was registered at the Industrial Court?

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have not read the document so I cannot confirm that the date of any memorandum is the 3rd of April, but I am aware that there is a legal matter at the Industrial Court which is widely reported and as far as I am aware, the OWTU has filed a memorandum of understanding at the court and that is the subject of some challenges at the Industrial Court and elsewhere.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Could the Prime Minister indicate to this House, based on the fact that my information is that the Memorandum of Understanding was registered at the Industrial Court, in keeping with the Industrial Relations Act of Trinidad and Tobago, who at Petrotrin gave the instruction—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Question please, Member.

Mr. Indarsingh:—to the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development in relation to having—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Question please, Member.

Mr. Indarsingh:—this Memorandum of Understanding registered at the Industrial Court?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member! We move on; question No. 4, Member for Oropouche East.

Petrotrin (Recommendation of Closure)

Dr. Roodal Moonilal (*Oropouche East*): Could the Prime Minister state who recommended the closure of Petrotrin, given conflicting reports in this regard?

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Mr. Deputy Speaker, once again my colleagues are aiming to spread misinformation. There is no conflicting report. There is absolutely no conflicting report about the closure or any restructure at Petrotrin. All decisions taken with respect to the future of Petrotrin, with regard to the restructuring and closure of any or all of its department, is a decision of the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr. Moonilal: Could the Prime Minister state categorically whether Petrotrin is to be closed or not?

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: This matter was the subject of a press conference yesterday wherein the Minister of Communications of this Government answered this question comprehensively, yet my colleagues insist on misinforming the public. There is no close down of Petrotrin. There is a restructuring of Petrotrin where a number of business units are to be operationalized by a particular date already given. And it has been made clear over and over that Petrotrin remains in place and all the legacy items of that company will remain in place, and a holding company has been formed and a number of operational units as companies exist.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can say no more and I cannot say it any clearer.
[Desk thumping]

Dr. Moonilal: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can say more. Is the Prime Minister saying that all the departments are closed, all the workers have gone home, but Petrotrin itself is not closed? And this is the Parliament, not a press conference we are concerned with.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member; I will move on.

**Tobago Terminal
(Commencement of Construction)**

Ms. Ramona Ramdial (Couva North): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Could the Prime Minister say when the construction of the new Tobago Terminal will start?

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are in position now to report that a request for proposal went out for this particular project. The closing date for that request is on the 1st of February, 2019, and the proposal for that project is for design/build/operate/lease/transfer, and we expect that if we get positive responses that sometime in 2019 this project will be commencing.

Ms. Ramdial: Prime Minister, can you say what is the estimated cost of this project?

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you will understand, that if we are going out for proposals and the closing date for the responses to come in have not yet arrived, that it is quite premature to be talking to me about cost. [*Desk thumping*]

**Coast Guard
(Vessels Available for Use)**

Dr. Surujrattan Rambachan (Tabaquite): Hon. Prime Minister, could you indicate how many coast guard vessels are currently available for use by the Coast Guard?

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): At the moment there are 16 vessels available for use by the Coast Guard; eight interceptors and eight patrol vessels.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Tabaquite or Naparima, who will give way?
Member for Tabaquite.

Dr. Rambachan: Mr. Prime Minister, how many of the eight interceptors are actually functional, and how many of the eight vessels are actually functional?

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would presume that for any vessel to be available for operation, it has to be operational. [*Desk thumping*]

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Exactly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Silence please, Members!

Mr. Charles: In light of the fact that we have a number of vessels available, could the Prime Minister explain why on every occasion that there are refugees coming into Trinidad and Tobago at the rate of 1,000 per week, we are not in a position to monitor that?

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will not take any of the datum put to this House by the Member for Naparima. We know of no 1,000 per week refugees coming into this country, and of course it is impossible to have a coast guard vessel from bumper to bumper around Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*]

Dr. Rambachan: Mr. Prime Minister, how many interceptors are there totally, and how many of these interceptors are actually working?

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are a number of interceptors. There are a number of vessels of all categories. There are eight interceptors which are available for use, and there are eight patrol vessels which are available for use. There are also a number of other items, larger and smaller, which are in various stages of disrepair, but they are not part of the operational units at this time. [*Desk thumping*]

Imported Super Gas/Diesel (Cost of)

Dr. Surujrattan Rambachan (Tabaquite): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Hon. Prime Minister, could you state the respective cost per litre of super gas and diesel recently imported by the new company for sale to the

public since the closure of Petrotrin?

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Mr. Deputy Speaker, if my colleague is referring to the cost at the pump, the prices remain the same.

Dr. Rambachan: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have asked the question, the cost per litre of diesel and of super recently imported, so not at the pump. The cost that it costs the Government of Trinidad and Tobago or Paria Company to import this fuel?

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: In light of the fact that the question was not clear—
[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: It is clear.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: It is not clear.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: To the reader, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the question was not clear. If he is asking about the price paid to the seller then that is a different story, and that could be the subject of a later question, and we will certainly answer you.

Housing Development Corporation (Greenvale Estate Phases 4 and 5)

Dr. Roodal Moonilal (*Oropouche East*): Question No. 8, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Could the Prime Minister indicate the date at which the Housing Development Corporation (HDC) informed the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) that the former will not be pursuing the extension to the Greenvale Estate, namely phases 4 and 5?

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the Government has said quite clearly before, there were five phases of anticipated development in this location of which three had been completed. The Housing Ministry, through the HDC, had gone seeking approval for the other two phases. Even before the flooding of recent times, the Ministry of

Works and Transport Drainage Division had denied that approval. Given the indication that there would be no approval granted for development in phases 4 and 5, and as a result of which, there is a letter drafted at the HDC now for onward transmission to the EMA that it will not be pursuing its application there.

Heritage Petroleum Company/Paria Fuel Trading Company

(Details of CEOs for Units)

Mr. David Lee (*Pointe-a-Pierre*): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Question No. 9 to the hon. Prime Minister. Based on an article in *Trinidad Newsday* on Wednesday, November 07, 2018, which stated that executive recruitment was being undertaken for the newly launched oil companies, could the Prime Minister state the names, qualifications and remuneration packages of the persons hired as the Chief Executive Officers for the Heritage Petroleum Company as well as the Paria Fuel Trading Company respectively?

10.30 a.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you are aware, Petrotrin, in its restructuring has indicated that there will be an exploration and production company, and there will be a company dealing with fuel trading and other business. So far, Petrotrin has used international oil recruitment processes to hire persons—one person of the highest calibre so far, because it is the intention of Petrotrin to use international benchmarking so that the oil company will be engaged in oil company production.

To date, Petrotrin has hired a Mr. Mike Wiley to head the exploration

and production of the new Petrotrin, Heritage Petroleum Company Limited. That individual was hired in August of 2018, and is now actively engaged in the recruitment process, and we have hired no one for Paria Fuel Trading Company at this time, but the search has begun, and very soon we could report on that when it is done.

With respect to the remuneration, Mr. Deputy Speaker, given the nature of the assignment in the international benchmarking and the running of an oil company of this size that we intend to, I am advised that Mr. Wiley's package involves US \$425,000 per year plus housing, transportation and health.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Supplemental, Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Thank you, Prime Minister. In your answer to the question, you alluded that Mr. Wiley who is the Chief Executive Officer for Heritage Petroleum Company Limited, has started doing recruiting. Could you also state, along with Mr. Wiley, who else is recruiting individuals for the employees of Heritage Petroleum Company Limited?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Prime Minister.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: I said that was part of the process, I did not say that he was recruiting, which is quite different. The company has put in place a team of persons of relevant skills and requirements, and is using that team to recruit its new employees to populate the new companies.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Supplemental, Pointe-a-Pierre.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Prime Minister, you had mentioned that Mr. Wiley was hired in August 2018, and I am assuming he was hired for the Heritage Petroleum Company Limited. If my mind serves

me correct—

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: I just said that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Silence, please.

Mr. Lee: If my mind is correct, in the Heritage Petroleum Company Limited, could you state when was that formed and registered as a company?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Prime Minister.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not have that particular date in hand, but I can tell you that the company, Petrotrin, had been in existence for decades, and in anticipation of populating its subunits under the holding company, that it would be proactive in finding such persons. So the relevance of when the Heritage Petroleum Company Limited was formed or registered is not a great issue because it was always the intention in the restructuring to hire a Chief Executive Officer to head the E&P. As now, the company is looking for someone to head the Paria Fuel Trading Company, and eventually I believe they will look for someone to head the Guaracara Refining Company, depending on what is happening. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as soon as the decision was taken to restructure into these business units, the company would have been proactive in looking for its staff.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Oropouche East, supplemental.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Prime Minister, are you confirming that this man, Wiley, is getting a quarter million dollars a month as a salary? And if so, could we not have sourced that level of personnel within Trinidad and Tobago? Is that the salary, a quarter million dollars a month?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Prime Minister.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are very few oil companies in the world that you can hire at the salary of a Member of Parliament. The salary is commensurate with the responsibility and the nature of the business, and our expectation to operate the new company at international standards, using international— [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Couva South, last supplemental.

Mr. Indarsingh: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Could the Prime Minister inform this House how many, in addition to the Chief Executive Officer, how many employees have been recruited for the Heritage Petroleum Company Limited? And if former employees of Petrotrin have been incorporated into this organization?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I will not entertain that question. It has been answered already. Member for Pointe-a-Pierre.

**Petrotrin Refinery
(Offers/Bids for Sale)**

Mr. David Lee (*Pointe-a-Pierre*): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Question No. 10 to the Prime Minister. Could the hon. Prime Minister state if the Guaracara Refining Company or the Government has received any offers or bids for the sale or lease of the Petrotrin refinery?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Mr. Deputy Speaker, only yesterday the Government by way of a press conference in front of the full media core and in front of the full country, told the country that we are, through Petrotrin, through its subsidiary, in the process of inviting international interested persons or agencies to respond to an RFP which has not yet gone out, to the best of my knowledge. And if it has not gone out, then there is no way I could respond to talk about bids being received until

the RFP has gone.

And we went further at an earlier time, in full public disclosure, that Petrotrin will put a room, a display room on the refinery, a data room at Pointe-a-Pierre so that interested agencies or persons could come and look at what is available, and then respond to the RFP. Only then will we be able to talk about what bids or what proposals or what costs or what benefits are sold. So, I just ask my colleagues to “hold your horses” until the process gets there.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, supplemental.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Prime Minister, the offer that was made by the OWTU for the refinery of Petrotrin, how would you classify that, offer or bid?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Prime Minister.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am aware that in the communication between the board and the OWTU there was talk about offers being made, and I am not aware of what the offers are.

I am also aware that at the Industrial Court the OWTU could not tell us who the support finance was. But what I do know in my correspondence under my hand to the OWTU, I did indicate quite clearly in English that if the OWTU has a proposal to put, it will be treated in the context of what I have just described a while ago of the company inviting and accepting, and of course, that such offers would be exposed to the same rigorous approach, and if it meets the business standards, it will be treated with the same dignity and respect. That has been put in writing to the OWTU, and that is where it is at, Mr. Deputy Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, question 11.

**Sandals Resorts International
(Details of Money Spent)**

Mr. David Lee (*Pointe-a-Pierre*): Mr. Deputy Speaker, question 11 to the hon. Prime Minister. Prime Minister, given the reported statements of Sandal Resorts International Chairman Gordon Stewart in the Trinidad *Newsday* on Monday October 29, 2018, that the Government had spent money on several designs for the Sandals project, could the Prime Minister state how much money was spent so far on these designs?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think my colleague from Pointe-a-Pierre has misrepresented or has misunderstood what Mr. Stewart said. The Government has spent no money, but the Government has liabilities for work done in advancing the project by Sandals. Meaning, in preparing the project that we are working on, we have authorized Sandals to do preliminary sketch drawings or even further advance, to do architectural drawings on what is proposed for Tobago as we seek to advance this project. The Government is fully liable for the cost of that work.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Prime Minister, one second. Oropouche East and Couva North, there is a procedure that is to be followed. Prime Minister.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Since we have advanced Sandals to do these works which are required especially for getting the approval project and so on, because in applying for your approvals, you have to put to the agencies what you are going to do, and if you want to get ahead of time, you need to do these things as quickly as possible. We have authorised Sandals to do some work, and eventually the Government will have to accept those costs, but as

of now we have spent no money to Sandals, but we have liabilities for that aspect of the work. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member for Oropouche East.

Dr. Moonilal: Thank you. Mr. Prime Minister, the question was very simple. How much money does the Government owe Gordon “Butch” Stewart? And/or is it that you cannot say now? He has said that you owe him money. How much money do you owe him?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member, any other supplemental? Supplemental, Member for Caroni East, proceed.

Dr. Tewarie: Caroni Central.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Caroni Central, my apologies.

Dr. Tewarie: Mr. Deputy Speaker, through you to the hon. Prime Minister. Is the Government, as has been stated in the past and I want to clarify, the sole investor in this project in terms of the financial development of the project?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Prime Minister.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if my colleagues will keep quiet, I want to say this for the last time for the public, because it appears as though that there are some people who are having difficulty with English.

I, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure that on many occasions the Minister of Finance and myself as Prime Minister have said clearly, this is a project that is being driven by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. We are at this point in time responsible for the equity expense in it however, we are open to having other interested parties take equity in the project. We have gone as far as to say, we have invited the three large business houses in the country, ANSA McAL who said no, they are not interested; Massy who said

they might be interested; Guardian Life who said they might be interested. And we have also said, if there are other equity investors who we approve of, who want to invest in this project, we will be quite happy to have them to reduce the Government's exposure.

However, we have also said, if no other equity investors are forthcoming, then the Government of Trinidad and Tobago will do it, because we realize that this is a major part of the national infrastructure and it is important to Tobago's economy, and with or without other equity partners, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago will do it. [*Desk thumping*] I do not know why that is so difficult to understand, and we have said so on many occasions, and I say it and I hope on this occasion my colleague understands what I have said. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Charles: Mr. Prime Minister, do you not think it prudent that all these elements should have been thought through so that you would have come with a complete comprehensive proposal [*Desk thumping*] rather than thinking it up as we go along?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No question there, Member. Move on. Member for Oropouche East.

**Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
(Fraud Allegations re Distribution of Housing Units)**

Dr. Roodal Moonilal (Oropouche East): Thank you very much. Question No. 12, I think. Yes. Could the Prime Minister indicate whether an independent enquiry into the operations of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development in light of the scandal reported in the press involving officers of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development involved in

alleged fraud in the distribution of housing units? Whether the Prime Minister will call for an independent enquiry into this?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member, please, read the questions as is.

Dr. Moonilal: Mr. Deputy Speaker, with great respect to you, the question has been edited a bit.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member.

Dr. Moonilal: Well, let me read the question as it is.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Right. There is a procedure. Let us follow the procedure, colleagues.

Dr. Moonilal: Okay. Let me read the question as it is. The question as it is: Could the Prime Minister indicate whether an independent inquiry into the operations of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development in light of the scandal reported in the press involving officers of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development involved in alleged fraud in the distribution of housing units? That is the question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Dr. Keith Rowley): Mr. Deputy Speaker, with reference to—the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has demonstrated its ability to pursue matters requiring investigations without an independent enquiry, and the best example of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the Eden Gardens land purchase which has been pursued without independent enquiry, and is now subject to a matter of the court.

And with respect to the distribution of houses where it has been reported in the last few days, of improper occupancy of one unit, I am sure that given the competence of the Ministry in dealing with Eden Gardens, that this matter can be dealt with without an independent enquiry. [*Desk*

thumping]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Supplemental.

Dr. Moonilal: Would the Prime Minister agree that since in this particular matter reference has been made to a Deputy Permanent Secretary, a Permanent Secretary and a former Minister of Housing, that this requires a neutral and independent enquiry rather than an internal investigation? [*Desk thumping]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Prime Minister.

Hon. Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not aware of the details of a permanent secretary; all I have seen on this is what is in the media, and of course, an indication from that. If, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if it turns out that the Ministry can report that there are situations involving public servants, as my colleague has determined, I will see no problem with the appropriate investigations being taken, but I am not aware of what he has just said.

**DEFINITE URGENT MATTERS
(LEAVE)**

**Trinidad and Tobago Open Borders
(Failure of Government to Address)**

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member for Naparima.

Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In accordance with Standing Order 17(1), I hereby seek leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a Definite Matter of Urgent Public Importance, namely, the relatively open borders throughout Trinidad and Tobago, especially along the south-west peninsula which allows for the unregulated weekly inflows of asylum seekers together with possible accompanying arms, ammunition, livestock and drugs.

The matter is definite because it pertains specifically to Trinidad and

Tobago's close proximity to Venezuela and the fact that because of internal problems, millions are fleeing to neighbouring countries.

The matter is urgent because it relates to the failure of the Government to regulate the flow of persons into our country since the protection of our borders is a key responsibility of our Government, and the evidence points clearly to their failure. This unmanaged influx of illegal immigrants can overwhelm our health, education and other services.

The matter is of public importance because there are innumerable problems that can result from this unregulated inflow that can lead to demographic changes for which our country is ill-prepared, and problems can arise as Venezuelans compete for jobs in the local market.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, I am not satisfied that this matter qualifies under this Standing Order. I advise that the Member pursue this matter under Standing Order 16. Member for Cumuto/Manzanilla.

**Increase in Violence against Mothers and Daughters
(Failure of Government to Address)**

Mrs. Christine Newallo-Hosein (*Cumuto/Manzanilla*): Thank you, hon. Deputy Speaker. I hereby seek leave to move the Adjournment of the House today under Standing Order 17 for the purpose of discussing a Definite Matter of Urgent Public Importance, viz the wanton increase in violence against our mothers and daughters that has resulted in an unprecedented level of fear in our nation for our safety and security.

The matter is definite because it pertains specifically to the killing of our women and more particularly, our young women, and with each passing day there is an increase in the number of our women that are murdered, kidnapped and sexually assaulted.

The matter is urgent because as a country we cannot continue to allow

the criminals to take the lives of our women, our mothers and daughters.

The matter is of public importance because there could be no more an important matter than securing the lives of our women, our mothers and daughters because when a family loses a mother or daughter, the loss is immeasurable. I so move.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, I am not satisfied that this matter qualifies under this Standing Order. I advise that the Member pursue this matter under Standing Order 16.

**MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS (HERITAGE
PETROLEUM, PARIA FUEL TRADING
AND GUARACARA REFINING VESTING) BILL, 2018**

Bill to vest certain assets of Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited, in Heritage Petroleum Company Limited, Paria Fuel Trading Company Limited, and The Guaracara Refining Company Limited; to vest certain assets of Trinidad and Tobago Oil Company Limited and Trinidad and

Tobago Petroleum Company Limited in The Guaracara Refining Company Limited; and to vest Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprises Limited Lands in Heritage Petroleum Company Limited [*The Minister of Finance*]; read the first time.

Motion made: That the next stage be taken on Wednesday, November 14, 2018. [*Hon. C. Imbert*]

Question put and agreed to.

**ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE
(INDICTABLE PROCEEDINGS) (AMDT.) BILL, 2018**

Bill to amend the Administration of Justice (Indictable Proceedings) Act, 2011 (Act No. 20 of 2011) [*The Attorney General*]; read the first time.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT**National Security Police Manpower Audit Committee****(Adoption)**

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I recognize the Member for Laventille West. [*Desk thumping*]

The Minister in the Ministry of the Attorney General (Hon. Fitzgerald Hinds): Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move the following Motion standing in my name:

Be it resolved that this House adopt the Fifth Report of the Joint Select Committee on National Security on the Final Report of the Police Manpower Audit Committee.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, at a sitting of the House on November 11, 2017, the Final Report of the Police Manpower Audit Committee, hereinafter called the PMAC Report, was presented and referred to the Joint Select Committee on National Security.

Let me at this juncture state, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have arrived at this position today on account of the foresight and the focus of the hon. Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago [*Desk thumping*] who, since we were in the Opposition between 2010 and 2015, as early as about 2012, we proposed a 12-point plan for the improvement of the security and the crime circumstances of Trinidad and Tobago.

Among those points, Mr. Deputy Speaker, guided by the now Prime Minister, then Leader of the Opposition, was a suggestion that a manpower audit of the police service be conducted for the purpose of determining whether the numbers were suited to current demands in Trinidad and Tobago, and to determine the skillsets that a modern police organization

must possess if it has to function effectively in these circumstances.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in furtherance of that, the hon. Leader of the Opposition as he then was, looked at similar jurisdictions, in particular Fairfax County in Virginia in the United States with a population similar to that of Trinidad and Tobago, a county that has no more than 1,200 police officers, admittedly backed-up and supported by state police and university police so called, but kept focused on it and sent us off to experience what they do and how they do it to shape our response to the crime situation from the benches of Opposition, guided by principle as opposed to expediency.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the PMAC Report provided—and of course, that report, the committee was put in place. By January of 2017, when the Opposition Leader was now Prime Minister, he appointed this committee led by Prof. Deosaran. This PMAC committee and, of course, it reported to this Parliament at a later stage, and here we are today to debate the Report of the Joint Select Committee flowing from that.

This report provided a comprehensive list of findings, conclusions and recommendations over two volumes comprising in excess of 700 pages. Your Committee's process of considering this voluminous report was deliberate and thorough and it involved 16 meetings of that Joint Select Committee, an extensive review of the report and supporting documentation, public submissions and applicable literature. Hearing with a full range of stakeholders including, very quickly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members of the manpower audit committee themselves; two former Ministers of National Security, Mr. Basdeo Panday and Mr. Overand Padmore; two former Commissioners of Police, Mr. Trevor Paul and Mr. James Philbert; the members of the Police Service Commission; a former Deputy

Commissioner of Police, Mr. Wayne Dick; members of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and Welfare Association led by Mr. Seales, I think his rank is still that of Inspector; members of the Trinidad and Tobago Police executive, every one of them; a police analyst and strategist in the person of Serena Joseph-Harris who presented a paper; as well as the Police Service Welfare Association. Thorough papers which were very, very helpful in our deliberations, and I would like to thank and congratulate them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, your committee left no stone unturned in this important work. It must be underscored that your committee did not undertake another police manpower audit, but relied upon the information already available to us. We deliberated on the manpower requirements for each rank, division, branch, unit and task force of the current Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, as well as the operative requirements for an effective police organization.

Over 82 recommendations were provided by PMAC. While all the recommendations are indeed of great significance for the efficacy of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, your committee believes that the responsibility for the implementation of many of these lies flatly and solely with the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. "None but ourselves can free our minds", if I may paraphrase Bob Marley and make that point. It is the police who have to deal with these issues for the most part.

However, collaboration among various stakeholders is necessary to ensure timely implementation of the three primary overarching areas identified in this PMAC Report.

One: governance and oversight. That recognizes that the governance of the police service is very diffuse, involving several different entities and

stakeholders so called. Whether it is the Police Service Commission, whether it the Minister of National Security, whether it is the National Security Council, the management and oversight is particularly diffuse, and that issue of governance and oversight was thoroughly addressed.

The second item: human resource management. A quick glance of it demonstrated that important as that function is for a modern organization, not the least the police organization with some 7,000 or so personnel in its bosom, the human resource management tool of the police service was certainly not as efficient as it should be and, in fact, was even worse described.

Three: organizational culture and a customer-centred approach to service.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, your committee is of the firm belief that urgently addressing these three overarching issues will bring about the transformation of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service that the nation so desperately needs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this exercise is not about the simplicity, the narrowness and perhaps the stupidity of bashing the police, it is not about that or bashing individuals of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. It is about the organization as a whole, it is about its upgrade, its uplift, it is about its improvement. It is not about murders, it is not about police corruption. These are matters of importance, but this exercise is about the police organization, its suitability, its efficacy and its delivery of a service that is necessary for the safety and the well-being and the cohesiveness of the citizens and the society that is Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the population has from time to time reflected its

anger, its frustration and its deep fear, real fear about crime and violence in our society. It has expressed from time to time its concerns about poor police reactions and police performance. It has reeked serious social psychological and economic costs that are quite high, all of them, on this society. And it has, of course, in times when we look forward to the involvement of other economies, other companies, foreign direct investment, it has damaged our country's reputation from time to time. So these are some of the matters.

11.00 a.m.

The TTPS, the report found, is in a very troubled, and to quote the report, "wounded state". Troubled mainly because of the complex network of problems facing it, and wounded due to its continued inability to react and recover from that. This phenomenon was highlighted by the data reviewed by the audit committee. One such avenue of data, the committee's police survey involving 500 active and serving police officers of all ranks, randomly selected across those stratified ranks, suggests the need for attention. For example, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when these serving officers were asked by the committee whether they thought that the police service is satisfactorily organized to deal effectively with crime, over half, that is to say 54 per cent of the officers said very unsatisfactory or unsatisfactory. So, you have a situation where the police officers themselves do not think highly of the service provided by the very organization that they are a part of, telling us that it is not only deep but it requires some kind of intervention, the kind for seeing and focused on by the Prime Minister to get something done about this not so wholesome state of affairs.

Given its public safety and national security duties the reform of the

Trinidad and Tobago Police Service has to be treated as an emergency situation, the report says, through collective non-partisan will for such to be effected in a sustainable manner. Non-partisan because at times as has happened before we may need to amend the Constitution in order to deal with these problems and it requires a big thinking, it requires magnanimity, it requires a non-partisan approach, the report said. It continues, the perception ranking of the service in terms of positive or negative among the following stakeholders highlighted respectively a 40 per cent positive versus 37 per cent negative from the Trinidad and Tobago police itself. Other law enforcement agencies said 8 per cent positive, 41 per cent negative; key public officials when asked, 3 per cent positive, 43 per cent negative; the business sector when asked, 4 per cent positive, 31 per cent negative; prominent and former high-level officials in Trinidad and Tobago, 3 per cent positive, 21 per cent negative.

So that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, overall, an overall 12 per cent positive and 35 per cent negative views of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service came from that kind of survey by the committee, telling us that something is clearly wrong and we must move on to fix this. The complaints and prevalent dissatisfaction with the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service itself, about tribunal delays, unfair promotions, lack of resources and equipment et cetera, add to the loss of the organization's reputation. A manpower analysis in this context, therefore, is not only about plugging numbers into places, but encompasses a level of moral, feelings of unfair treatment, a lack of having a voice in the organization's operations, because many police officers feel so. For example, when officers were asked whether or not they felt that there was favouritism in assigning individuals to various divisions, units,

specialist sections or branches, 66 per cent of the officers said very often or often in terms of favouritism rather than capacity, professionalism, track record and efficacy. They think it is about favouritism. And even if that were not true that feeling is important to address. Despite the fact that all officers do not get involved in misconduct, there is a sufficient number of such persons in the service to cause and have caused over time, serious public alarm. Personally I have been, as a former police officer, a former police instructor myself, there are many occasions when I myself was severely alarmed when I saw the behaviour of some of the officers causing harm and, if I may say, ill-reputation to those who are not of that ilk, and who have dedicated 39 years, 40 years to this very important public service, at little pay. Because you cannot pay for the work that they do.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, while there was a strong view from all stakeholders that the estimated 6,008 actual strength of the sanctioned strength which is supposed to be 7,500 of the TTPS is enough, police misconduct and corruption seriously weaken and subvert this strength. As I indicated earlier, a community, a county in the United States with about 1.4 million people is policed, and I dare say when I saw with my own eyes, because I did three days of work on the streets, and patrols with them as a visitor back in 2012, I think it was, when the Opposition Leader arranged this, they policed that county very, very effectively, because of the attitude and the training of these men and women of that unit, and our officers have demonstrated they have this capacity. They are no less than the trees and the stars, but we have some work to do to strengthen that institution, as a Parliament, as a Government, and as a society. Ironical, the committee's police survey—in the committee's police survey over 40 per cent of all the

ranks and ages of officers, stated that corruption in the police service exists, either very much or much, with a higher proportion of the young officers feeling this way. In fact, over 48 per cent of the officers with less than 10 per cent service felt that corruption in the service exists very much and much.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know human beings are what they are. I saw some time ago the United States sent three DEA, Drug Enforcement Officers, to work in South America, to help deal with international drug trafficking and gun running, and these three officers eventually ended up being charged for drug dealing themselves. So, it is not just Trinidad and Tobago, it is the human being, and it is the way it goes. And this is why modern police organizations require modern techniques. There are methods that can test integrity on a daily basis, regularly, and I am happy to say, we are following the recommendations of this. But this Government will take action to ensure that the police service is fitted out with the most modern technologies and the legislation to support it, for testing the integrity of officers along the way, not just upon recruitment as might now be the case. It could be done randomly and mandatorily. Mr. Deputy Speaker, given that their protection and safety largely rests in the hands of a police officer, the public naturally has very high expectations of a police officer's conduct more than most occupations. Therefore, offences and public misconduct by officers has serious consequences in the public mind and the public feels that handling those matters must be swift and decisive. The Commissioner of Police, as we know, since 2007, he now has the power to hire officers and to fire officers, and I am sure that he would use the powers that he has fairly, in accordance with the law, and effectively, in order to ensure that the police

service wins back their high reputation that it deserves to hold in Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the question of governance and oversight, there is a strong belief that effective accountability and oversight should involve a system of internal and external checks and balances aimed at ensuring that police officers perform functions expected of them to a high standard, and be held responsible if they fail to do so. Without doubt, implementation of an efficient accountability system will prevent the misuse of police officers' powers, prevent political and other external sources of influence from exercising control over the TTPS, and ultimately enhance public confidence in it. Two critical activities have been identified by the committee, under the umbrella of governance and oversight.

1. Reform of the Police Service Commission.
2. The establishment of a police inspectorate.

In respect of the former, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Police Service Commission, looking at the Police Service Commission, your committee recommends the reformation of the Commission into an enhanced oversight and managerial authority, supported by a police inspectorate. This proposal will require amendments as I alluded to earlier, to the Constitution and the Police Service Act. The range of duties of the proposed reformed Commission will include:

- Setting standards of service and competencies for officers of the Commissioner of Police, Deputy Commissioner of Police and that of Assistant Commissioner of Police.
- It will involve as well, the recruitment, monitoring, evaluation,

appointment, promotion and discipline, from the rank of Commissioner of Police to that of Assistant Commissioner of Police.

- Regularly assess whether the Commissioner of Police is administering police services in a timely, appropriate, and sustainable manner.
- Monitor performance standards of the officers from Commissioner to Assistant Police Commissioner.

The other ranks will be monitored by the Commissioner himself, and his delegated arrangements.

- Investigate reports of failing standards, police abuse, poor work patterns, lack of community connectivity and confidence, and provide feedback to the Commissioner of Police.

I have seen the police now reaching out to the public with their town meetings, a very good way to go, very important, because modern police organizations, in modern societies recognize clearly the need for community connectivity. Police cannot function effectively without it. After all, it is the very communities that they are expected to police. The functions will include as well:

- To investigate all complaints about officers within the ranks of Assistant Commissioner of Police and above.
- And to act as an appellate body for matters involving officers below the rank of Assistant Commissioner of Police, which now exists, except that it is below the rank of Deputy, yes.
- Audit the procedures followed for recruitment to ensure that

there is full compliance with approved policy.

- And to sensitize the service to community concerns about police conduct or policies.
- And generally to ensure the establishment of a comprehensive code of ethics for the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service in accordance with international global standards.

These are some of the responsibilities of the newly rearranged, reconstituted, redirected Police Service Commission. The committee is also of the firm view that there should be improved procedures to ensure transparency and a broadening of the recruitment process applied by the reformed commission, inclusive of greater public participation in accordance with international best practice.

In respect of the establishment of a police inspectorate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, your committee recommends the establishment of a police inspectorate to assist the reformed Police Service Commission. This inspectorate will function as an oversight body external to the TTPS. The police inspectorate will be responsible for inspections and evaluations of police performance at stations and within specialist units, investigations of alleged police inefficiencies or police service delivery against determined policing standards, measured against these standards throughout the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. And, police inefficiencies are very important. There is a lot that the police organization and its personnel would do that may not reach the level of corruption or serious crime, or even crime, but there is a lot that policemen and women do short of crime, short of corruption that has a serious adverse effect. Sloth, laziness, not taking a

report, hiding when a crime is in their view, and that kind of thing, these matters must also be addressed if we have to achieve the level of efficiency that we must, and in order to serve the public as it should.

It involves as well, providing feedback through reports, presumably, annually. Reports, which would be made available to the reformed Police Service Commission, the Commissioner of Police, Minister of National Security and the relevant communities. Your community recommends that the police inspectorate be staffed with civilian professionals, with specialist expertise in various fields, and that its head should not be a police officer. A retired police officer, yes, perhaps, but not a police officer, and even if the person is retired they should be at least five/seven years removed from service in the police organization. And these measures, the reviewed, a reformed Police Service Commission and police inspectorate, had and continue to have the full support of the Police Commissioner, as he then was, Mr. Williams, and his executive, and, of course, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service Welfare Association. So, even the police themselves accept the need for a reformed Police Service Commission, and an independent and external police inspectorate to monitor the standards that are set for the efficient operation of the police service, and the police inspectorate must be autonomous in its operation.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is as far as my time permits me to say on the question of governance. On the question of human resource management, your committee is concerned that the human resource management within the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service was significantly broken. The committee, the Deosaran Committee, reported that when it attempted to get basic records, for example to say, sadly, how many

men and women were actively on duty on any particular day, and where they were, the police service human resource department was unable to provide that and many other kinds of information that a proper human resource management operation should be able to provide, so that the Commissioner, or the Minister of National Security, or the Chairman of the National Security Council, or indeed the public, could know how many officers are in the theatre of conflict on a daily basis dealing with their business and protecting them from the criminals, white collar too, in this society. So that, the view from the committee is that as a matter of urgency a TTPS-wide, competency-based human resource management framework needs to be developed. Issues like appraisals, staff appraisals, the Deosaran Committee found some appraisals were outstanding for as much as 15 and 18 months, and when the issue of promotions come up, all kinds of inefficiencies and madness takes place because of failure to carry out basic human resource management techniques for an important organization like our Trinidad and Tobago Police Service.

In the interest of time I would alert my contribution to two areas of focus in respect of this. It has to do with recruitment and selection. Based on the evidence, Mr. Deputy Speaker, your committee concluded that the established recruitment and selection process for the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service is not providing the service with officers who possess the intellectual interpersonal motivational capabilities and capacities to perform successfully at the First and Second Division levels of the police service. Additionally, according to the PMAC Report, data shows that the TTPS is not recruiting adequate police constables to fill the vacancies. The committee therefore recommends a very swift review of the entry

requirements to become a police constable, as well as the consideration of alternative routes to enter the police service, to be able to render the skillsets that a modern organization must have to deal with current trends, even in circumstances where it does not now possess it. And the Commissioner has that power, and some recommendations are made. In the interest of time I cannot go further. But, I will tell you, the Police Welfare Association and the police leadership at the time provided very clear paths that we could be guided by in order to meet these issues.

Applicant, for an example in the route, with five O' levels—and this is happening in organizations around the world. To become a police officer is a prestigious thing. It is a very important thing, you ought not to—so, one route suggests that with a minimum of five O' levels who has successfully passed the initial polygraphing—so, very early we would not take you through the entire recruitment process, spend that money and time, and then polygraph you to realize that you were not suited for the job. Very early you are polygraphed, once you make your application and so on, and then after this initial polygraphing, screening and selection process would ensue. And that should be required to engage, and then when you get past that you are not made the engage in preliminary training centre experience by completing an eight-week professional development programme with on-board coaching, training and mentoring initiatives. Once you get past that and you are selected, candidates should be required to complete a programme that covers stipulated core courses in policing over a six-month period, and the successful candidate would then be given a job offer to the rank of police constable.

Now, that sounds a little elaborate. It is certainly different from what

is happening now. But I will tell you one thing, just like in armies and in police organizations in England, in America, in Canada, when that young man or woman is taken through that kind of process he cherishes it, because he would have proven himself, and the police organization would cherish it too, because we now know we have an individual coming into the organization would have been through the fire and the shaping in every respect to carry out this proud and important function as a police officer going forward. There is a second route and a third route. Time does not permit me to deal with those. And as my time approaches for retaining my seat, I want to deal, very quickly, with the business of promotion. Promotion is the life blood. This morning I received a call, very quickly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from a senior, military personnel who wanted—in other words, I “doh” have to go there. But in other words, what seems ordinary and we take for granted, for men and women in uniform and under arms, military and paramilitary personnel as the police service, promotion is a very, very serious issue. It has a psychological component, it has a feeling of personal achievement as you move on up the ranks, it has a direct bearing on your benefits, because the higher you are ranked, the greater your income, and the greater your retirement package and all of that, and it does touch morale in a serious way.

So when the promotion system is not working as effectively as it should, then it has a serious deleterious effect on policing in ways that civilians and observers may not easily understand. The history has shown that promotions in the police service were traditionally based on seniority, but the transformation of the police service into a modern entity, and in keeping with internationally accepted standards, we are looking for a system

that is based on meritocracy, or at any rate a combination of meritocracy, and with a consideration for seniority and experience where applicable. That is not to be carted aside. And therefore, those are the kinds of principles that should surround the new and reformed promotion system. The laws governing promotion today are the Police Service Act, No. 7 of 2006, Police Service Regulations, and there are some areas of concern. Succession planning is an issue, attrition, human resource shortage, manpower shortage, human resource allocation, length of time to complete interviews, standardization of promotion policy, and very importantly, legal challenges, judicial review. It has happened from time to time where an aggrieved officer, or two, or three, would go to court and seek judicial review in respect of the promotion system for one reason or another, and that stops the entire system, choking the system, and we have to find a way in this exercise through that so that it would not continue to be that way. Critical issues. In excess of 80 per cent of the ranks from Corporal to Commissioner are acting ranks for those reasons and more. Promotion interviews and assessments have not been conducted for a long time, although to the credit of the new Commissioner, within two or three weeks of his assuming office as a civilian I observed that a promotion exercise took place, and I thought that brought great joy and relief to the officers who benefited, and all officers benefit, because as some move up, it allows others to move up in the system. Lengthy delays of having examinations, a lack of transparency in tabulating and releasing marks, confusion as to how marks are allocated.

All of those things, Mr. Deputy Speaker, do not lend itself to proper policing, and therefore the committee proposes a review of that system, and

we expect it will be done. Another issue is the recruitment, selection and training of the Special Reserve Police, they constitute about 35 per cent of active police officers on duty today; 35 per cent. Traditionally it was not intended to be that way, but because of the exigencies and the demands on the organization, the stresses that this society puts upon it, more and more SRPs have been brought into the atmosphere. They now constitute, as I said, 35 per cent of police operations and practice on a daily basis. And if that be so, either we reverse that by recruiting more regular police officers and training them, and putting them in the atmosphere, the theatre, or we train—we recruit and train the SRP's better so that they can serve better and more efficiently in the atmosphere.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, so these are some of the issues that the committee has found. So, I would like to thank—as chairman of the Joint Select Committee on National Security, which looked at this report, I would like to sincerely thank all of those who sat in that Police Manpower Audit Committee led by Prof. Deosaran, for their very important work. We give them the assurance because when that report was handed over to the Prime Minister, I remember the chairman Mr. Deosaran, pleading with the Government, not to allow that report, like the many others that have gone before over the last two/three decades, not to let it languish, and the Prime Minister gave an assurance that it would not. At that point he sent it straight to the Joint Select Committee which I chaired, and the Joint Select Committee conducted its work, as I described earlier, and we took the decision that very early in this session we would debate that report and we are here today. I would like to thank all of the stakeholders who took time out and participated, who came before our Joint Select Committee and gave

very useful evidence, and made useful contributions that will sustain this work, and for the improvement of the police service. I would like as well, and it would be remiss of me if I did not sincerely thank the secretariat staff of our committee for their tireless support in the work of the committee, led by, of course, the very restrained and quiet Clerk of the House, Madam Jacqui Sampson-Meiguel. She and her team worked particularly hard, to make this the reality. And I would like to thank as well the other members, my colleagues who sat with me on that Joint Select Committee.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Report of the PMAC, we are left to ask ourselves what has been done.

Hon. Member: Ramdeen.

Hon. F. Hinds: Ramdeen, hmm! [*Laughter*] Mr. Deputy Speaker, the challenge now facing the executive of the police service, well, sorry, the Executive of the Government is not a question as to whether the TTPS needs reform, but how to execute the necessary transformation of the service, inclusive of the governance and oversight mechanisms proposed in the report in such a manner so as to ensure improved level of service by the TTPS that can be sustained over the long-term.

This report cannot be allowed to fall by the way of earlier reports. So, as soon as we get past this, the Government will, I am sure, mobilize as we have promised, and take action to ensure that the implementation of the recommendations of this committee be immediately approached, and not have it gather dust. Your committee therefore recommends the prompt commencement of a Trinidad and Tobago Police Service institutional strengthening project falling administratively—this is the recommendation of the Joint Select Committee falling administratively under the Office of the

Prime Minister, and managed by the Secretariat of the Security Council. This is really to ensure that it gets top level attention, top level priority from the highest office holder in the Government. And that is to underscore the importance of this urgent and necessary work. This administration's approach will signal the importance, as I said, and the seriousness of that work, and it will retain the focus that is necessary.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is your committee's hope that if these recommendations are assiduously implemented, our police service, and I stress our police service, because they are us, they are of us, they serve us, we support them, they are our sisters, brothers, mothers, fathers, they are us, and we understanding that once these recommendations are assiduously implemented, our police service will finally experience the transformation that is necessary to ensure that the dedicated men and women of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service are sufficiently supported to achieve their mandate to protect and serve diligently the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move.

Question proposed.

11.30 a.m.

Mr. Rodney Charles (*Naparima*): [*Desk thumping*] Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is a pleasure that I join this debate that ultimately will redound to the benefit of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and the people of our country. Mr. Deputy Speaker, after listening to the Member for Laventille West I now understand why we are in the problems as a country as we are today. You see, what we had today was an elaboration of a report about a report. Essentially, it was about talk and not about action.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have been through this before. Our problem is not about reports and adopting reports. Our problem is about acting and implementing the report prescriptions that we have. [*Desk thumping*] It is not—we have passed the stage, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of ideas, prescriptions, esoteric of repeated statements of good intent and commendable; these are commendable but unproductive. [*Desk thumping*] We have to perform and we have to deliver and the quicker the Government, those on the opposite side, understand that, the better for this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you would understand that I would not be enamoured with hearing about another report about a report. I have—60 years ago we had the Lee Committee Report in 19—well, years ago, they did the Lee Committee Report.

Hon. Member: David Lee?

Mr. R. Charles: I recall singing—is your relative—singing, Sparrow singing, “They planning to lock up Lee for raising the police salary”. And there were problems associated that the Lee Report attempted to identify and change. We have had the Darby Report in 1964. The problem is not about reports; the problem is about implementing the reports. [*Desk thumping*]. Today, we should have come here with the legislative agenda based on the report, [*Desk thumping*] not to discuss the report and hope that something would happen.

We have had the Senior Planning Group Report in 2006; we have had the Mastrofski—the famous Mastrofski Report in 2006; the National Security sector in review of Trinidad and Tobago in 2009, yet another report. We have had the SAUTT Implementation Team Final Report in 2011. It is not about reports; it is about acting on the reports. [*Desk*

thumping] We have had the Multi-Sector Review Team on the Police Service Commission in 2013, and we had the Manpower Audit Committee Report, and today, we are discussing the report of the Joint Select Committee on the report of the Police Management Audit Committee.

But that is not all. We have had the Ramdhanie Report; we have had the Bruce Report, and let us show the problem with implementation in Trinidad and Tobago. The O'Dowd Report in 1991 observed and I quote:

Having reflected on our findings, it is very clear to us that the police have for many years suffered from neglect as a result of under-funding, policy priorities of successive governments, and through a lack of good management and skills training at all levels within the service.

That was the O'Dowd Report, 1991. Where are we today? And clearly, the problem in Trinidad and Tobago, which the Government does not understand, is that it is not about reports and not about high sounding phrases. It is about implementation. [*Desk thumping*] And we remind them that performance beats "ole talk" any day. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, crime is the most serious issue facing our country today. When you look at the murder numbers, the newspaper reports, if you talk to anyone in our society, you will realize that we are living in fear. People are looking to the Government for answers, not lengthy statements of what we intend to do. We have passed that stage.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want us to be very clear about what we are doing here today. While our citizens are being slaughtered en masse, we are asked to come here as servants of the people, to use precious parliamentary time to discuss a report of a report of a report. Who will be safer after we

complete this exercise today? Who will be? When I leave here after this debate, or as a sitting MP, can any of us go to our constituents, to our families, and say we have done all we could to make you safer? Or are we being asked to participate in essentially an articulation of time-worn ideas which we have heard before in some form or the other? [*Desk thumping*]. And we wonder whether this is an exercise in futility; wasting of parliamentary time.

Now, this Government prides itself on solutions. We can all remember the statement by our colleague the Member for Tobago West, who said “We are in charge and we have to deal with it.” So the question we ask, if you are in charge, deal with crime and utilize parliamentary time to assist you in this effort. But what we have witnessed, the Government—so they told us about a police management authority and they told us about a police inspectorate in the report. But we have witnessed as they cross into the last couple of years of their existence that they are clueless and they are an incompetent bunch of talkers. And I will tell you why. [*Desk thumping*] As far back as Friday the 13th of July, 2001, and that is from the *Hansard* on page 60, the Prime Minister then, Mr. Basdeo Panday, he spoke about and quoted, and there was agreement across the floor to replace the Police Service Commission by the oversight committee called the Police Management Authority.

So 2001 we heard about a Police Management Authority and here we are in 2018 talking about a Police Management Authority. So they come here and talk. They talk about the report, they talk about the UNC. I am sure that they could talk ad infinitum but they will never talk about what they have actually done. [*Crosstalk*] Why is it, Mr. Deputy Speaker,

because on—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Silence, please.

Hon. Member: Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. R. Charles: Mr. Deputy Speaker, because on honest and careful introspection they have done absolute nothing. Since the PNM administration has taken office there have been close to 1,510 murders. The new Minister of National Security will come here and say they have been working and no doubt this report is part of the work and they tried to convince us of his reality. But in the 96 days he has been in office there have been 119 murders. That is what we should be dealing with here today; eight women and 111 men, including a national award recipient and an unborn baby. Those are the realities we are facing. And today when I leave here I will not be a position to say that we have accomplished something tangible.

Of that 119, eight stabbed, two chopped, two beaten, one burnt, two strangled, 104 shot, eight over 60 years, one under 18, and six murdered at home. So if the Prime Minister opts to leave the Minister of National Security there for his blatant non-performance, by the time they leave office we will have over 5,000 murders in the five years they have been in office. That is the judgment. [*Crosstalk*] That is the judgment. The Minister of National Security has to level with the population and say what material impact they intend to—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Members, silence. Silence.

Mr. R. Charles: They have to tell us. Do not read out the report, tell us how this report will assist us. Let us look to the report and what it really

means for the people we ought to be representing. That is their job. If we are to adopt the findings of this Report, what does the PNM Government intend to do to facilitate the implementation of these findings? Page 78 of the Joint Select Committee Report states and I quote:

“...the”—Joint Select Committee on National Security—“is of the firm view that there should be improved procedures to ensure transparency in the recruitment process applied by the reformed”—Police Service Commission—“inclusive of greater public participations in accordance with international best practice.

It is proposed that the reformed...”—Police Service Commission—and it goes on to say comprises of seven persons, et cetera.

The question I ask, when will this Police Service Commission be amended to cater for the proposals in the report we are discussing today? That requires consultation with the Opposition because you are talking about a constitutional amendment. So we do not want pie in the sky. They should be talking to us about how we can work together to amend the constitution to advance the process, not to tell us about the process and leave it open and vacant. So they have to amend the Constitution.

So, therefore, what are the legislative plans to implement this amendment? That is where we are. That is where First World countries are, not into talk, but into the next stage of implementation. How is this debate of this report going to help alleviate the crime situation in Trinidad and Tobago? Are we helping anyone? Will this bring comfort to the families of the victims, thousands of victims, that justice would be served? You see, we are used to a pattern with this Government where they make plans on paper but fail to execute. All their so-called achievements so far have been paper-

based, and this is what we have here today, a paper-based plaster for a running sore that is afflicting our society on a daily basis. If I were—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Members of the Government front Bench, I am hearing you in loud overtones. Please. Proceed, Member for Naparima.

Mr. R. Charles: If I were more spiritually inclined, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would refer them to James 2, 14:26:

“Faith Without Works Is Dead.”

Ideas on paper without a delivery capability is dead. [*Desk thumping*]

They acknowledge that there is a problem but palm off responsibilities and to fix it on others. And we note the good work that the police are attempting to do in recent times. But the reality is, they have to operate in a framework of all of Government response. The police can only do so much. We cannot have a—well, thousands of Venezuelans come in our borders because we do not lock it down. They bring in arms, ammunitions, guns. There is human trafficking and—overwhelm our police services. They have to do that to assist the police.

I want Trinidad and Tobago to note that in the Venezuelan Constitution if you are 18 years old you are required, both male and female, to join the armed forces and get military training. You are conscripted. So all the citizens who come here, whether it is 40,000 by some official report or 100,000 by some others, all of them are military trained, military trained to kill, because that is the army, that is the responsibility of the army. They are hired guns of the state. So we have military trained, probably 1,000 on our shores. We have no documentation; we have no idea who they are, whether they are ex-criminals and they are roaming our shores, militarily trained, and we are turning a blind eye and expecting the police to be the

panacea for the dystopia that this Government is doing to Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*] Palming off; blame-shifters. If they cannot blame the Member for Siparia—in fact, we have a thing in this: How long will it take for them to get around to blaming the UNC? That is our standard. The record is two seconds.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Standing Order 48(1), please.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Overruled.

Mr. R. Charles: If some people were “fass”—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member.. Member.

Mr. R. Charles: Okay, I would not say it, I would not say it. Eleven murders in three days and they will come to talk about the country, about all kinds of things except how we can develop policy prescriptions and legislative agenda for dealing with crime.

Our job is not to do policy, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Member: What!

Mr. R. Charles: That is the responsibility of the Executive. [*Desk thumping*] We are here to legislate based on the policy prescriptions. They do not understand Montesquieu separation of powers. [*Desk thumping*] Do not, do not. It is not the responsibility of the TTPS and the Commissioner of Police to execute the much needed changes and upgrades that require legislation. The required policy changes need to be backed up by a strong Government who understands how to work and what needs to be done and how to do it. In every spiritual prescription we hear:

By the sweat of the brow shall you live.

Genesis 3:19. Not by talk but by action.

So the time for debating reports are long passed. We will not reach

First World standards by debating. We could debate here for five days, it will not change the price of cocoa. The Government needs to ensure, for example, that the maintenance contracts and upgrades to equipment for use by the TTPS is considered before they are purchased. Equipment must also be compatible with the users. You cannot simply buy and mamaguy the population with 60 new vehicles, drones, tasers, armoured vehicles, blimps, et cetera, and put the priority of training officers—and do not train the officers to use the new equipment. They are trying to pretend to be saviours.

Had they just continued the policies of the People's Partnership, today we would have been in a better position [*Desk thumping*] with respect to crime. So my point so far is, there needs to be a strong legislative framework backed by a well-articulated policy and funds that need to be properly allocated. If they do not give the funds to the police service all the talk would be in vain. And I will give an example subsequently how they have allocated only 1.3 million for training, but yet we have all these new equipment and upgrades to the police service.

My second point is: the Government has not done enough or led by example to incorporate the findings of this report into their national security strategy. Fundamental point, I will repeat it. The Government has not done enough or led by example to incorporate the findings of this report into their national security strategy. The final report of the Police Manpower Audit Committee, the PMAC, has been in the hands of the Government since October 17, 2017, 13 months ago, more than a year, but has it been part of the State's implementation strategy? Sitting on their desk for 13 months and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to implement the findings of this report, a major part of the responsibility rests with the Commissioner of Police. Have they

consulted in the 13 months the Commissioner of Police to find out whether he agrees or not with the findings of the report?

So we are here to discuss a report that has to be implemented by someone and we do not know as yet what are his views on this report. This is the kind of non-consistent, non-logical, kind of decision-making that occurs opposite that leads us into us being a Third World approaching failed State. How, if they had this report in their possession, how did we not see it reflected in the budget? Should they not have been allocating items clearly in tune with this report so that there would be a seamless flow from idea conception to report prescription to implementation? That is the problem next door, of those opposite, a disconnect between ideas and intent and prescription [*Desk thumping*] and the implementation of those ideas.

So I would like to just let Trinidad and Tobago—they are very good at passing blame, and the question is, I am asking loudly, loudly, are they setting up institutions to take the blame when they fail because of their inability to come up with—[*Desk thumping*] and come up with ideas and solutions that require policy prescription?

So they promised in the 2019 budget, create a better relationship between the police officers and the public. So what is that? What is that? That is a statement of intent, like I love my fellow citizens, but I do other things. They talked about improve the capability and effectiveness of the police service. If there is ever an innocuous statement, a vacuous statement, it is that, their policy prescription, unrelated to this report we are discussing today. They think in silos. They talk about make appropriate legal arrangements to allow for the use of non-legal weapons, pepper spray, tasers, mace and rubber sprays. Where is the legislation? Do not tell us

about we are going to make, bring it. As I am reminded by my colleague, the Member for Oropouche East, when he quoted some time ago a film: *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly*. It was said, “When you come to shoot”, and I am talking figuratively, “doh talk, shoot”. So we tell this Government—
[*Crosstalk*]

Hon. Member: “Careful dey ent send you Privileges Committee, eh”. **Mr. R. Charles:** I am talking metaphorically. And to explain to them, metaphorically mean, “I doh mean the thing ah saying”. I mean the applicability in a parallel circumstance. So what I want to tell them, if they come here to implement, implement. [*Desk thumping*] If you come here to shoot, “doh talk, shoot”. *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly*.

Has the TTPS Operational Command Centre, which will:

“...ensure daily command and control of all operations...”—they say—“design patrol methods and ensure proper management and accountability of every patrol and every action.”

That is what they are saying. I would have thought they would have come today and tell us how this thing is being operationalized. They call this in management, the tactical response to a strategic decision. They do not know about those things. Keep the police service—they talked about in the budget—keep the police service in contact with all other protective agencies. They use modern crime fighting technology. Just talk, sounding nice, lots of sound and fury but signifying nothing. When you look at the consideration of critical stakeholder concerns in the Joint Select Committee Report, under the heading:

“Information and Communication Technology”—on page 72. I quote:

“Critical Findings of PMAC

The acquisition of new technology is no guarantee that the TTPS will effectively utilise such technology in all aspects of policing. There is a disconnect between the capacity of the infrastructure, personnel who operate the technological systems, and pragmatic user requirements of the TTPS.”

Well for heaven sake, if the report says that come here today and tell us what you are doing to ensure that there is a bridging of the gap between the technology and the capacity of the agency to utilize the equipment optimally. It goes on:

“Systems are often bought/acquired without a committed budget for continued maintenance/license renewal resulting in degradation of the system and loss of usability.”

That is where we are. That is where we are.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, under “Concerns” on the same page:

“...evidence was presented that many officials in the Public Service, including the TTPS, remain unwilling”—or unable—“to keep abreast of technological advances. As a result, new technology implemented within...respective departments is not effectively...”—used.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, so we are discussing a nice sounding report and to me it sounds like putting a turbo, 400 horse power engine on a donkey cart. That is where we are. [*Laughter and desk thumping*] It is like the “TTGS”, all kinds of interceptor vessels, all kind of—I understand, is how much? Twelve, 13, 14 vessels, but I have been to Cedros and I have seen the coast of Venezuela and I have never seen a Trinidad and Tobago Coast Vessel, a Coast Patrol Vessel.

Hon. Member: Coast guard.

Mr. R. Charles: A coast guard vessel, never seen. And when I talked to the residents they say the same thing, they have never seen. So we have 14 vessels or so and they are talking about end to end monitoring. You do not need end to end today with GPS. You can stay 10 miles here and monitor your boundary and you could have another coast—there is no reason why for heaven sake with 14 vessels we cannot have 24/7 monitoring of the south-west peninsula.

So the Government buys all these nice equipment for the TTPS and says, here, use the laptop, or tablet, or drone or high tech devices, high tech vehicles, but they do not consider that the officers require training to use them. You see the disconnect between Government plans and implementation. You are going to upgrade the police service but you know what, our secondary schools where we gave laptops to all students to create a computer literate, a citizenry, so when the police service recruit citizens who are graduates of our secondary schools they would all be computer literate. So they come into power, they cut the programme, and I would say maliciously, and then resurrect it years after and leave it in the schools not knowing that computers today, in the United States, it is to take home, it is to use, it becomes part of your being and you develop a relationship with your computer so that we are producing computer illiterate citizens who will now go into the police service, who would now be required to deal with all these sophisticated equipment that they proposed to buy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, hear where the disconnect continues; that is why we will remain Third World under this Government. The TTPS received a mere \$1.5 million in the 2019 budget for training when the Government

wants to introduce modern crime fighting technology. So who are they coming here to fool?

Hon. Member: Say again.

Mr. R. Charles: Who are you fooling? Nice sounding report and when you get to the implementation you realize the disconnect. And I want to repeat what I said earlier:

“...article 6 of the 209 law on conscription and recruitment states that all Venezuelans of military age (men and women) have the duty to perform military service in the Bolivarian National Armed Forces, and are subject to military training.”

We are discussing report and they have 40,000 of them roaming in our society and this Government does not have a clue, no intelligence gathering, to know that of the 40,000, 10,000 are ex-convicts or 5,000 are whatever, whatever, whatever. So that informs the police service, so that when they see a particular crime in Trinidad and Tobago they could make a connection. That is the kind of sophisticated—I hate to say Singaporean approach to crime solving. Singapore would not have this foolishness.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the report highlighted three routes of entry into the police service and it was articulated. The first route, rank or police constable, minimum, five O' levels, polygraphing, screening, et cetera. Second route, police constable, tertiary training. Fourth route, applicants of appropriate rank with tertiary education and competencies with skills will be brought into forensic science but will be brought into the police service. Good idea. Good idea, but when for heaven sake will that start? You have two more years. If you do not start now—we should be well advanced in the process of implementing this idea. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are many

instances—this report is a report on a report. So they agreed over and over with the report and we here are agreeing with their agreement to the report that was originally given to them 13 months ago. “Oh Jesus ages.” Lord have mercy.

12.00 noon

Page 55: Both the PMAC and the JSCNS—Joint Select Committee on National Security, agree that the responsibility for the management of the TTPS rests with the Commissioner of Police, and that effective mechanisms are needed for ensuring accountability through the Commissioner of Police. Well, why did you not talk to the Commissioner of Police, [*Desk thumping*] so that today this discussion would have been informed by his competence and his ability? So after we finish here, you have to now go to him and he will select: “Yes, I agree with that”, or not agree with that. Because ultimately, he is responsible.

On page 77, under the Heading? Governance and Oversight, it states:

“We support the recommendations...”

They supporting everything; everything the PMAC said:

“We support the recommendation of the PMAC in this regard and suggest a system that promotes greater accountability to all stakeholders of the TTPS including citizens, communities as well as the Government.”

Page 97: “Officer below the rank of Sergeant:

The”—Joint Select Committee—“agrees with the recommendations of the PMAC that training needs should focus on enhancing basic policing skills such as:

- a. Knowledge of regulations;

- b. Police Standing Orders;
- c. Customer service training;
- d. Mediation and conflict resolution; and
- e. Investigation techniques.”

You see why we are not enamoured with their capacity or their approach, which means talking and talking and talking; talking about the PMAC Report and coming here for us to talk? We will not waste time and join them in this nonsense.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Member, your initial speaking time has elapsed. You have an additional 15.

Mr. R. Charles: Yes, I will take it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Avail yourself.

Mr. R. Charles: Page 105 of the Report: Bullet point 63:

“The PMAC recommends and the Committee agrees...”

Well, they “coulda” bring the PMAC Report to us straight and let us discuss and do not waste time.

My third point is this: Government is underperforming and we are most likely to fail in their two remaining years in office—a non-performing Government. They talk about the:

“—Police Service has a responsibility to:

- i. maintain law and order;
- ii. preserve peace;
- iii. protect life and property;
- iv. prevent and detect crime;
- v. apprehend offenders; and
- vi. enforce all laws and regulations with which it is charged.”

We do not have to come and discuss this report. That is taken as given. That is the responsibility of the police service. [*Desk thumping*] We should have been here to discuss what legislative agenda and what legislation we are going to put in place to maintain law and order. That would be an advance over what we already know. The TTPS has a responsibility to fulfil the mandate. And the question we ask: If it is to preserve peace and protect life and property, was it really necessary to brutalize the students of the University of the West Indies? Was it? Was that the best way of handling it?

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Mr. Deputy Speaker—

Hon. Member: What is the alternative?

Mrs. Robinson-Regis:—Standing Order 48(1).

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Use a different word, please.

Mr. R. Charles: Like what? In place of what? Of “brutalize”?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Ah, you see? You knew clearly. Proceed.

Mr. R. Charles: Was that the best way to treat with young citizens, the future leaders of our nation who probably should have been guided [*Desk thumping*] at what we call a teachable moment, rather than the heavy hand of the law? My view. My view.

In April 2018, 12th of April, *Loop News*:

“Four police officers...three police constables and a police corporal, are all assigned to the western division task force”—were detained after—“an individual claimed he had been beaten”—and the officers—“used excessive force.”

And I am not blaming the officers—

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Who “yuh” blaming?

Mr. R. Charles: I am saying that the policy prescription is not there so we could have the protocols in place so they would know, “when I meet this situation, [*Desk thumping*] this is how I am supposed to act,” and our students ought to know that “if we are doing this, we are breaking the law”. They do not know. And, therefore, we have a requirement to educate our citizenry.

In giving the breakdowns, the current manpower of the police service, Minister Young said there are 7,200 officers in the service with an additional 3,100 SRPs. The sanctioned strength of the TTPS is 7,884 resulting in a shortfall of 684 officers. The report says, and I agree with the report—the report says:

The challenge lies not with the number of officers because when the International Standard of Police Officers to population is applied, the number of officers per 100,000 of population, the TTPS is more than adequately staffed with 494 officers per 100,000 of population. We have 494, close to 500, per 100,000 of population. Every developed country has less than that significantly. Luxemburg, 278 per 100,000; we have 500. Japan, 198; we have 500. Iceland, 196; we have 500 per 100,000. Denmark, 192; Germany, 296; Norway, 210 per 100,000, and I have to say it, Singapore has 162 police officers per 100,000. So we have 494. It does not occur to this Government that we need to look at why it is we have more. Are there cultural reasons? Are there underutilization issues? Are there management issues? And let us talk about those issues.

According to a 2012 study of the UNDP of seven Caribbean countries, including Jamaica, the ratio of police officers to civilians in Jamaica was one officer per 273 inhabitants, which was the lowest police presence per capita

in the seven Caribbean countries. So we need to do our—if we say that the developed countries, the benchmark is different, let us look at countries with similar circumstances as us and see where we fit in. So we do not need another report, but urgent action. Another report is not of any use, if implemented.

Crime fighting initiatives, increased visibility, community orientation, increased engagement of organized crime, heightened activities on the road, continuous training of officers.

So instead today, we should have been discussing things that would immediately apply and improve the police service, for example, the Witness Protection Programme. In order for the TTPS to actively solve crime, they need assistance from the public. They are reliant on information from the public to assist them and it is important that witnesses feel safe to volunteer and provide that evidence.

Anti-gang legislation, which they told us if they passed it, the police were in a state of readiness to act when it was proclaimed, but the anti-gang legislation will not succeed without an effective witness protection programme. You are entering an area where you have to snitch—is the word?—on a gang, on a gang leader, and when you do that, your life is at risk. And if we want the young fellas in our inner city, our at-risk youth—if we do not understand the pressures that they are under, then heaven help us. They have no salvation.

So while we debate, what is their implementation strategy, given poor track record, given no money, given rogue police, the inadequacy of the PCA, lack of trust between police and citizens and a lazy Government? What is our hope and what is our future?

The final report of the Police Manpower Audit Committee, page 14, it says:

The TTPS is in a very troubled and wounded state, troubled mainly because of the complex network of problems facing it, and wounded due to its continued inability to rescue itself.

My colleague from Laventille West talked about 45 per cent of officers surveyed rated the then leadership of the TTPS as very unsatisfactory or unsatisfactory.

So what are the major challenges that affect our crime detection rate? What are the major challenges? The major challenges include the fact that we have inadequate expert forensic science support, which results in inordinate delays in progressing matters, the solution to which will be an increased capability of the Forensic Science Centre in the short term.

If we do not solve that issue we will not be able to—for all the hard work of the TTPS, it will redound to less than optimal if we do not have a Forensic Science capability. We had a meeting recently, a Police Complaints Authority Outreach and, Mr. West, the director, indicated that the fact that he does not have the support—the active support of the Forensic Science Centre inhibits his investigations that he is undertaking.

And, you see, we ask questions in Parliament about the Forensic Science Centre and we get the usual nice-sounding statements as we got today. And when you look at how a serious Forensic Science Centre operates—and I will read about one. This is the Forensic Chemistry and Physics Laboratory in Singapore:

“The laboratory has been accredited by the American Society of Crime Lab Directors/Lab Accreditation Board for trace evidence and

firearms/toolmarks since June 1996.”

You are talking about a First World Forensic Science capability. We are 100 per cent far behind in that the lab’s wide-ranging analytic capabilities have practical applications to industrial and commercial tools.

So we are in trouble. We are in trouble. We are, unfortunately, with a government that is all talk and no action. Our problem, in closing, is not ideas, but implementation. Any future document, we demand, ought to have an implementation strategy applied to it. It is critical to identify low hanging fruit, i.e. high-impact, low-cost strategies that will affect the desired change we want to implement.

But you see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a lot of the legislative changes require respectful interaction between the Opposition and the Government. The Prime Minister on Independence Day spoke about—he admonished on Independence Day—admonished the nation to respect the Opposition, respect the Government, and that they should respect each other. They do not respect us.

In closing, it would be remiss of me if I do not call on the Attorney General to apologize. That is in the context of this need for consensus—to apologize to Sen. Saddam Hosein—

Hon. Member: For what?

Mr. R. Charles: It is not—

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: For what?

Mr. R. Charles: It is simply not done professionally—

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Standing Order 48(1). [*Crosstalk*] Totally irrelevant. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Silence, please. Member, again, the relevance to this

particular report that we are debating—

Mr. R. Charles: It is relevant in the sense that, to be implemented, like the Police Service Commission, they need to collaborate with us—[*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: One second. Member, I think you should move on. Move on to your other point.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Yes. Totally irrelevant.

Mr. R. Charles: Okay. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Government, by its inaction, by its vacuity of ideas—

Hon. Members: “Ohh gor.” [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. R. Charles:—by the poverty of vision and lack of intellect, is incapable of taking us into the 21st Century. The TTPS will learn soon that they could do as much as they can, but there are not the policy prescriptions to assist them to achieve—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Two more minutes.

Mr. R. Charles:—to achieve what is required in our society. I call on this Government, I call on the Minister of National Security, do the patriotic thing. If you realize that by qualifications, experience and skill training you are incapable of dealing with crime, what you should do? Resign. Save us. Lord, what have we done to suffer under this PNM Government administration? Why are we in a situation where they talk, talk, talk and do not do, do, do? We have passed the stage of ol' talk; passed the stage of ideas; passed the stage of police prescription. We want—Trinidad and Tobago is begging. There is a hopelessness in this country. There is a sense that we are heading to a Haitian future and we call on the Government to do the honourable thing, to do the patriotic thing and resign forthwith. [*Desk thumping*] You are not capable of taking us into the 21st Century. You will

not make us a Singapore. You will make us closer to a Haiti.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I close. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West.
[*Desk thumping*]

The Minister of National Security, Minister of Communications and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Hon. Stuart Young): Mr. Deputy Speaker, in some recent words that I saw on television by none other than the newly-appointed Commissioner of Police, "Lord Fadda".
[*Laughter and desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, to bring us back in line with a sane and proper debate and reality, I would like to start by just telling the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, despite what was just said by the Member for Naparima and despite him attacking and saying that we are wasting time here today in debating a very important report, the Parliament and this House, we are the people who have been elected by the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago to do the people's business, and we are here today to discuss the improvement of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, and we see that, as an administration, as being of utmost importance. [*Desk thumping*]

I would like to start by welcoming to the House, sitting in the gallery, the fairly newly appointed Commissioner of Police, Mr. Gary Griffith, [*Desk thumping*] Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police, Dulalchan and other members of the police executive. [*Desk thumping*] Welcome. And I would like to thank thereafter, all of the members—[*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Members, one second. Members, remember your comments are picked up by the *Hansard*. So, Members, please. Each

Member will have the opportunity to enter the debate and I am not going to tolerate the constant outburst as we continue along. Proceed, Member.

Hon. S. Young: Thank you very much. I would like to thank, Mr. Deputy Speaker, all of the members who took up the mantle of service and sat on a Deosaran Cabinet-appointed committee, for their service to Trinidad and Tobago, and in particular the work aimed at improving the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. [*Desk thumping*] And if I may be permitted, very briefly, to call them out: Prof. Ramesh Deosaran, Ms. Jacqueline Wilson, Mr. Harold Phillip, Mrs. Urla Christopher, Mr. Allan Meiguel, Dr. Levis Guy Obiakor, Mr. Zameer Mohammed and Inspector Anand Ramesar. [*Desk thumping*] We thank them for the work that they did and the manpower audit that they carried out.

You see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service is the body that has been created by law and constitutionally charged with the responsibility of protecting and serving the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, and there have been a number of reports and studies done over the years that resulted in a number of reports, starting with the Lee Committee Report in 1958, and then a report into the Organization, Administration, Disciplining of the Police Force, the Darby Committee Report of 1964; the Carr Committee Report of 1971; the Bruce Committee Report of 1978; the Police Executive Research Forum Report of 1990; the O'Dowd Committee Report of 1991; The Senior Planning Group, 2006; Mastrofski, 2006; the National Security Sector Review, Trinidad and Tobago; the Ross Report in 2009, and then a SAUTT Implementation Team, Final Report, 2011; a Multi-sector Review Team on the Police Service Commission, 2013.

When this side was in opposition and they were willing to work along

with the then government in tackling the issue of crime, recognizing that even then, and even before then, crime is one of the main elements that affects the daily lives of our citizens, we had put forward a 10-point plan, and one of the elements of that plan was a manpower audit. Of course, at the time it was completely ignored and nothing was done by the administration between 2010 and 2015. In fact, what they did was set about dismantling things that were actually working.

This administration, Mr. Deputy Speaker, completely supports the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, and, in fact, has been doing so from September 2015. And it is very disheartening, and we saw first-hand experience here today, that those on the other side, rather than stand up and support the police service, do the exact opposite, constantly criticize them and attack them, especially in that other place. This Government's position—and I say it here for the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago and to record it in the House—is that we fully support the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service once they are acting within the confines of the law. And they have our full support. [*Desk thumping*]

And if you would permit me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to just set out, as an administration, I heard the vacuous words on the other side a short while ago and saying that we have not done anything and it is all ol' talk and there has been no action. For the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, if I may, very briefly, outline exactly what has been done and then get into what the intention to do, is.

By December 2015, having come in as an administration in September 2015, we had brought to the House the Orders and had debated in the House, the Orders to revise the whole complicated process of

appointment of a Commissioner of Police.

Hon. Member: Exactly.

Hon. S. Young: That was done by December 2015. And let me remind the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, as an administration we identified from early o'clock—it was in our political manifesto—that in order to assist the police service and provide them with support, one of the things they needed immediately was a permanent leader. They needed leadership at the head, and to do that we came to the House and debated and simplified the process for the appointment of a Commissioner of Police. [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Member: What they did?

Hon. S. Young: Immediately the Opposition ran to court—

Hon. Member: To block it.

Hon. S. Young:—and tried to block it and, in fact, delayed the process with the appointment of a Commissioner of Police. And I will remind the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, between 2010 and 2015, for five years and three months, those on the other side, and those who were in power at that time, had a constitutional majority. So all the old talk we have heard here today about amend the Police Service Commission and amend the law and constitutionally do this, and call upon the Government to work alongside with them to change the law, that could have been done between 2010 and 2015, five years and three months, with a constitutional majority. Let the country recall that those on the other side did absolutely nothing to improve the system—

Hon. Member: But they spent plenty money though.

Hon. S. Young: Absolutely nothing to improve the system. Right? What they did is they appointed the last permanent Commissioner of Police and

terminated him, and a deputy Commissioner—

Hon. Member: For no reason.

Hon. S. Young:—in 2012; did nothing about it. But, in fact, the then Attorney General, for three and a half years, was proud to stand up, not only here, but outside and say, “Well, it better to have a Commissioner on contract.”

Hon. Member: He will work harder.

Hon. S. Young: He “go” work harder. In other words, you do anything “ah doh” like, I will get rid of you.

Mr. Lee: Mr. Deputy Speaker, 48(1), please. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Chief Whip, clarify.

Mr. Lee: The relevance. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Overruled.

Mr. Imbert: Sit down.

Hon. S. Young: Thank you very much—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Retract that, Minister of Finance.

Mr. Imbert: Certainly, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Proceed.

Mr. Imbert: I will not ask him to sit down again.

Hon. S. Young: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The next big step by this Government with respect to the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, by January 2017 the Cabinet had appointed the Police Manpower Audit Committee, the members of whom I have just referred to. So, again, it is not a matter of talk, talk, talk. When in opposition we recognized that to improve the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service what should be done is have a manpower audit. That was done by this Government in January

2017, and sitting on the committee, two acting deputy Commissioners of Police, as well as a representative of the Police Social and Welfare Association.

So we went and we put in place three active police officers with the highest levels of experience to sit on that committee and that committee delivered the report which then was brought to Parliament. A joint select committee on national security, which is the right body in Parliament, studied it, digested it, met with stakeholders and produced the report that we are here today to deal with. And to listen to those on the other side say that it is a waste of parliamentary time for us to go through this Police Manpower Audit Report and the work done by the committee chaired by Mr. Hinds, is a shame. And I want the persons of Trinidad and Tobago to look on. As usual, what they do not want is an efficient police service—[*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Member: They “fraid” police.

Hon. S. Young: Well, this administration, as I said before, supports the police service. And you can ask the police service if they have been getting the Government’s support. By August 2018 this administration had come to the House and had debated fully, in the full glare of the country, and by August 2018, for the first time in six years this country had appointed a Commissioner of Police. [*Desk thumping*] And, again, I would like to use the opportunity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, through you, to remind the country what was the position of those on the other side in that debate. Those on the other side who had served alongside with Mr. Griffith, who is now the Commissioner of Police, when he was the advisor—

Mr. Lee: Mr. Deputy Speaker, 48(1). That debate has ended and the Member cannot go back into a debate that has already ended.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member, again, make the point quickly and move on.

Hon. S. Young: Thank you very much. And I remind the population that those on the other side, not a single one of them agreed to the appointment of a permanent Commissioner of Police, but the country and those on this side are relieved and we are already seeing the positive effects of that action by the Government. [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Member: Leadership.

Hon. S. Young: And at this stage, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have listened to what was being spewed on the other side about no implementation and it is a report, and a report put on a shelf and nothing being done. Completely untrue. As usual, an attempt by the Opposition to mislead the public of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have in my hand here the complete implementation plan of every single recommendation of the Deosaran Committee Report, and not only does it identify what the recommendation is, the action that has to be taken, the executive and functional responsibility of the officer or officers in the police service, as well as an implementation timeline, so to tell the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago here, without fear of contradiction, the police service has already taken the step of formulating the implementation plans for all of the recommendations coming out of the Deosaran Report, and for that, the police service is to be applauded. [*Desk thumping*]

They are being proactive. They are doing what needs to be done, and this is not a report that has been parked on a shelf. In fact, I can tell you, one of the first actions I took upon assuming office as Minister of National

Security was to write to the Commissioner of Police and to provide him with the reports and tell him, let us discuss the reports and kindly take a look at it. And what did the Commissioner of Police and the executive of the police service do? They went ahead. They were proactive. They immediately digested the report and began a plan of implementation. And when you look at it, the implementation has already begun. September, December 2018, and they have been reporting and they have been going through the tick boxes, as I will get to in a short while, and the police service is already implementing some of the recommendations of the Deosaran Committee.

So rather than sit there and chastise, and rather than continue to call it upon the country to stain Third World status, we on this side refute that. We will not participate in that type of derogatory and negativity brought on the country, and we will work with the police service to take us forward. Immediately upon the appointment of a permanent Commissioner of Police, the population immediately started to say that they felt a sense of the public hope and a sense of confidence in what was being done. It was the right step at the right time. What we have also seen, and I have seen it first-hand, working along very closely with the police service when they come in for us to discuss policy and for me to give them my observations, et cetera, there is a new energy in the police service. There is a new vibrancy in the police service and we are seeing the results. Despite all that those on the other side may want to do and the cloak of negativity and the anchor of desperation that they have, the truth is facing us and the truth is, there has already begun to be vast improvements in the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and I thank you all officers for it.

12.30 p.m.

I thank you all for the leadership that you all are providing. I have seen you all roll up your sleeves, go down in your various division and work alongside with the men and the women in the police service, and you have this Government's full support as you go forward and do it. [*Desk thumping*] Yes, there are difficulties; yes, there are shortcomings in the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, but this Government is not afraid to confront them no matter how difficult. In fact, what we have seen—and what I have told all of the law enforcement bodies since assuming office, and it is already happening, is that we will work together. The police service has a more active relationship with the defence force, with the intelligence services, with the prisons officers, even with the fire services. We bring the fire service now, we bring ODPM, all of them to the heads of security meeting on a weekly basis so everybody is on the same page.

This Government has told the police service and the other arms of the law enforcement that we no longer will tolerate silos of information, and you can ask the police service. They are already seeing the benefits of it, and I take this opportunity, as we sit here, to thank the men and the women of the police service, the men and women of the coast guard and our intelligence agencies for a task well done that culminated last night, an operation that was taking place for a while and for the massive find of drugs and serious assault weapons that was picked up last night, and that was not by “vaps”. [*Desk thumping*] That was the result of intelligence-led operations, and I thank the police service for the work that they are doing. [*Desk thumping*] Whilst we are sitting here, there has just been another big find led by the police service going into the dangerous forest. They are doing a tremendous—you have our support. Continue to do what is happening and

what is going on.

I see very often some of the communication that is taking place amongst you all when we sit together and it is refreshing. The police service is on the right track and do not allow the negativity of those on the other side whose sole purpose is to bring down not only the police service but to try and bring down the people of Trinidad and Tobago, because this Government will stand in the frontline with you—the members of the police service—and we will march forward with you all as you all do your jobs which are often thankless and dangerous. You have our support, continue to do what you are doing.

The de-siloing of information and intelligence. You are already seeing the use of the National Operations Fusion Centre for the first time being properly operationalized, and the police have an important part to play in that. The police are now given access to the facilities, given access to the assets that the people of Trinidad and Tobago own, and I am seeing them all working together. I am seeing the exchanges between the Commissioner of Police, his deputies, the executives, along with their compatriots and their colleagues in the defence force, in the SSA, even in the fire service, the prison service, and that is something that is to be applauded. Keep it up. That is the right direction because it is only when we all march forward to the same drumbeat, and you are seeing the effects of that right now, and you are seeing the increase in detection rates, and the increase in the positive work that you all are doing.

And on that note, just in the past few short months, allow me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is only a microcosm of what has taken place and some of the positives under this new vibrancy and energy of the police service, the

exercises this morning—the exercise you all just completed in the forest. The earthquake—do not underestimate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when Trinidad suffered that 6.9 magnitude earthquake, how quickly we were able to assemble at the National Operations Fusion Centre, how quickly I was able to get briefed. The policemen and women went and manned their post. When traffic lights were down they found the traffic lights, they manned the roads to make sure there was safety and security, they gave a sense of calm to our citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, and these are just some examples of the positive. The kidnappings that have taken place, and one of the main ones that was brought into the spotlight, the Pollonais kidnapping, how quickly they were able to work together with the other arms of law enforcement, drive the intelligence, get it done, and thank God, safely returned Natalie Pollonais to her family. That is the work of this new energized vibrant police service. We stand with them. The day of rest and reflection, “doh listen to de ole talk”. We sat and we planned very carefully every single hour of the day for rest and reflection. We got policy—I got policy from the Chairman of the National Security Council, then took it down for discussion with the heads. There were no incidents. Called by Members of the Opposition and associated with them to block major roads and intersections, again the police service did very well and managed to ensure that none of that was disrupted.

The recent disaster floods, again the police service played their part, their role, even though there were those on the other side calling for death, saying the police were—

Mr. Lee: Mr. Deputy Speaker—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Imbert: What is the Standing Order?

Mr. Lee: You relax. You relax—48(4) and (6), please. 48(6).

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member, I would like you to rephrase, retract and say it differently please.

Hon. S. Young: I would like to thank the police service for the yeoman's job that they did and what they did during the disaster floods—every single man and woman of the police service. [*Desk thumping*] And in fact, you are seeing this new energy and camaraderie between the police service. Yesterday, I saw the Police Social and Welfare Division—and it had to be by gathering the resources of the men and the women of the police service—handing out—they had gathered appliances and other things to take to their affected brothers and sisters in the police service who had lost stuff in the flood. That came after, after they are the ones who ensured there is a continuation of law and order.

When there were calls for looting taking place, et cetera, and this continued attempt at creating panic in the society, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, under the leadership that we are seeing here today, are the ones who ensured that that panic did not spread and they kept up law and order, and I thank you for it. [*Desk thumping*] We have recently had some disasters take place in our prison service. We have had the uncowardly attacks on two of our prison officers who met their fate. What happened? Immediately we came together including the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and we said all for one, one for all, and again the police service are playing a very important role, along with the defence force, in assisting the prison service in making it a more secure environment inside and outside. They are now much more responsive.

The launch of the new emergency response unit that took place not

too long ago, I heard those on the other side here, a few minutes ago, criticize it and tell the police service “dais ole talk, dais flash”. It is not. I commend the police service for taking these initiatives. You have the people’s support because citizens are reporting to the Government that they feel better, and I know what it is the police service do because over the weekend when there was this, all of a sudden, an upsurge in murders, that is not something any civic-minded citizen of Trinidad and Tobago wants. What happened? Immediately, I was in contact with the Commissioner of Police, in contact with the Chief of Defence Staff, head of SSA, came together, they put in place a plan and they got all of their vehicles out and I—

Mr. Lee: Mr. Deputy Speaker, 48(1), the Member is not—we are debating a report.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Overruled.

Hon. S. Young: Also, another important area that the police service played—and I want the population to know the good work that the police service is doing. When we were doing the contingency planning for Petrotrin, obviously security was an important element, immediately the police service stepped into gear. They formed part of the interagency team that oversaw that and they did what was right. You had the Commissioner at the time telling people, once you make the correct applications, once you do this, once you do that, keep within the confines of the law, all of that went on without incident.

I have heard criticism, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about the passage of the anti-gang legislation, I would like through you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to tell the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago that the work with respect to the anti-

gang legislation is twofold. One, the legislation is utilized and is being utilized to disrupt because it is not only about charging and prosecution. You will recall some of the provisions of the anti-gang legislation, and those provisions are being utilized by the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service to disrupt some of the elements that are engaging in gang-related activities. I cannot say much more as to what is going on with respect to the investigations and what we expect to happen as a result of that anti-gang legislation, but I stand here today without fear of contradiction and tell the population of Trinidad and Tobago, that the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, the intelligence agencies and other law enforcement are working very hard, very meticulously, very carefully within the confines of the anti-gang legislation and they are utilizing the provisions that we as a Parliament gave them, and very soon we will see the outcome of the other side of the anti-gang legislation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a new culture of sharing and working together. That is one of the recommendations coming out of the report that there should be more sharing of intelligence, there should be closer working relationships. It is not about giving soldiers the powers of police. We are currently showing that is completely unnecessary. The police service and the defence force are working like fingers in glove. They are working together, they are providing the levels of support necessary. Our intelligence services are providing all of them with levels of support. The use of technology it is taking place, and I heard the most derogatory comment made a short while ago, about those in the police service would not be able to utilize computers and they would not be able to utilize the technology presented to them. Not true. The men and women of the police service are

doing yeoman's duty and they are utilizing the technology. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member for Laventille West, I will not recognize you in the seat that you are in please.

Hon. S. Young: I would like to also say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the recommendations that was made here is the utilization of technology. I am sad to say that coming now, as I have come, that we are finding that for all of those years, and all of the years where you had all the money in the world, five years, three months—they gave computers to school children, great, but what they did not do is give computers to the police service. [*Desk thumping*] So the police stations did not even have a set-up where there are computer terminals in the police station feeding back to a centralized location so the information could then be disbursed within the police service. Why did they not do that? They did not want the success in the fight against crime. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this administration is working closely with the police service and we are getting those things done for the first time.

This administration is working closely with the Police and Social Welfare Association. Cabinet took a decision yesterday—one of the things to lift the morale of the police service and to let them know that we are there and we recognize the difficulties they face, and to provide them with a safe space that they can go after work and they can bond together, they can exercise together, they can socialize together, this Cabinet took a decision yesterday, approved and confirmed, and we are granting a parcel of land with buildings to the Police and Social Welfare Association. So for the first time they will have their own headquarters and wellness facilities. [*Desk thumping*]

The report talks about, one of the recommendations is implementation

of new units and looking at all of the various units that do different jobs and ensure no duplicity, but also recognizing that the crimes have changed. For example, there is white collar crime now, serious white collar crime. I heard the Commissioner last night talk about billions of dollars being stolen and what that can do to a country, and what is the police service's reaction to that? They are putting in place new financial units.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member, with that phone, please.

Dr. Khan: I apologize, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Your speaking time has expired. Member, you have an additional 15. You care to avail yourself?

Hon. S. Young: Yes, please.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Proceed.

Hon. S. Young: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What is taking place, a new unit is going to be populated under the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service to deal specifically with complex and complicated financial crimes. Maybe that is why there is a lot of jumpiness. What is going to take place is the bringing into the police service of the forensic auditors, the bringing into the police service of the persons who are skilled, who have the experience in dealing with these types of crimes that have been committed against Trinidad and Tobago, but that is not being done in isolation. Some of the other recommendations are being implemented in terms of special operations response team and various other specialized teams to deal with the evolving movement of crime. We are going to bolster the cybercrime unit and other areas that need more resources.

I heard a lot of “do, do”, “do this, do that”, “do, do”, from “Duppy” about the Forensic Science Centre. What is happening, Mr. Deputy

Speaker—and I will say it again, the Government has gone and we have negotiated, and there is about to start construction of a new state-of-the-art DNA lab and forensic science centre, free from the Government of China, gratis from the Government of China, because of the relationship we have been building with the Government of China, and we are going to get that so the police service will also have that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with some of the remaining time that I have, if I can just go very quickly to some of the recommendations that were being suggested in the manpower audit and just to assure the population in addition to what the police service has done, which is for each item, have a plan for the implementation, implementation date and who is in charge of implementation, I would like to just let the population know some of the things I can very briefly, as to what has already been done and is already being implemented. It is not talk and you are seeing the results. The country has already begun to see an increase in the detection rate of crime. That is not by fluke, that is not by “vaps”; that is by the use of technology, that is by the use of all of the arms of law enforcement sitting down together, and working together, and the de-siloing of intelligence and information.

Some of the important recommendations that already are taking place:

“The Police Service should consider a review of the number of Units and Branches in its current structure with the aim to reduce redundancy where it is fitting.”

That has already begun. The OCIU unit was a bringing together of the gang intelligence unit and the OCNFB. That is already operationalized. There are other areas that we are looking at that the police service is looking at, that they will bring together under one roof, one arm.

“The TTPS currently has an Asset Management...Fleet Management system that is not being fully utilized. This needs to be fully and quickly actioned.”

“A proper Fixed Asset Register”—things like—“(furniture and equipment)”...

This is being done. These are some of the things that are already being implemented.

There is an urgent need—this is the recommendation:

“...to move”—as far away—“from a paper-based system for many of the operations in the TTPS to a computer-based one.”

As I just said, this is already being implemented and it shocks me that all of the talk we have heard for all these years, a proper computer system was not in each police station feeding back to a central database. That is being implemented; systems and procedures for overtime and leave, the recommendations identified that there were issues with overtime and leave, that:

“The TTPS should take necessary steps to restructure itself to reduce the annual overtime expenditure.”

This has already begun to be done; the Commissioner of Police and his executive have already in the last two months reduced the overtime bill, I believe, by \$15 million a month. So do not sit there, stand there and criticize. They are doing the work and that is with the help of the Government.

Greater collaborative arrangements with external—this is another recommendation, there should be:

“Greater collaborative arrangements with external agencies to the

TTPS should be fostered, for example, between the Strategic Services Agency and the TTPS on joint intelligence. This is...one example. Others can be...Customs and Excise, Immigration Division, Prison Service, Defence Force, municipal Police, estate Police, private Security, etc.”

The question being asked as, “Oh, is this a report on a shelf and there will not be implementation?” The answer is no. This particular element, this recommendation has already been implemented and the country is beginning to see the positive effects of all of the law enforcement agencies working closer together and in a more collaborative manner for the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago under this administration. Officers themselves complained about the inadequacy of transportation vehicles in the TTPS for them to carry out their duties, again, this is being addressed. The conversation taking place with the police service by the Government is a proper maintenance of vehicles. They have already just—the newest vehicles they got they formulated an emergency response unit, that is not for show. That is out there on the ground. I saw how it worked over the last weekend when there was an upsurge.

Training and development, a point was made about only \$1.5 million in the budget for training and development of the TTPS. Of course, that is not the limit. What is already taking place is we are speaking to our foreign allies to see what other training we get, but the point is you can vire and transfer money from the various votes, and if that is what has to happen it will happen and you will have the full support of the Government to do it. Joint operations between police and other related agencies like defence force, prisons, customs, immigration, as I have said weeks ago, this is

already taking place. So it is not old talk. Implementation is taking place and we are seeing the results, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Another recommendation:

“There should be adequate resources for...installation...maintenance of the CCTV cameras across Trinidad and Tobago. This should be a massive project undertaken by the relative authorities as a strategic means to detect and prevent crime.”

Done! It is in the process of being evaluated and implemented. That is taking place. There should be improvements in vetting background checks of all recruits to the police service, a system to monitor the activities of all officers to ensure—

Just this week, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Chairman of the National Security Council called a meeting of the National Security Council where 28 officers—the top 28 officers in the executive of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service came to the National Security Council and that formed the main part of discussion to let the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and those who run it and manage it know, they have the support of the Government. If there are rogue officers, if there are corrupt officers, if there are those that are holding the system back, throw them out. You have the support of the Government and let them fight in the courthouse, and that was the message from the Chairman of the National Security Council, with the full support of his National Security Council, to let the police service know we stand with them in improving the police service.

We have taken on board, but even despite what we, the Government, are taking on board out of the recommendations, the police service have already begun to do it and implement it. What we discussed as well was

polygraphing of officers in the service as a means and a method to increasing the productivity of the police service and ensuring non-corrupt elements. We have heard the Prime Minister say within the last couple of weeks, publicly, that the main cancer this society faces is that of corruption, and it is not only in the police service. I will venture to say that even within close confines here there are those that participated in it, and we as an administration assure the people of Trinidad and Tobago that we have taken that task on and we are fighting it as hard as we can within our crease and we ask the police service—because as citizens we look to you—to root out the corruption in the society and bring those persons to court and let them serve. [*Desk thumping*]

EAP system: an EAP programme for the police service, the Government will work closely with you all on this because as an administration we recognize the dangers that you face, the difficulties that you, the police service face. So we will bolster the EAP programmes with you all because persons do not recognize when you all go out there and persons are shooting at you to kill you, the types of effects that has, the constant criticism and negativity. Well, the Government stands with you all and the Government will support you all fully as I hope by now, you all have seen, and that it is not just talk. You all are the ones out there and you have the full support of this Government, and I challenge any member of the police service to say otherwise.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Government saw it very important to come here to the Parliament today in the full glare of the public, the full accountability of the public, and in complete transparency, to tell the public that one of the things we undertook as an administration was a Police

Manpower Audit, and unlike what may have happened in the past—because we cannot change what happened in the past—we brought those reports—two volumes—to the Parliament, sent it to the Joint Select Committee on National Security, and we are here today telling the population of Trinidad and Tobago that maybe for the first time, but certainly it is happening now, we are taking the recommendations of the Manpower Audit of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and they are being implemented.

So this Government has not left reports on a shelf. We are implementing—along with a closer relationship with the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service—the recommendations of these reports and it is not what we intend to do. I have reported to the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago in the short space of time that I had, there is a lot more, but there is also a philosophy that I subscribe to, in national security there are some things that are best not spoken about and you just let the experts get on with it and do their job knowing that they have the support of the Government.

Even in these times of limited resources—I would end by saying this, even in these times of limited resources, I give the assurance that this Government stands in full support of the men and women of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, the defence force, the SSA, the fire service, the prison service, the life guards, everyone who is part of our national security apparatus, and we will do what we can with the resources to support you because Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, your job is to protect and serve. I have seen the increase in energy, I have seen the increase in your desire to work together and you have the support of all of the other arms, and I would like to end as a citizen of Trinidad and Tobago, and as the Member of Parliament for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West, and as the

Minister of National Security, to thank each and every officer of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service on a daily basis putting your lives on the line to protect and serve us. Thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Members, at this time we will suspend for lunch and will resume at 2.00 p.m.

12.58 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

2.00 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: As we resume after lunch, I will recognize the Member for Couva South.

Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh (Couva South): [*Desk thumping*] Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As I rise to join this debate here this evening, I want to take the opportunity to commend my colleague from Naparima for doing yeoman service [*Desk thumping*] in his contribution and actually indicating to the national community that we have had a history of reports and inaction in this country, and what was really needed was the political will to ensure that there is value for money in terms of dealing with crime in Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*] Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was really an inspiring contribution on behalf of the Member for Naparima. [*Desk thumping*]

And it is important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to make a few points based on what has been said by the Minister of National Security and also the Member for Laventille West when he led off on behalf of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. But more importantly, I would want to ask the Minister of National Security here this evening and for the national community to take note of whether he abused his authority as the Minister of National Security. I do not know whether he invited, he summoned, he

called the hierarchy of the police service of this country to be present in the parliamentary Chamber to hear him speak. Because certainly, the hierarchy of the police service did not come to listen to the Member of Parliament for Naparima or the Member of Parliament for Couva South, but they came here, certainly, to listen to the Minister of National Security and I think that this was an abuse [*Desk thumping*] on the part of the Minister of National Security in terms of—[*Interruption*]

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Mr. Deputy Speaker, 48(6).

Mr. Deputy Speaker: You take total responsibility for your comments, Member?

Mr. R. Indarsingh: Yes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Okay, proceed.

Mr. R. Indarsingh: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am asking the question, whether it was an abuse on the part of Minister of National Security.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: One second, Member. Couva South, one second.

Mr. Al-Rawi: I rise on Standing Order 48(6) and if I may just be permitted to elucidate what it is I asked for your consideration on? It is not the fact of taking ownership, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is the fact that it is an improper motive; so one cannot own an improper motive because it is not a reference to fact. So the allegation that the Minister has done something, which is an abuse, [*Crosstalk*] is in and of itself an offence under Standing Order 48(6), so I ask you humbly to consider it, Sir.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member, move on to your next point.

Mr. R. Indarsingh: You see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the Government launched its National Crime Prevention Plan on the 18th of July, 2018, and the Minister, at that point in time, in his capacity as the Communications

Minister, indicated and I quote that:

“...crime is not about politics...”—and—“From the time...”—you—
“begin to politicise crime or the issues of crime and wish that the
scourge of crime continues to develop in the hope that it mars a
government and makes a government look bad, you are failing...”—
the—“country...”

I have simply asked the question here this afternoon, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we must never forget that the police service is an independent and autonomous organization under the constitutional framework of this country. It is important that we on this side reaffirm our commitment and also take note of the continued hard work and dedication of the officers of the police service of Trinidad and Tobago and all of the law enforcement agencies in this country. And we gave the support when we were the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar and those of us who were a part of the Cabinet and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago ensured that there was the independence and rule of law observed as it relates to the independence and the work that the law enforcement agencies in the country was doing. And the Minister of National Security has absolutely no legitimacy in saying or attempting to attack Members of this Opposition [*Desk thumping*] in relation to what we did for the police service and the law enforcement agencies.

In fact, he has been so obsessed with fake news in this country that he was the bearer of fake news in his entire contribution [*Desk thumping*] here this evening, and I want to take the opportunity to remind him, because he misled the country and provided misinformation to this country when he said

that the—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member, Member, please address the proper pronoun please—“he”; “Member”, “honourable”, as the case may be.

Mr. R. Indarsingh: When the Minister said that the Opposition—I want to get it right—That when the Government brought the orders to the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago to simplify the process for the appointment of the Commissioner of Police, the Opposition ran to the courts of Trinidad and Tobago in an attempt to delay the process and so on. But the truth is that the Opposition went to the courts of Trinidad and Tobago fulfilling its role to ensure that there was the separation of powers being maintained under the Constitution of this country. [*Desk thumping*] And we will do it again [*Desk thumping*] because the PNM has an obsession with undermining the rule of law in this country [*Desk thumping*] and you only have to check their track records since the days of Independence up until 2018.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Standing Order 48(6).

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Clarify, Leader of the House.

Mrs. Robinson-Regis: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Member is implying that the People’s National Movement—and we represent that party—has had a history of undermining the law and order in this country and that is certainly not true and that is an improper motive. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member, could you rephrase your comments, please?

Mr. R. Indarsingh: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have not referred to any Member in a personal capacity here this evening. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member, again, I asked you to rephrase. So it is either you rephrase or retract and move on kindly.

Mr. R. Indarsingh: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for your guidance. I simply was making the point that in no way did the Opposition in going to the courts of Trinidad and Tobago was being irresponsible under the Constitution of this country. [*Desk thumping*] We simply wanted to ensure that the separation of powers existed in this country and we must never forget that the orders that they brought to the Parliament with respect to the appointment of the Commissioner of Police and the Deputy Commissioner of Police and so on had a heavy tinge of political involvement and political interference where, at that point in time, they wanted the Minister to trigger the process as it relates to the appointment, and the courts ruled through Justice Rajkumar that the separation of powers must be maintained, Mr. Deputy Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of National Security went down the road of attempting, again, to continue this narrative that the Opposition whether when we were in Government or taking into consideration that we are now in Opposition, we are not supportive to the different stakeholders of this country, the different arms of the law enforcement agencies and so on, and went on to indicate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, during his contribution that we on this side never did anything to support the members of the law enforcement agencies and so on. But I want to take the opportunity again here this evening to remind the Minister of National Security and remind those on the Government Bench and by extension Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that during the 2010 to 2015 period, the Government of which I was part of was able to bring down serious crime to the lowest [*Desk thumping*] in 32 years by making law enforcement more present and giving them the resources to be more present.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, just to illustrate, the Government to which I belonged, ensured that more than 500 vehicles were purchased for the police service and 11,470 vehicles were refurbished. And today, the Government and the law enforcement agencies still continue to utilize the 13 surveillance bays which were established on the nation's highways. [*Desk thumping*]

And also, we, as a Government, at that point in time, launched the Community Comfort Patrols and I want to ask those on the other side, today, they come back and they attempt to tell the national community that they will pursue a programme of community comfort patrols and so on, but why, in the first place, Mr. Deputy Speaker, did they resort to disbanding this programme in their first few months of office? [*Desk thumping and crosstalk*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Silence.

Mr. R. Indarsingh: And in addition to these initiatives, we ensured, as a Government, that there was a special duty allowance of \$1,000 for all law enforcement officers in this country. We also ensured—it was a work-in-progress but it did not become reality. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we conceptualized—we realized that law enforcement was a very dangerous job and a very dangerous responsibility and so on and we considered that in the line of duty, persons may fall in the line of performing their duties and we had a responsibility to look after the well-being of the families of law enforcement officers. [*Desk thumping*] And today, whenever law enforcement officers fall in the line of duty, their recognition is always underscored and also, the well-being of their families is looked after from the point of view of \$1 million allocation, and that was conceptualized under

the leadership of Mrs. Kamla Persad-Bissessar.

And today, I want to remind the Minister of National Security and remind the Government Bench that the inter-agency joint patrols between Trinidad and Tobago and so on was implemented in our tenure and in addition to that, we launched the Rapid Response Unit and the E999. [*Desk thumping*] So Minister of National Security, your narrative will probably satisfy yourself and satisfy your ego but the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago will realize that you are indeed the bearer of fake news in relation to the propaganda that you continue to spread [*Desk thumping*] in your attempt to vilify the Members of the Opposition.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are here today simply because every right-thinking citizens of our country is convinced that after three years of this Government, under Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley, that this Government has no idea, absolutely no idea on how to properly govern Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*] And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this debate is really in the direction of what I would call or if you examine what is emanating out of the Government Bench and the contributions of the Government, you would realize that they are trying to mass their incompetence through a public relations campaign in the Parliament here today.

And we must never forget that this Government told the country they had the solution to crime and when this Government assumed office they realized that they could not solve the crime problem and they attempted to appoint someone else to tell them what to do. They had no idea what was needed in spite of presenting a manifesto to the population of this country and sometimes, it is important to remind the citizens of this country to understand how they would hoodwink prior to the general elections of 2015.

And I want to quote from the message of the political leader Dr. The Hon. Keith Rowley from page 3 of their manifesto:

“As in our practice when in Opposition, we have spent the last five years developing the necessary policies and programmes to rebuild our country and our economy, restore confidence, equity and social justice, and enhance and improve every area of national life.”

Well, I want to tell them that this manifesto has failed the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, not only from the point of view of crime fighting, but Trinidad and Tobago is in a state of collapse, whether it is from education, health and virtually every sector of Government, and it is only time that you will all be voted out as the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*] Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say so because they had no idea of what to do and they needed Professor Ramesh Deosaran and a team to attempt to tell them what to do as it relates to the police service.

But more importantly, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, what the Government is really doing is they are finding another scapegoat to blame so that when the blame does not fall at their feet and in time, I want to signal to the hierarchy of the police service, because this is no different from the anti-gang legislation when they told the country that this was the most important tool or weapon in the fight against crime, and they also said too, from the point of view of the SSA legislation, I want to tell them that the hierarchy police, in months to come, they will move away from the praise that they have attempted to heap on the police service, and in time to come, they may attempt to point their shortcomings or in the direction of blaming the police service.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the desperate cry of the people of this country—

no matter where you live in our country today, rich or poor, employed or unemployed, whether you are Indo-Trinidadian, Afro-Trinidadian, white, Chinese or Lebanese, people are concerned about being safe and secure, and after having spent over \$155 billion in three years and approximately \$24 billion on national security and a further \$6 billion in the forthcoming year, citizens are feeling no better off in terms of their personal safety and their family's safety and the business community also is feeling the scourge of crime throughout the length and breadth of Trinidad and Tobago in terms of productivity, in terms of their final output and even getting their workers to man the respective shifts of their businesses and so on. The bottom line is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Government made so many promises prior to 2015, and in 2018 they have delivered absolutely nothing for the benefit of the country.

And as I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they touted their 10-point plan and we must never forget the pronouncement of the Prime Minister when he was the Leader of the Opposition. When he was in Opposition he said that if a Government cannot keep the country safe, a Government does not deserve to be in power. He said that a Government that cannot deal with the crime problem is part of the problem. Like so many of his statements and that of his Ministers, it is one song that is sung to get into power and when you get into power, you sing from a different hymn book.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our children are being killed on their way to and from schools. Our citizens are being killed in their homes and in their work places. And Mr. Deputy Speaker, whilst the Minister of National Security will want to tell you and want to tell us that this is not about the murders and this is not about what is occurring in Trinidad and Tobago, I want to tell the

Minister of National Security that as a Member of Parliament, I have to deal with the reality in the constituency of Couva South [*Desk thumping*] and the reality in central Trinidad and the reality in Trinidad and Tobago.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whilst I will not attempt to read into the records the names of all of the constituents of Couva South who have been brutally murdered in the last three years under the Government of Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley, I want to tell the Minister of National Security that, indeed, 23 constituents of Couva South have been brutally murdered as a result of their failings as a Government and today, whilst we debate this particular report, the families of these 23 constituents will certainly want to know how this report will be implemented to benefit and bring closure to their grief and what trauma and so on that they have passed through. In addition, the fact is, as I said, that in addition to our children, our mothers and daughters are being killed in their workplaces and on our street corners and in their homes and so on.

And last week, I had to endure a very heart-wrenching experience when I was joined by my colleague the Member for Chaguanas East and also the former Minister of Energy and so on, when we had to experience and to lay to rest one of the hardest working public servants and dedicated citizens of Trinidad and Tobago in the person of the former Commissioner of the Board of Inland Revenue and former board member of the National Gas Company who was brutally murdered. And I have to speak about it because she resided in the constituency of Couva South. And a woman who gave her life to the well-being and service of this country and to the Islamic community and towards Trinidad and Tobago, certainly her family will want to know how the implementation of this report from a time point of view

will bring some kind of closure and when will those who perpetrated this particular crime against her be brought before the judicial system in the country.

Because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of National Security and the Minister in the office of the Attorney General and sometimes who acts as Attorney General from time to time during his 10-day stints and so on spoke about the implementation of the report and in fact, the Minister indicated during his presentation that the report is already being implemented. The recommendations of the report are well on the way to implementation. In fact, he waved a piece of paper for the benefit of the colleagues who are in the Chamber without being specific to say well recommendation a, recommendation b, recommendation c will be implemented by the end of 2018, in the first half of 2019 and so on; that you will see a, b and c becoming a reality in terms of its implementation.

And both of them spoke in the direction or towards the issue of the reform of the Police Service Commission. I do not know when that will happen in terms of the reform of the Police Service Commission which the reports point to as being a key component as it relates to the transformation of the police service of this country. We must remember that anything in relation to the reform of the Police Service Commission and also amendments to the Police Service Act and the legislation and so on that is needed to give direction and lift to this particular report will need the support of the Opposition. It will need a constitutional majority and certainly it will need for the work of a joint select committee of the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago. And certainly, they have attempted to paint a picture here this morning, and I am sure this afternoon, that this will happen probably in the

next couple of months in relation to the reform of the police service of Trinidad and Tobago and the supporting pieces of legislation which will have to be amended in relation to giving the necessary support or lift as we would say in relation to the transformation of the police service.

And I want to say that again, is part of their propaganda, that is part of attempting to hoodwink the population by not levelling with the population and coming clean and really saying, well, we might be out of office, the incoming [*Desk thumping*] UNC Government will have to deal with the issue of the reform of the Police Service Commission and the supporting pieces of legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

2.30 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Member, your initial speaking time has elapsed. You have an additional 15. You care to available yourself?

Mr. R. Indarsingh: Yes, please, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Proceed.

Mr. R. Indarsingh: [*Desk thumping*] So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in addition to the persons who have been murdered, I also have to raise the very important issue of six persons have been missing or have disappeared from the constituency of Couva South since September of 2016, and I am hoping that the operationalization of what they are speaking about in relation to the transformation of the police service will indeed provide the necessary energy that we heard of so much being touted by the Minister of National Security as it relates to bringing closure to the respective families such as Keston Mahabir and Anil Matagoolam and Shannon Sookram and Dhanraj Adesh Juman; all who have been missing. And their families continue to come to my constituency office pleading with me as it relates to bringing closure to

their disappearance or bringing closure to knowing where or how; bring closure really to their disappearance. Also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, an employee of this said Parliament was brutally murdered in the constituency, and today her case remains unsolved, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Member. Member, I have given you a certain amount of leeway, right, with regard to your discourse and, you know, it continues to be along the line of the explanation with regard to these murders or missings. How long again do you plan to stay on this particular topic? Because again, we are dealing with a particular report, so you can, you know, move on kindly.

Mr. R. Indarsingh: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take note of what you have—the advice you have extended to me. But, I also take note of the fact that these issues are dealing with or directly related to the operations of the police service and the whole question of the manpower audit and the manning and staffing levels and the different units and arms of the police service. And I hope that the Minister of National Security and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago will display the political will and provide the appropriate funding, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so as to bring closure and end the trauma and pain to the constituents of Couva South, the 23 families that have been murdered and the six who are yet to be accounted for.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you see, it is important that we remind this Government to tell us during—probably the Member for Laventille West will tell us. What is the status of the joint border protection agency in the fight against crime? What is the status of the Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System that they promised, the Government,

more than two years ago? What is the status of the system for electronic monitoring that you have promised the country more than three years? What improvements have you made to the Witness Protection Programme? And what is the status of the offender management programme that you promised the country in the last budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

And also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Government's big ticket item to fight crime was the enactment and proclamation of the anti-gang legislation. They said that 80 per cent of the murders committed were gang-related and the passage of this legislation would give the police the ability to go after those involved in crime, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And it is also important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that after six months of this legislation coming into effect, that over 200 murders have been committed since the proclamation of this legislation, and not a single person has been arrested, charged or prosecuted for being a member involved in gang activity in Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Deputy Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

And it is important to note that the Opposition gave the required constitutional support for the passage of this legislation. So whilst they want to give this narrative that the Opposition is unpatriotic, the Opposition is not willing to give support to the legislative direction of the Government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we on this side will hold the Government to account, based on the parliamentary process under the relevant Standing Orders and laws of this country, and we will ensure that when laws are brought to the Parliament of this country it is in the interest of the citizens of this country, Mr. Deputy Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is important to ask the Government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and again, the Minister of National Security, when he said

that there is a drop in the murder rate, I do not know where the Minister of National Security is living, because we have now passed 450 murders and we have had over 15 murders in about the last week, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the big ticket item that was announced by the Minister of Finance with respect to national security was the establishment of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service Operational Centre. This, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is not something new. This is simply another name for what was established between 2010 and 2015 under the leadership of Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar. It is really the National Operations Centre in action, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So, they are attempting to take credit for something that they did not even have the manpower to conceptualize and operationalize, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Their success today in crime is really piggybacking on the foundation that was laid by the Government of Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar, [*Desk thumping*] Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And what the citizens of this country—they want to see the presence of law enforcement in their communities and in their villages and in their towns. The report of this committee, Mr. Deputy Speaker, points also in the direction of collaboration between law enforcement agencies.

And I want to ask the Government today and the Prime Minister: What is their position on joint police/army patrols? [*Desk thumping*] Because the Prime Minister, in this very said place, at a point in time when myself and other colleagues attempted to hold the Government accountable as it relates to tackling the issue of murders, and so on, in central Trinidad, the Prime Minister indicated to me, based on a question that was filed, that there were joint police/army patrols taking place in the constituency of

Couva South. And he called a number of streets and he alluded to it taking place in the constituency of Couva South and in Couva. Well, I want to tell the Prime Minister that he was very deceptive in providing that information to this Parliament and he misled the Parliament and he insulted the intelligence of the people of Couva by saying that joint police/army patrols were indeed taking place in Couva and in central Trinidad. In fact, what is the Government's position, as it relates to collaboration between the police and the army in terms of joint police/army patrols? Because when we were the Government of the day and we brought legislation to give legitimacy to joint police/army patrols taking place in this country, the Government of the time—[*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Silence.

Mr. R. Indarsingh:—the Opposition, gave no support to the “Soldier Bill” that it was popularly known as or referred to, when it was brought to the Parliament as part of the legislative process of the Government of Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we would have also ensured the transformation of the justice protection or the Witness Protection Programme to ensure that it was properly resourced and we would have gone in the direction of looking at the Justice Protection Act and also to bring into law provisions to operationalize the relationship between our country and our Caribbean and international partners to provide adequate and proper protection to persons and their families to assist in law enforcement in Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the worst forms of criminality in our country today, which faces our country today, is the women folk, our

daughters and mothers, in terms of domestic violence. And we would have assisted in giving that protection to our daughters and our mothers in terms of protection for the victims of domestic violence, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by ensuring that there was the—to repeal and to replace with a stronger piece of legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I probably thought that the Minister of National Security would have attempted to provide some comfort in that regard, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what is important to Trinidad and Tobago today is not another report. I think what is needed is another Government to deal with the issue of crime affecting the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*] Because you have failed the country in the last three years, and based on your manifesto, based on your lack of political will and also your public relations campaign and your propaganda, you will not be able to achieve anything different in the next two years, based on what I referred to earlier in my contribution, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the reform of the police service and the appropriate legislative amendments will not happen overnight, based on the parliamentary process, and so on, and based also on the constitutional support that is needed to give that sense of legitimacy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we as a society—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: You have two more minutes, Member.**Mr. R. Indarsingh:**—we will continue to live in fear. Our children will continue to be murdered, raped, robbed and kidnapped. Business places and homes will continue to be hunting grounds for the criminals and gangs will continue to prosper as long as the Government of Prime Minister, Dr. Rowley and the PNM continues to remain in office.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have a team that will do this again for the

people of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*] This team will bring all the agencies of the State to fight crime and take back the country from the criminal element. We are prepared to work with law enforcement to go after the criminal element, seek out and bring to justice those who break the law and terrorize our citizens. For those that are charged and brought before the court justice, court justice will be swift and absolute.

The United National Congress will return our Trinidad and Tobago to the place we know it to be, where the hardworking persons will enjoy the resources that we are gifted with. No report will do this, in relation to what is being touted by the PNM. What you need is a Prime Minister in the form of Kamla Persad-Bissessar and the United National Congress, [*Desk thumping*] to take Trinidad and Tobago away from this state of chaos and anarchy that we have under the Government of Prime Minister, Dr. Keith Rowley. I thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

The Minister of Health (Hon. Terrence Deyalsingh): [*Desk thumping*] Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for allowing me this opportunity to join the debate on this very, very important matter.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the matter before us is a debate on the Fifth Report of the Joint Select Committee on National Security, Third Session (2017/2018) of the Eleventh Parliament on the Final Report of the Police Manpower Audit Committee. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this report is 111 pages long, and do you know my colleague who just spoke never mentioned one page, one line, one paragraph? Not one? Because one has to ask themselves—yes, it can be broadened into crime and it ought to, but there is a time and a place for being patriotic and there is a time and a place for being sensational. Today is the time and place for being patriotic and to

debate the contents of the report. My colleague who preceded me came with the usual UNC smoke and mirrors, rhetoric, throwing red herrings, and launching an ad hominem attack against the Minister of National Security, [*Desk thumping*] also besmirching the reputation of officers who came here today.

They did not come here today, as you suggested, but they came here today to hear an erudite debate and they probably left in frustration after hearing the two contributions made by Naparima and Couva South. Why would they stay here to listen to what the UNC has to say? They wanted to hear what were their recommendations, what were their views on the recommendations in 111 pages of report, and they came on their own volition to lend physical support in the people's Chamber. That is what they do. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to—you see, unless you have somebody responding now to the misinformation put out by Couva South again, it goes into the public domain and it takes root. The issue of the legislation to appoint a Commissioner of Police, the path that was taken out was where the Minister triggers the process. That is all. That is all.

The Member for Couva South made a big deal about the comfort police. Let me tell you what the comfort police was about, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It had nothing to do with crime fighting. It had everything to do with giving out \$60 million a year worth of contracts to rent vehicles. That is all the comfort police was about.**Mr. Al-Rawi:** \$20 million a month.

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Right? Or, it is more; \$20 million a month to rent vehicles. It was just giving out contracts again. There was no interest in crime fighting. Mr. Deputy Speaker—[*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Members, thank you, Members, please.

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: My colleague—and you should mention murders. I have no problem with that. But you see, unless you identify the problem, how do you know what solution to put into force? And that is what we wanted a debate on here today. Let us debate the report, identify the problems and recommend solutions. But in typical UNC style, only rhetoric, only ad hominem attacks and no recommendations. And I will speak directly, Couva South, to the 23 murders in your constituency and the pain and anguish the families are going through, because that ought to be addressed. But it ought to be addressed, not in a sensationalistic fashion, but in a prescriptive manner, moving forward. [*Desk thumping*]

My colleague also wanted to know about the electronic monitoring bracelets. The contract has been awarded. Done. Done. But if they would pay attention and do their research they would know that these things have been done and they will soon be implemented. But, again, they just come here—[*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Members, Members, please, please, please. Right? I need to hear the Member for St. Joseph. Kindly proceed.

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know the typical UNC solution—because he asked about funding. Where is the funding? Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you read this report it has not everything to do with funding. You see funding and throwing money at the problem is not the only solution. It is part of a wider solution. But in typical UNC style, throw money at it. Give \$20 million a month to rent vehicles; you have nothing to show for it. Just spend money, spend money, spend money. We are not about that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one must also question our colleagues opposite. The link between white collar crime and street crime, blue collar crime, cannot be underestimated. Because what funds street crime? What is the biggest funding component for street crime? Who brings in the guns? Not the little punks on the street, you know. When the little punks on the streets are caught with a little bit of marijuana or cocaine, they did not import it, you know. They did not import it. When a vehicle is stolen and it goes to a chop shop, who is caught stealing the vehicle? The little punk. But where does that vehicle go? Who owns the chop shop? And that is what we do not talk about in this country because it is an uncomfortable discussion to have. It is an uncomfortable discussion to have. And the link between white collar crime and street crime/blue collar crime has to be seen in the context in our friends opposite not wanting to support anything to do with white collar crime. But that has an impact on street crime.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the recent seizure of 10 high-powered rifles and a significant amount of drugs at 3.00 a.m. this morning is testimony to the new leadership under Commissioner of Police, Gary Griffith and that ought to be commended. That shows the can-do attitude about leadership. And this report, I will get to it soon, speaks squarely about leadership and governance.

People ask about: What are you doing? The 80 emergency response unit vehicles that were recently distributed, Member of Parliament for Couva South, that is where you ask: When will the people in Couva South see a police presence, to quote you, in their villages, communities and towns? With this, you will see it. We are doing that.

Let me address your concerns about the joint army/police things.

Joint army/police patrols have gone on in the country in the past and are going on today as we speak. Since the 1970s, 40 years now, they have been going on. What the PNM did not support was your attempt to bring legislation here and the then Attorney General, Anand Ramlogan, with great fanfare, spoke about how this legislation was being used in both Jamaica and Grenada to sound effect. It took the Attorney General to expose the untruth about the Jamaican legislation experience. Correct Attorney General?

Mr. Al-Rawi: Yes.

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: And it took Independent Senator Helen Drayton to expose the untruth about that legislation and its use in Grenada. That is where that collapsed. Because we were being sold a basket of goods that was totally removed from the Jamaica experience where the Attorney General exposed it as a hoax, and the Grenada experience where then Independent Senator Helen Drayton quoted chapter and verse and the UNC and this country was embarrassed about the hoax that was about to be perpetrated if the Attorney General and Helen Drayton were not on guard. So joint army/police patrols are going on and have been going on for over 40 years. So, I think I have dealt comprehensively with the misinformation perpetrated by Couva South in their usual style. Because you see in this era of untruths, once that gets into a person's mind, like the super gas not burning good, you know, it takes root. It takes root.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me get now to the actual report, because no one from that side to date, neither Naparima nor Couva South, mentioned the report. And I want to focus on a couple sections. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to page 17 of the report, because you see if we do not fix the police service, the 23 families in Couva South would become 25, and no

amount of standing here and blaming us is going so solve the problem. The problem will be solved by a proper debate on the merits of the police service, its demerits, its strengths, its weaknesses, what opportunities lie there for us and what threats we could avert. And this is what this report is about.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on page 17 of this report, it speaks to an overview of the police service. And I want the public, because I am not speaking to the UNC again, I am now speaking to the man in the street who is concerned about crime, as we all are and all should be. It talks about the police service being very hierarchical, very complex. It says there are 10 levels and 37 sections/divisions/departments. I ask, for a small country of 1.3 million people and with 7,884 sanctioned strength of the police service, the report is asking now: Is that structure, is that hierarchical structure, which they call complex, suitable for our needs? Should it be slimmer to make it more nimble and more proactive? These are the things we should be debating.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when one goes to page 53 of the report, and this is where I was hoping that the UNC, for once, would adopt a nationalistic patriotic approach to the issue of crime and not just quote statistics. There is a place for statistics. There is a place to say how many murders occur. We are not hiding from that. We are not running from that. But we are saying let us address the problem.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you cannot run any organization, whether it is private sector, public sector, the police service, an RHA, a Ministry, without proper governance and oversight. And this is the first part of the report that the joint select looked at. And let me just quote:

“The governance arrangements of the TTPS must ensure that while operational decisions rest with the Police, they are held accountable for what through the processes of a valid and transparent system...”

That is problem finding and solutions.

But we all know we have problems with the police service. And what does the report say in its findings? They say here:

“The major reasons for the up-and-down, seemingly zigzagged approach to Police oversight and governance in this country over the years seem to be:”

—and this is crucial because if you want to tackle crime, you need a police service that is properly governed. And they say here:

“• the lack of understanding of the philosophy behind Police oversight in a democracy...”

Now this is not—what I am saying here is not going to make the headlines. What will make the headlines is what Couva South said because that is sensationalism. But this is the crux of the matter.

Dr. Moonilal: What? You attacking the media?

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: No, I am not attacking the media.

Mr. Indarsingh: I am a Member of Parliament. I have to raise the issue.

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Right? Because that is what people want to hear, the sensationalism part, but is what we have to attack, the governance issue.

3.00 p.m.

And what were some of the concerns? Let us tell the public, what the concerns of the Deosaran report were:

“Without effective oversight and an appropriate governance arrangement, accountability systems in any Police enterprise will be

non-existent, failing or weak.”

Now, that is a major concern, and how are we as a Parliament, putting aside political differences, going to solve this issue? Certainly, not through the contribution of the Member for Couva South. Certainly, that would not solve anything here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, other issues raised, and we all know, no organization, and the Member for Caroni Central will bear me out here, and the Member for Tabaquite, both management people, no organization could perform optimally without proper leadership; leadership. Because, leadership sets the tone and sets the standard for the rest of the organization to follow. [*Crosstalk*] And yes, talking about leadership, where is the Member for Siparia by the way? Anyhow.

And this is what the Deosaran report says, but they will not talk about this, but let the public who is hearing, listen to the PNM talk:

“Leadership, from top to middle, is consistently identified as one of the most important aspects to maintaining police integrity...”

We all talk about police integrity, but what are we doing about it? Where is the debate on this report on police leadership and restoring integrity so that police officers can know what the ethos of the police service is, and go out there on a daily basis putting their lives on the line to protect you and I. That is what they want to hear. That is what the Commissioner of Police came here today to hear.

Dr. Moonilal: He told you that?

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Right? And what were the findings? What were the findings?

“Key findings:

There is an urgent need for the development of leadership expertise in the TTPS.”

Leadership expertise. Because how do you lead the Constable, taking a report? That leadership has to come from the top. And that is why we have failed over the past few years in not appointing a substantive Commissioner of Police, and that is a stain on Trinidad and Tobago. Not a stain on the PNM, not a stain on the UNC, because this is a non-political bipartisan affair. Crime ought not to be politicized.

So one of the key concerns is that for a police enterprise to be successful, it requires effective leadership. And one of the recommendations in the report is a total change management programme to change the culture of leadership within the TTPS. And that is what we ought to be addressing here today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is why we on this side are taking that approach, talking to the population about what the report says.

You know what is the other concern that this report brought out? And for those of you in the public who do not have access to the report it says this and this ought to scare us, this ought to concern us, this ought to engage us in sensible debate. It goes on to say on page 57:

“The police service has lost its ‘soul’...”

Now that is a damning statement. It is not a damning statement against the men and women making up the police service you know. They have to operate within that culture, but what happened over the decades? What happened over the decades, I ask the country, where a report could put in black and white, laid in the Parliament, in the people’s Chamber, a report that says:

“The police service has lost its ‘soul’, its core purpose, because people

in the service have lost respect for the uncompromising standards of the service.”

This did not start today. It did not start under the PNM, it did not start under the UNC, and it is not a political blame game. But rather, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is the reality of this report. And we are here today to debate the findings of this report. An organization with no soul cannot be effective, and the 23 families in Couva South, I am sure are concerned about this. I am sure.

It goes on to say that:

“Middle management has lost its way...”

This is what the report is telling us. Middle management has lost its way. So it begs the question, what are we as 41 good souls in in this Parliament going to do? Are we going to continue blaming each other? Does that help? What are your recommendations on this joint select report? What are your recommendations on this Deosaran report?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the TTPS, like any large organization, with an important function of securing 1.3 million people, must have an efficient human resource management system, must have it, it is imperative. No organization can function effectively without proper HR. So what were some of the findings? What did some of the people testify before this Joint Select Committee? You know what they said? The human resource system of the TTPS is in dire condition regarding record collection, storage and retrieval. Record system is paper based.

So it is not about asking as the Member for Couva South did, “Whay you know about funding?” It is where the funding is required, and to achieve what objective. This is one where I would submit where funding is

going to be needed. Right? Because it says here:

“It is critical that persons with appropriate HR training...”

So you may have to bring in more and more civilians to do the HR component or train police officers in HR management, HRM. This is what the population wants to hear from us today. This is what they are looking forward to hearing, a nonpolitical or an apolitical debate on a serious issue. But we have not heard that from colleagues opposite.

It talks about the high turnover at the level of the Director. We have to solve all of those things. And that is why I said when I started off, I challenged the Member for Tabaquite and Caroni Central as two management people, talk to us and let us address these issues. Do not just pelt blame. That is not going to help us today. Right.

Dr. Rambachan: We waiting to see how good you are.

Hon. Member: “Doh rush.”

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Mr. Deputy Speaker, we all know that one of the areas for discontent among the rank and file of the police is the whole issue of promotions, how police officers are appraised, how they are promoted. And if we have to motivate people, as people in management would know, you must have a sound promotion and appraisal system. And it must be based not only on seniority, but on your demonstrated competency; your track record.

And the report speaks directly to this. But no one so far opposite—so I am now challenging my colleagues opposition speak to the report.

Dr. Moonilal: We challenge you, speak about it.

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: The report talks about the TTPS becoming an unhealthy organization. Remember I said earlier, the report said the police

service has no soul? It is unhealthy organization. But yet we expect them to go out there every day and perform above and beyond the call of duty, and most of them do it. But how could they do it coming from an unhealthy system? A system which does not recognize competence. How can we do that? And it speaks to the current system for appraisal being totally flawed. So let us put some recommendations into this thing. If the appraisal system is flawed, if officers—good officers—who want to be promoted cannot get their promotion because the current system is flawed, you expect them to be motivated?

But we have a chance here today. Because I am talking to most of the people outside there today who are reasonable. Most of the population is reasonable. The vast majority are reasonable. They will want to hear if the promotion system is flawed, if the appraisal system is flawed, these 41 people that they have elected to serve them, what are we as a collective doing about it? The blame game is over, as the Member for Couva South did. That type of debate is over, done. It is not going to score you any points.

Mr. Indarsingh: “Allyuh still blaming we.”

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: We are not blaming you. I am just saying that type of approach to the debate is not what is wanted today.

Dr. Moonilal: “Doh blame nah. Doh blame nobody.”

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Mr. Deputy Speaker, recruitment and training in the police service. Again, the report does not paint a complimentary picture. So, I spoke about governance, not complimentary. I spoke about leadership, not complimentary. I spoke about appraisal, not complimentary. Now, I am speaking about recruitment and training. The report does not paint a good

picture of the status quo of the police service.

So, if we want to bring down crime we have to fix the service and we will fix the service together if we work in that spirit of camaraderie. [*Desk thumping*] What is one of the key findings, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Please allow me to quote from page 65 of the report.

“A significant reason for the inefficiency”—listen to the adjectives “eh”—“inefficiency, ineffectiveness and lack of professional integrity and commitment in the TTPS stems from the deficiencies in recruitment, training and assessment systems.”

But yet we blame the police. We blame the Constable, we blame the Sergeant. But they can only work with the system and culture that they have. It is up to us reaching across the aisle, one and a half sword lengths away from each other, to join hands today and demonstrate to the public that we can do this together, that we can put aside political differences and fix the TTPS, fix the inefficiencies, fix the ineffectiveness and lack of professional integrity.

One of the recommendations—and this is what we have to come to. What are some of the recommendations for the public to digest and for the public to comment on? One of the recommendations, because if you read the report on page 65 is that, you might want to consider pre-service training. Throw it out to the public. That is what we ought to be doing here today. Throw out these recommendations to the public, let us hear the public's views—

Hon. Member: Hear the Opposition's views.

Hon. T. Deyalsingh:—let us hear your views.

Dr. Rambachan: You had it for 13 months.

Mr. Hinds: They have nothing to say.

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: But in doing that type of training, they go on to speak about, if you are going to have this pre-training programme and train police officers—and again, I really like the fact the Members for Tabaquite and Caroni Central have to come after. They talk about the programme should be accredited.

Hon. Member: “How you sure we talking after.” [*Crosstalk and laughter*]

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: The programmes should be accredited so that your police officers are going to undergo a curriculum which has been tested and proven. This is what the public wants to hear us debate here today. This is what the public wants to hear us debate today. [*Continuous crosstalk and laughter*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, “We here whole night, you know, whole night. Look I bring meh chaadar here.” For when I get cold tonight.

Dr. Moonilal: You want to find the soul later.

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: [*Laughter*] Yes, Sir, sorry. “Chaadar” means cover or blanket in Hindi. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on page 68 of the report, we can all agree that a major issue in the police service is that of discipline. Discipline, and it speaks about the TTPS should be fostering a strong sense of discipline and professionalism within its ranks. If you do not have discipline—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member, excuse. Your initial 30 minutes have expired. You have an additional 15. Care to avail?

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Yes, Sir. Thank you very much.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Proceed. [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: If you do not have discipline instilled in any

organization, especially an organization charged with crime fighting or defence, the people in the army, coast guard, police will tell you discipline is key. You must have discipline. But what does the report say about discipline? Let me tell through you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the public who is listening to this debate.

“The system of treating with indiscipline is sluggish at best.”

This is what the report is saying—

Dr. Moonilal: What page?

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: This is page 68 of the report, Sir. Page 68 of the report says:

“The system of treating with indiscipline is sluggish at best, with numerous...inefficiencies and protracted delays that render the entire process useless.”

Right? This is what the report is saying. So if you have a disciplinary process that is useless, what will happen? Members joining the police service will become infected, because a culture of indiscipline will inadvertently have stepped in and spread like a cancer throughout the police service. [*Crosstalk*] So you have to check it.

We have a ripe opportunity here today to talk to the public about the key issues facing the police service. Whether it is governance, leadership, recruitment, training and now indiscipline or discipline. [*Crosstalk*]

One of the concerns raised again, it said:

“The TTPS has veered so far away from its standards of discipline that the reality now exists that Officers seem to be ignorant of the established policies...”

So, the Member for Tabaquite asked me what are we going to do? This is

what you have to do. If it is they are ignorant of the established processes for indiscipline, you have to put a training programme in place within the TTPS for them to know when they breach and to have sanctions, to have due process and have sanctions and they must feel the full brunt of the law immediately. That is what you have to do. That is what you have to do.

[Electronic device goes off]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Members, Members, please. I think I should mention at this time, electronic devices are either to be switched off or on silent. I think this is about the fourth time for the day that an electronic item has gone off. Okay. So, I am not going to tolerate it again. Switch it off or on silent, please.

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The last few minutes, I want to touch on two other items on page 71; it deals with corruption. You must tackle corruption within the police service, you must.

And finally, it talks about oversight, public confidence and trust and whenever the TTPS holds one of its community meetings, a common thread is the distrust or mistrust between the communities and the police. You always hear that. That is a fact. You cannot varnish that. Public confidence and trust. And it speaks about what sort of oversight we need and the report starts to question the role of the Police Service Commission, I believe, the PSC. Is it relevant? Is it functioning as it should, and this is what we have to tackle. Because, if the public does not have confidence and trust in police officers we are going nowhere, absolutely, nowhere.

So the question everybody asked while I was speaking is what you are going to do? And you see if Members opposite would read the report; as the Attorney General always says, if they would just read and do the work. On

page 91 of the report it talks to a road map for establishment of a police inspectorate within a period of six months. That is something that could be done if we analyze it and if we get bipartisan support. It talks about development of policy, police to be finalized for a police inspectorate. It goes to Cabinet, gets Cabinet approval for the policy. It then goes to the AG for legislative drafting, if necessary, it is enacted into law, implementation and establishment of the police inspectorate. That one initiative on page 91 of the report, if we read the report and if we debate the report is a road map as to what we can do. And what we can do together to bring down the levels of crime and criminality in Trinidad and Tobago as it now stands.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the last minute or two that I have I want to tell the country that this Government under this Prime Minister is totally committed to solving the problems in the police service. We are totally committed to living up to our constitutional responsibilities in the protection of our citizenry. But—and we would not be debating this here today if the Prime Minister was not so concerned and so moved. But the debate has to take on another tone, another angle. We have had the Members of Naparima and Couva South, the usual—“yeah” okay, been there, done that, let us forget that.

Hon. Member: Histrionics.

Hon. T. Deyalsingh: Forget the histrionics, but let us talk about the report now. I have just put the report squarely into the public domain by highlighting certain key aspects of it, identified problems and spoken about possible solutions and initiatives that could be taken. We now join hands with our colleagues opposite, one and a half sword lengths away. Let us do this in the interest of 1.3 million people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie (*Caroni Central*): [*Desk thumping*] Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I wish the Member for St. Joseph would have made the statements of—[*Crosstalk*—no, no—of reaching out and of working together and so on. Three years ago when we were pleading for that [*Desk thumping*] and the word “tone” was used on several occasions. I myself have used it many times, and the business of using the Parliament as a collaborative opportunity in order to get things done in the interest of the nation, we raised on several occasions, and in the last Bill that we debated here. I do not think that friendliness was apparent.

And I do not think that the Member for St. Joseph and his colleagues opposite should keep raising the issue of being unpatriotic just because you take a different position or you articulate a strong view. And it is not sensationalist to talk about what is happening in this society and how it is impacting on people which is what the Member for Couva South did. So, I would say that the tone you want to establish now, I mean you are asking for it, it is reasonable, but perhaps it is a little too late. [*Laughter*] And secondly, I think that given the nature of this crime issue, I mean it is a big issue, people are dying every day. Some of them have died in my own constituency without solution of the crimes. And the report itself talks about the escalation that is taking place. And I want to go to the report now, I think on page 16—[*Crosstalk*]

Dr. Moonilal: Faster than you, in record time.

Dr. B. Tewarie: On page 16, maybe to make a point or two. Now, I want to say that the report makes a fairly realistic assessment of our situation. On page 15 item 217 it reads:

“Unfortunately, our Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) has retained an unfavourable reputation for being understaffed, underfunded, unstable, publicly undermined, archaic and unprofessional. Crime in Trinidad and Tobago is steadily rising, and while from time to time there are downturns, looking back over the past decade...crime and the fear of crime have rocketed. Any reduction in crime or the fear of crime in the last 5 years has proven to be a short-term cycle within a long-term worsening trend, instead of a reversal of the trend itself.”

And we have known that over the last two years especially we have really been breaking records. We may end up with 550 murders at the end of the year this year.

“Law breakers”—I continue on page 16—“...seem to be emboldened with the notion that there is a good chance of escaping punishment for criminal activity. The public seems to share the notion and generally there seems to be a low public confidence in the central law enforcement agency and the criminal justice system on the whole. An unremittingly low crime detection rate and a less than desirable prosecution rate has reinforced this mistrust.”

So, this is what we are dealing with in Trinidad and Tobago and this is what the Police Manpower Audit Committee, which is the report that was referred to the Joint Select Committee and which is being reported on here after due deliberation by the JSC; this is what that report talked about. It talked about the troubled state of the police service, and it talked about the police service being in a wounded state.

And it also talked about the human condition, human resources and

attitudes affecting the TTPS. And when you look at the shortlist of issues which the JSC puts before us on page 3, the issue of public confidence and trust is mentioned twice. Now, I am sure it is a typo, but the fact that that was a typo, I think, tells us something about how important this particular issue is, this issue of public confidence and trust in the police service.

3.30 p.m.

I think that when you look at just a few pages of the report you really find that the condition in which we find the police service today is quite alarming, and there are certain things that have been recommended for prompt attention in the report.

- “Governance and Oversight;”—the Member for St. Joseph mentioned that.
- “Human Resource Management, specifically—
 - Screening
 - Recruitment and Selection
 - Training and Development
 - Monitoring and Evaluation
 - Discipline
 - Promotion
 - Needs Analysis
 - Succession Planning
 - Organisation culture and Customer Centred Approach to Service.”

Now, all the information in this report, deriving from the original report and finding itself in terms of interpretation by the JSC and, therefore,

in some of the recommendations of the JSC, tell us that the police service is not effectively led, it is not well managed, it is a human resource nightmare and what we really are faced with in the police service is a largely dysfunctional organization.

Now, when the Member for St. Joseph spoke, he spoke about the Member for Tabaquite and myself as knowing a little bit about management, and without going into that and how much you know and stuff like that, generally when you have a dysfunctional organization, you have to determine what is fixable. The second thing, you have to determine what cannot be fixed and you close that—you suppress that, you deal with that. Then you have to decide whether transformation and rejuvenation is possible and how, and therefore, what can be strengthened to make this transformation and rejuvenation possible. And as you do that, you also have to reorient and re-culturize and incentivize and energize, and that is not an easy task in a dysfunctional organization that is really very hierarchical, and tends to cultivate and evolve over time, largely authoritarian systems. That is the nature of military systems.

So, when you talk for instance here about a police inspectorate, I wonder what—the thing that might not be more effective should, in fact, be what you have in the US police systems, which is the internal audit function, where something is wrong in an organization and you have the capacity within the organization to move in and deal with the matter quickly. I do not know if they have what they sometimes call in the US, an internal affairs division, in the police service. So, the question is whether that is not the thing that should be strengthened, given the dysfunctionality. And if you ask the police inspectorate, which is being recommended here, which is

meant to:

- “(a) independently assess the service delivery efficacy of the TTPS;
- (b) promote good community-Police relations;
- (c) encourage a human rights culture within the TTPS;
- (d) promote accountability and transparency in the TTPS;”

I wonder if given that the organization is dysfunctional and you do this, will it affect the state of play in the country? Is it going to address the issue of the escalation of murders and bring it down? Is it going to deal with the growth and intensity of power of the criminal gangs in the country and contain it and help to eradicate it? Will it deal with the assaults on the person in order to deal with attacks on property and the abuse of people in the system in order to commit robberies and other things like that? Will these things lead to the results that we require as citizens? Because that is what the Member for St. Joseph avoided, and that is what the Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West avoided. Because at the end of the day, all the internal things you do in the service, all the attempts that you make to fix it, to transform it, to energize it, to incentivize it, at the end of the day, what you are really trying to do is to do these things in order to achieve certain results, and those results have to be the results that will make the society feel less fearful, more safe and more secure as it conducts its business.

I think this is the issue for us in addressing the report, not that some elements of the report are not worthwhile, not that the work that the original committee did—the Manpower Audit Committee, led by Prof. Deosaran—is not important and does not highlight important considerations. But the question is, were we to implement some of these things—and the Member

for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West said that implementation had already begun—were we to implement these things, would we begin to see a reduction in the places where it matters—crimes against the community, crimes against the citizens, crimes between and among gangsters and murders that have continued to proliferate as the report itself says, year, after year, after year?

Now, one of the important things that this report deals with, is that it wants to ensure in the report that the most suitable candidates are chosen in the recruitment process. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for a report to write this, is that not a condemnation of the current system of recruitment? Does that not in part explain what the problem of dysfunctionality is in the existing service? It then goes on to talk about the routes that are possible with five O Levels, with university graduates and then with professional recruits. Now, I just want to say something about this which is why I am raising the issues in the way that I am. If you take well-recruited, effectively recruited, five O Level graduates, CXC graduates, and you train them properly as is recommended here, and the dysfunctional system as exists now, is not fixed, and you put these recruits in the system—and today I think in one of the contributions here it was mentioned that the younger policemen—I think it was the Member for Laventille West who had been in the police service for a short time—complained about the fact that the problems were really with the more senior and well-entrenched officers in the police system.

So you take these young men, five O Levels, and you well train them and you put them in, what is going to happen to them over time in a dysfunctional system? And, therefore, the issue here is not just to take recommendation which might be good recommendations and begin to fast-

track them by putting a table which tells you—do this, do that, when to do it, how to do it—but to deal with the dysfunctionality of the system and address the issue, so that when you make these kinds of recommendations and you effect them, it will make a difference.

And when you go to the second route, the university graduate, they are also going to be put into the system at the level of constables, you know. So you are going to have two categories. They are going to be specially focused on special units, et cetera, but they are going in as constables. So you have two categories: five O Levels, you have university graduates going in as constables in that same dysfunctional system that I mentioned to you.

Now, the professional recruits that are mentioned, may have a chance to lead and to strengthen the specialist units to which they are assigned. They may, in fact, be able to enter and be intermediaries of change, if you want to call that, because they may have special units, they may have smaller units within it, and they may be able to do something. But I shudder to think of the other two groups going into the system as dysfunctional as it is, and being to make a difference at the end of the day, both to the quality of the police service and, secondly, to the results that we expect from the police service.

Now, the issue of promotion has also come up as an issue here, and it is a problem that is heavily complained about. The Member for Laventille West made that point in his presentation. Now, there was, in fact, interviews for police promotion on August the 8th of this year—I am bringing it and making it very contemporary—and I am reading here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from a publication that we do in my own constituency. I have done six of these now, two each year, and this deals with the issue of that particular

problem of promotion. I quote from it:

“There are only 7 people in the Police Service who qualify to do the Assistant Commissioners exam. There are 11 ranking officers who now function at Senior Superintendent Level (many of these are acting). There are 35 Superintendent posts 45 people will sit an exam for that”—for the 35 posts—“on August 8 and then go for oral assessment. Some will make it some will not. Some who are acting will be confirmed, others will go down to Inspector. Some Superintendents will become Senior in rank. The promoted and confirmed will be energetic. The demoted will lose enthusiasm.

All of these things have implications at the career level. An inspector at 55 must retire. Above Inspector you can retire at 60. When the assessments and promotions are over 180”—people—“will be in the line of exit at”—the age of—“55.”

And the issue of how promotions are done is also important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because as you know, the system in the police changed so that police officers can move up on the basis of examinations and on the basis of acquired qualifications, but one of things that is mentioned in this particular report, is the fact that the police are supposed to make cases. They are supposed to charge people for crimes and they are supposed to manage this matter in the courthouse. So, if the amount of matters you have before the court and the amount of matters you win before the court, and the amount of investigations that you are involved in, are not critical to the process of promotion, why would you bother with these things if education and qualifications are more important and passing the exam is more important than the work of policing? So the issue of balancing the

educational requirements which need to be improved in the police service and the training that is necessary to ensure that these educated people can effectively do the police work, are important considerations in this matter.

The report talks about the alarming state in which you cannot find out how many policemen and women are on duty, that you do not know how many people are on sick leave. Do you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if you are on sick leave you can sit the exam to get a promotion? Do you know that if you are on leave you can sit the exam to get a promotion? Do you know that if you are on some disciplinary charge, you can take the exam to get a promotion? So, all of these dysfunctional elements of the police service have to be brought together and dealt with so that you can literally clean up the system in order to ensure that there is an adequate mixture of education and training in police work, bringing together better prepared and better educated people, but also people who are involved in police work but who have the discipline and the disposition to do the work of policing which is not an easy thing to do.

There is legend in this country in which there was a Police Commissioner in which, if you come for a promotion with sick leave—and under our Constitution the Police Commissioner has the power to appoint and to dismiss—if you come for that promotion interview and you have spent a year-and-something on sick leave and you come to the interview, he would just ask you, legend has it, “how you are today”? “You are well today?” And if you say, “Yes, Sir, I am well today”, he says, “Okay, go and make sure that you keep in good health”. The interview is over. And if you came and you had no cases before the court, and you were involved in no investigations, that commissioner would simply ask you: how many cases

you have before the court? And if you said a low number or zero, he said: “How many investigations are you on”? And you say, again, a low number or zero, that commissioner will simply tell you: “Well, okay, go ahead then and see if you could do some police work to take some matters before the court for the next time you come in here”.

So that the regime was established in a certain way, in which you had to be performing police work, you had to be a high performance person. You had to be a person who attended to your duties in order to function in the police system, and one of the alarming statistics that comes out here by the way, in addition to these things that I am talking about, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that more people are leaving the police service than are being recruited annually by the police service and that is here in this report.

Hon. Member: What page?

Dr. B. Tewarie: I will get it for you. People are leaving the police force in larger numbers than, in fact, people are being recruited annually in the police force.

Dr. Rambachan: Page 32.

Dr. B. Tewarie: Page 32? Is it 32?

Dr. Rambachan: Page 33.

Dr. B. Tewarie: Just for the record, I will read it here. It is page 34, under:

“Manpower Strength and Utilization in the TTPS

The number of Officers separating from the TTPS annually is greater than the number of intakes. The TTPS already has a shortfall of Officers. The low recruitment of Officers is further adding to the problem. The TTPS needs to acquire the necessary resources to recruit adequate Officers.”

So, it is an issue. And I want to say the Member for Naparima made an important point this morning in talking about the statistics from Singapore and the other countries in which the ratio of the number of police to the population was smaller than Trinidad and Tobago and they were more effective.

So, I am not big on recommendations here to expand the police force, you know. I am not big on that because you can go on a recruitment drive and recruit a lot people and it makes no difference—the murder rates continue to grow, the crime continues to increase. It does not make a difference. The question is: How do you deploy and manage these resources? What is the structure of the system? What is the objective of policing? It is not just to put the things that the mandate of the police force is to keep peace or whatever it is—and I know it is located in here. I can find it and read it—or to keep peace and order or to deal with crime or to provide safety and security. It is not that. The mandate has to be to deal with a situation that is going out of hand and bringing it under some measure of control.

Now, having said that, I want to quote from one of the great economists that the Caribbean has produced and that is Sir Arthur Lewis. He has one sentence in one of the pieces that he wrote, which says that everything begins with the market, and it is an important statement although short and crisp, because what it says is that whenever you are doing anything, in order to be successful, you have to work backwards from the market if you are to achieve success. You have to start with what the market is saying and doing and telling you and work backwards in order to be successful.

And the Member for St. Joseph talked about problem-solving, but I would rather say, problem identification and solution-finding. You have to be able to identify the problem, and you have to find what that solution is. And we have to ask our question: What is the problem that we are trying to solve and what are the many critical dimensions of that problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and what are the solutions? What does the police service need to do? I want to identify—I am sure this is not—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Your initial speaking time has expired. You have an additional 15 minutes. You care to avail yourself?

Dr. B. Tewarie: I would like to, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Proceed.

Dr. B. Tewarie: I am sure that there are many others. I am not trying to be comprehensive here, but I just want to mention, maybe seven or eight things too, that I feel that are important for the police service to address. The first thing that the police service has to address is the gangs and the hot spot areas of Trinidad and Tobago, to bring the gangs under control and to bring the hot spots to a situation where they can be transformed from being hot spots to domains of reasonable living for the people in the community who live there.

The second thing is that the police has to focus on safe zones in Trinidad and Tobago. If you have a system in which you have known hot spots, you have criminal gangs that are roving all over the country, you have drugs, you have guns in proliferation, you have unsecured borders, you have the infiltration of migrants, you have a situation in which you have human trafficking, you do not know what the complexity of this situation involves, while you deal with the gangs and you deal with the hot spots, you must

have safe zones. Wherever there are large concentrations of people or likely to be large concentrations of people, there must be special strategies to keep those things under control, keep such areas under control, under peaceful control.

Three, there must be logistical deployment for effective control of the society itself, that is to say, outside of the safe zones, outside of the hot spots, outside of the gang areas, for the rest of the society. There must be logistical deployment for effective control. By that I mean, police stations that are managing with a strategy; mobile patrols that are effective. You need to have technology properly deployed in and out of cars, in and out of police, connecting stations with the mobility. You need to have rapid response capability; you need to have back up if there is a crisis; you need to focus on the returning criminals from abroad and you need to deal with the issue of white collar crime and something that the Member for St. Joseph mentioned, the links between white collar crime and police corruption which is mentioned in this particular report, and police linkages with gangs, guns and drugs, and white collar crime with what you might call blue collar or gangster crime in the community. You have to have focus on these things. You must also focus on white collar crime as an issue and you have to focus on illegal migration and its implications.

So it is not just problem identification in the context of what is wrong with the police, what is wrong with the police system, what is wrong with the police service. Yes, that is a problem, but it is problem identification for, what do we need a police service for and what problems do the police need to address to solve the problems of crime in Trinidad and Tobago? And there has to be a connectivity with that, and you can draw that on a sheet of paper

and you could develop a strategy if you think it through properly and that would then tell you what kind of organization you need, what are the linkages you need between mobile patrols, between stations, between technology and so on. What are the areas of concentration and what manner of deployment in what quantities with what kinds of skills that you need to deploy in the country.

And my own assessment is that there is much more thinking to do here. You do not have to start from scratch. We have hundreds, we have—well, at least, a dozen reports, so we do not have to start from scratch. A lot of things have been done already, but I want to say the problem identification has to do with the problems in the police service, yes, and they must be corrected, but the problems in the society—the problems of crime in the society need to be identified and those problems need to—working backwards, taking Arthur Lewis' statement that everything begins with the market, you start with that market of crime—these crime projects that you need to design and you work backwards from that—what do you need? What kind of organization do you need the police organization to be and what kind of strategies do you need to deploy in collaboration with each other to get these things done, and I have not even begun to talk about army and navy and all of these kinds of things which need to be connected to it.

4.00 p.m.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the report is important and we need to address the important—the thing. We need to address the elements of the report and the recommendation of the report. And the other question is—this is something that the Government sometimes shies away from, sometimes it takes it on, sometimes it shies away from it, but the question is,

whose job is it to maintain law and order? You know, on page 12, The Importance of Policing, 2.7:

“The Maintenance of Law and Order is an essential public service.” But when you put it like that, I mean, it is nebulous who is in charge of it. Well, I want to say that the political directorate is the first element in charge of it because they are elected. The political directorate is elected to govern, and the first law of governance [*Desk thumping*] is safety and security of the people and the State. The second element is the Commissioner of Police, and the Commissioner of Police, I want to say, in Trinidad and Tobago, has a lot of power. He or she, whoever that person is, has constitutional power in Trinidad and Tobago of an immense kind. They can hire, fire, transfer, deploy, at will. They have that power. They have disciplinary control from hiring to firing.

The third thing is that: Are other people in charge of this? Are other people accountable for law and order? Yes. You cannot have law and order in this country without Immigration, Customs, the military playing a role as a military should, not an intrusive role in your society, but being—what can I say—being acknowledged as a source for public order in the society as required. And fourthly, the citizens, the citizens are very critical. One of the things that was done here is that this story, this report, went back to policing in the city of Paris and it went back to 1667, and then it went to policing in the United Kingdom, in the Metropolitan Police in London, and it talked about the basis on which policing in the British system was based on citizen consent. And it then went on to say that this had continued as a tradition in Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and there was a fourth one that was mentioned. I do not recall now, and I cannot find the page right now, but I

would add it also existed in Hong Kong and it existed in Singapore. And the reason or the context of that is that citizens agree, just as citizens agree to elect people to represent their interests in a parliamentary system, or in a governance system. They also agree to give military power for the local context, for the local jurisdiction of the State to the police.

I want to say, this distrust between police and the public, or this distrust of the public for the police is a serious problem in Trinidad and Tobago, because it means that the police do not govern by consent. It means that they do not function by consent, and if they do not function by consent, enjoying the security of tenure from the consent of the people that they do their job in a certain way, then what it opens the door for is political interference. And I want to say that these matters cannot be dismissed as simple little things that can be solved by small recommendations, one by one. There is deep dysfunctionality in the police service and there is deep dysfunctionality in the body politic of Trinidad and Tobago, [*Desk thumping*] the institutional capabilities within the State of Trinidad and Tobago, and therefore these matters need to be addressed in a systematic way and they must be acknowledged. These are the problems that should be part of the parliamentary discussion here, because from the realistic assessment that I read out—remember I started by saying, I thought that there was a realistic assessment of the condition of the police service, and I read from page 16. It goes on to say, on page 17:

“The Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) is very hierarchical and complex in nature, with ten (10) levels of ranks and thirty-seven (37) Sections/Divisions/Branches”—et cetera.

And it goes on.

There is a section here in which one of the stakeholders who is reported in here—I cannot find the page now, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It says that, really, what we need to do is to scrap the entire bad egg situation in the police service because you cannot do anything without doing that. And that it is only from there if you are able to do that, that you will be able to do something with the police service to get it functional. But it is more than that, because, as I said, you cannot deal with that situation in the police service without dealing with Customs, without dealing with Immigration, without having a role for the military as a support system, without using the Navy, the coast guard, in a certain way, and there are other things which is that given where the crime has happened now in Trinidad and Tobago, where it has evolved to, where you have corruptibility at different levels, where you have big money involved, where you have guns involved, where you have drugs involved, where you have an entire pervasive infection of the society in Trinidad and Tobago. Given all of these things, I think that the seriousness with which the issue of reform of the police system has to be taken must be acknowledged. It cannot be done in this dysfunctional system, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by small recommendations that deal with human resources and that deal with tinkering with the existing system in that way.

Having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: You have four minutes.

Dr. B. Tewarie: I will close at this point. Having said that, I want to say that I welcome the opportunity to make a few points. I commend the committee that did the original report under Prof. Deosaran for pulling together all the information and making the recommendations. I commend

the JSC for the work that it has done to bring this into Parliament, all my colleagues who sat on the Committee, but I want to say that I am not sure if putting into place these recommendations is going to lead to the result that we are seeking, which is the control and diminishing of murders and crime in Trinidad and Tobago. Finally, I want to say, there is one recommendation in here which I do not support at all, and that recommendation is that one way of selecting the Commissioner of Police is by direct elections, and that recommendation, I want to say that I am totally against. You will turn the political system in this country upside down. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I recognize the Attorney General. [*Desk thumping*]

The Attorney General (Hon. Faris Al-Rawi): Thank you, Sir. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to give contribution to this particular debate. As we are all aware, this particular debate focuses around a very solid and important issue in Trinidad and Tobago, which is the management factor consideration, future and degree of hope that one can place into the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. It is true, as my learned colleagues say, that there have been many reports for many years on the TTPS. It is true that the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service is the arm that carries the weight of law enforcement. It is true that the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service has been through the doldrums insofar as the confidence that the public has in the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service has been eroded over time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me start with the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, in particular section 123A. In section 123A of the supreme law of Trinidad and Tobago:

“...the Commissioner of Police shall have the complete power to manage the Police Service and is required to ensure that the human,

financial and material resources available to the Service are used in an efficient and effective manner.”

Those are not my words, those are literally the words of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. As my learned colleague for St. Joseph put forward therefore, and as the Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West put forward, the first and most important aspect was to ensure that leadership of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service was in gear. Indeed this report, which is an excellent report, this report centres around some very specific recommendations, and we have taken the opportunity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to list out 83 of the specific recommendations. There are 83 specific recommendations that can be lifted out of this report, and the Joint Select Committee's work which brought us here. I wish to publicly commend the Deosaran-led committee for the work that it did, because it formed—and I am able to say now as a Member of the Government, it forms the blueprint for management of the issue of reform of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. One need look no further than this.

I am also very pleased to say that of the 83 items identified, the current Commissioner of Police has ensured that all 83 heads are traversed by a plan of implementation. But I am also very pleased to say that the Government has already operationalized quite a bit of the material that has been traversed, and the material that has been traversed has been operationalized in very important mechanisms. The report talks about professional skills at a high level; recommendation 71. It talks about Asset Management and Fleet Management, recommendation xvi. It talks about the issue of overtime, recommendation xxii, xxiii, xxiv. It talks about attendance at the court, recommendation lvi. It talks about the interaction

with the Police Complaints Authority, recommendation lxvi. It talks about the entry of specialist services from tertiary-level, qualified level entry into the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, and that is at recommendations v and vi. It talks about the issue of road traffic offences; that is at recommendation vii. It talks about the decriminalization of marijuana; that is at recommendation ix. It talks about inter-agency coordination at recommendation xiv. It talks about community policing, municipal policing at recommendation xvi and lxviii. It talks about corruption at recommendation to be found at page 271.

Those are the heads that I wish to put into context now, because I agree with my learned colleagues. It is all well and good to talk about a report, on a report, to reflect upon the fact that we have had years of reports into the cycle. The question is, ultimately, what is being done, what has been done, and what is yet to be done in dealing with the issue of positions that—[*Interruption*—]—yes—in dealing with the positions of reform.

Now, permit me to, just before I delve into that point, agree with a position volunteered by my learned colleague from Caroni Central, the Government shares the view, and I am now authorized in considering this report that has come from the Joint Select Committee, the Government shares the view that the position should always be that the Commissioner of Police should not be elected by public polling. We share that view and we are on the same page with that, that the Government's position is equal to that espoused by my learned colleague for Caroni Central. So I can clear that one up quickly. But in recapping now, the issue that Trinidad and Tobago really wants to hear, what have we done, what are we doing, and what can we expect, let me dive straight into that. Mr. Deputy Speaker, let

us talk about the interaction between the role of the Executive, the functionality of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, and how we treat with crime. What is crime? Crime is something defined under the common law of our country or defined under the statutory laws of our country, or the Constitution in some aspects as something which is to be treated with by way of a due process movement from allegation to evidential consideration, to the laying of a charge. When a charge is laid it goes through the court processes, which at present could be the Magistrates' Court if it is a summary offence. It could be the Magistrates' Court leading to the High Court if it is a preliminary enquiry. It can be the Court of Appeal or the Privy Council. That is the due processing point.

A verdict is eventually given and somebody is either acquitted, charged, convicted, or they are said to have actually been the subject of a conviction but they are reprimanded and discharged. So you can have that sort of process. Who are the important players that work and that are featured in this Bill? Number one in that criminal justice system, obviously, we are talking about the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. The Trinidad and Tobago Police Service receives witness evidence from people that report crimes. They conduct an investigation. They are arranged into several divisions. Those divisions go out, do interviews, et cetera. They can charge somebody of their own volition, or they can take that material to the Director of Public Prosecutions who has powers under section 90 of the Constitution as the supreme law to commence prosecution or discontinue prosecution, or do as he wishes. When they get there, it is very important now for the charging officer to himself or herself be a witness in the court. You now get into a court process. And what is involved in a court process? You need to

have a judge, a physical court, court staff, you need to have a prosecutor, you need to have witnesses, you need to have a defence attorney, you may or may not need to have a bailiff, you may or may not need to have a bailor, you may or may not need to have a Justice of the Peace, you need officers from the Director of Public Prosecutions Department, and, very importantly, you need defence attorneys. Those are the articulating elements inside of here.

In operationalizing the recommendations made by this Committee, specifically in treating with recommendation number lvi for attendance at court, I wish to now tell you what has been done and what is being done. You see, the UNC's approach to the management of crime under their tenure really can be summarized into a few things. Number one, legislation was brought to increase the level of offences. Those offences were more fines or more jail term, and I will refer you to a number of pieces of law to amend the Firearms Act, et cetera, et cetera. Secondly, their big nuclear policy to treat with crime was the state of emergency. The state of emergency so declared, so operationalized, which is no longer a conversation in Trinidad and Tobago, cost the taxpayers millions of dollars. Reputational damage was suffered by the country.

The next item that the last Government spent and implemented was the soldier-police Bill, and the soldier-police Bill was brought to be the solution in allowing Trinidad and Tobago to have better policing. And the Member for Naparima said, well, the Opposition then now Government did not support the soldier-police Bill, and he wanted to know the status of joint patrols, et cetera, let me answer that question as to the status and the rationale for the soldier-police Bill very carefully. The Constitution of the

Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has the Commander in Chief of Arms as the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The collection of Divisions that comprised the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force falls under, currently, Her Excellency Paula Mae-Weekes. The police have, in their positioning, the ability to have Divisions. The Divisions are done under the Police Service Act and the Police Service Regulations. The Police Service Regulations, as saved under 2006, allow for the establishment of joint patrols. It was always the law by a combination of the Constitution, the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force Act and the Police Service Act and the Regulations that you can have joint patrols. So the need for soldier policing, for soldiers to have police powers was never a feature of this country that was required to be operationalized in the manner that my friends brought it.

What was the game plan by the last Government? Under the Ministry of National Security, which was a target for their attention, there were six Ministers and junior Ministers in the Ministry of National Security. Let me remind the population. You had Brigadier John Sandy, you had Jack Warner, you had Emmanuel George, you had Carlton Alfonso. Do not forget you had Collin Partap and Embau Moheni, six people running the Ministry of National Security.

Hon. Member: What happen to Gary Griffith?

Hon. F. Al-Rawi: And you had Gary Griffith; seven, seven people running the Ministry of National Security. You see, I failed to recall Griffith because he was fired by the last Government for telling the truth. So perhaps that may be the reason why I inadvertently excluded his name. The Ministry of Justice established solely to articulate with the Ministry of National Security and the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, and the prison service. The

Ministry of Justice had Herbert Volney, Christlyn Moore, Emmanuel George, Prakash Ramadhar; four Ministers of Justice. Their requirement was to build courts, develop legislation, improve the criminal justice arena. Absolutely nothing materialized from the Ministry of Justice in the entire time that it existed. Some people became millionaires as a result of work.

What about Legal Affairs, Legal Affairs was managed by my learned colleague, my friend Prakash Ramadhar, the Member for St. Augustine, but Legal Affairs controls the land records of Trinidad and Tobago, and I will come to that in a particular moment to tell you how that employs good measure for the fight against crime. And then, of course, we had the Attorney General's office under Anand Ramlogan and Garvin Nicholas. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us get back to the report. In looking at this report, let me put it into context of what has been done. The criminal justice system must work for the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service to work, because, after all, they are taking reports of crime, they are taking evidential analysis, and they have to take it somewhere. They take it to a court, and for the entire time that my friends opposite were in Government, not a scintilla of improvement in the criminal justice system happened. So when we came into office, we established a dedicated plan to improve the criminal justice system. The first thing we did, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was to look at the metrics. We went into the prison system, we looked at the case flow. We looked at the nature of matters. We looked at how long they were actually in arrears, what the time frame of moving someone, a remanded prisoner for instance who is in custody into trial involved, and what did we discover? Cases that are 20 and 25 years in arrears. That is what we discovered.

There are 4,002 prisoners in the prison system today, 1,000 of whom

are there for the offence of murder and therefore are non-bailable; 1,000-odd who are there as convicted persons and who are serving time, and all the rest are on remand. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in causing that analysis we went further. We went into the Magistracy, because the police in terms of their court positioning, in terms of the recommendations coming forward by this Committee in talking about how the police managed their attendance at court at recommendation lvi, we went into the courts. What did we discover?

Let us start with the Magistrates' Court. In the Magistrates' Court the case flow is anywhere between 145,000 cases per year to 165,000 cases per year; 102,000 of those cases are motor vehicle and road traffic offences; 62 per cent of the case volume in the Magistrates' Court is motor vehicle and road traffic offences. You have 40 magistrates managing 145,000-odd cases; the disposition rate is at best 40 per cent, meaning 60 per cent of each year goes into backlog. And then we went further, we went into the High Court. In the High Court, and looking at preliminary enquiries, we have confirmed that there are 29,000 indictable matters in backlog in the High Court. Police are required to treat with 29,000 matters in backlog in the High Court. We went into the Magistrate's Court, there were no rules of court. There was no computerization of records. You manually sit down and manage the positions in a long ledger book. The Clerk of the Peace is an administrative officer that ascended in the ranks. It is chaos and pandemonium in those courts, and police officers are trapped in that environment where you do not know what time the court is going to sit, what time the court is going to rise.

We went further. We looked at the case management structure. We looked at the fact that there was no effective case management going on in

the courts. So, obviously, if you are talking about the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service as we are doing now, the question of improving their competence, the question of improving their efficacy is not only to be had as a conversation on boots on the ground, but very importantly in ensuring that there are consequences which come about by way of due process in our courts because of boots of the ground. We went in and we looked at the Evidence Act to analyse whether witnesses would come forward. We went in to notice that witnesses were being murdered. And what did this Government do, because we are talking about operationalization? And we have not often had a chance to explain, by way of connecting the dots, what the Government, the PNM Government, this Government, has done for this country, and let me start connecting those dots. We, firstly, in looking at that, statistically input as I have done, Magistrates' Court, criminal justice sector, in looking at the High Court, the Appeal Court, we made sure that while we did that we looked at the prosecutorial arm in the DPP's office. We looked at the financial investigation arm in the Financial Intelligence Unit. We looked at the capacity in the Board of Inland Revenue. We looked at the whole of Government structures. What did we do? Number one, first item of business came to Parliament, to appoint a Commissioner of Police. As my friends have traversed, but I will put it in a slightly different way, we came, we amended the law; we realized that the mischief was nobody was pulling the trigger.

The Director of Personnel Administration that has the responsibility to pull the administrative trigger to cause the appointment of a Commissioner of Police failed to pull that trigger in the period of 2013, 2014, 2015. Three years there was no pulling of that administrative trigger so we said in the

amended law, let us have the Minister say, start the process, not intervene in the process, but simply say, please start the process. My learned friends when to court. Mrs. Persad-Bissessar, Leader of the Opposition, Member for Siparia, went to court, spent a year in the court delaying the process. The judge came back and said, well, okay, we will just take the Minister off and let the process start. We could have appealed it because we were absolutely sure we were right, but it made no sense to appeal, we would waste more time. We would play into the delay game. So we left that judgment as it was and the process started; 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, four parliamentary years or Sessions it took for us to appoint Commissioner Gary Griffith. What did we do next? We said, now that you have a TTPS head and morale can be dealt with, and the country is buoyed by the morale now being experienced by that active appointment, we went in and we said, listen, let us make sure that the courts are not bottlenecked. Let us create divisions of court.

4.30 p.m.

We started off by creating the Family and Children Division, which has the Family Court and the Children Court which is a criminal court. We came in and we said let us remove the motor vehicle and road traffic offences, 102,000 per year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, choking the system, occupying judicial capacity, police capacity. We said let us cause those to become violations; removed 62 per cent of the backlog in the court.

What did we do next? We said let us create a criminal division. We established a criminal division by an Act of Parliament. What did we do next? We promulgated in 2016 immediately the Criminal Procedure Rules. What did we do next? We said to the country let us have Masters case

manage the files that come towards them, and let us pilot it out in the Children Court. What did we do next? We acquired software for the Children Court. We took that software and we applied it to the Magistrates' Court, so we are computerizing the Magistracy for the first time.

What did we do next? We have said to the country it is inappropriate to have the Clerk of the Peace as a non-lawyer. It is in fact a brief of the Legal Profession Act. We moved into Parliament and we amended it, such that there is a registrar of the Magistrates' Court. What did we do next? We created specialist courts in the criminal division. What did we do next? We came in a package of laws to treat with the financial crimes, Proceed of Crime Act, Financial Intelligence Unit act, Mutual Assistance in Legal Matters Act.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me start drilling even further now. This Government is not contemplating doing. I am telling you what we did. Member for Naparima said if they had their way they would have come and amend something. He could not even specify. Violence against women is a priority and they would amend the law. He did not say which law, he did not what, he did not say how. Let me tell you what we did, because we used the amendments in the children's arena specifically to replicate it in the Magistracy, and let me tell you what we did, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Not what we are doing, but what we did.

For children and for women, and with no support from the UNC in large part, we did the following: No. 1, we operationalized and we produced the Judges' Rules for Children in 2016; published *Gazette* 01 November 16. Two, we did the Family and Children Division Act, where we amended 19 laws to improve the fate of children and women, by allowing women the

dignity for the first time to get their maintenance orders in a High Court and not have to have two sets of proceedings going on—19 laws. [*Desk thumping*] We created the Family Division, the Children Court. We operationalized two children's courts. The only thing I can hear from my friends opposite about the children's court is, "who yuh rent it from? Did you rent it from Frankie Khan wife, de building?" Where the fact was that the Judiciary had selected it, and that is arm's length value for money that stands with transparent measure, before we came into office. But that is their big contribution to the Children Court.

What did we do next? We did the Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Rules, 2018 for children themselves, Legal Notice No. 20 and 27 of February 2018. What did we do next? We did the Family Proceedings Amendment Rules 2018, published on 27th February, 2018. We did the Children Court Rules, 2018, published on 27th of February, 2018. What did we do next? We did the UN protocols and signed the measures for anonymity for charges for children. We went further. We signed the Children Court Speciality Procedures. We did the Child Rehabilitation Centre (Designation) Order, published 15 May, 2017. Child Rehabilitation Centre Regulations 2017, published May 2017; Child Rehabilitation Centre (Designation) Order, published 15th September, 2017; Child Rehabilitation (Designation) Order 2018, published 16th April, 2018. Children Community Residences, Children's Homes Regulations affirmed in the House and Senate. Children's Community Residences (Rehabilitation Centre) Regulations for Foster Care 2018, published and affirmed; Miscellaneous Provisions (Supreme Court of Judicature) Act—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Lee: Mr. Deputy Speaker, 48(1) please. I do not know where the

Attorney General is going. This is not an appraisal format we are doing here this evening.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Overruled.

Hon. F. Al-Rawi: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Miscellaneous Provisions (Supreme Court of Judicature and Children) Bill, 2018, where we amended 12 laws. What did the UNC say in relation to that Bill? First of all, let me tell you what that Bill was about. That Bill, together with the Family and Children Court Division Bill—do you know what we did, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I started off by telling you the players in the criminal justice system that this report deals with?—we moved the High Court complement of judges from 36 to 64. That is a 77 per cent increase in judicial capacity. We moved the number of Masters to case manage by 400 per cent. We created the Registrars for the Criminal Division. What was the UNC's position that Pointe-a-Pierre cannot understand, strangely so? They said no, they would not support it.

Mr. Lee: Standing Order 48(1), Mr. Deputy Speaker. Where in the report is the Attorney General mentioning what he is talking about?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Overruled.

Hon. F. Al-Rawi: Thank you. It is Recommendation 58, if my friend would just pull out the report and read it, for heaven's sake. It is in writing at Recommendation 58, but this is what you call a lazy approach to Opposition. [*Desk thumping*] Read the report.

Mr. Lee: I did.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Address the Chair please.

Hon. Member: If you would only keep your seat.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Please, silence.

Hon. F. Al-Rawi: Mr. Deputy Speaker, what else did we do? In the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service my colleague, the Minister for National Security then, the Member for Point Fortin, went out and created in the TTPS by Executive support the Child Protection Unit in the TTPS populated with over 200-plus officers right now. And what do we hear from Naparima? “Well, they woulda, coulda, maybe woulda look at domestic violence legislation.” So that is the UNC’s version of how to protect children, coming from the mouth of Naparima on how to protect women, and the PNM’s version, in the 16 items that I have just enumerated is what we have operationalized already. Let us go further.

When we look to the criminal justice system, years in this country you are hearing about “public defenders system”. What is a public defender system? The country is run by 20 practitioners in the criminal arena; 20 lawyers control the Criminal Bar, and if your lawyer is not ready, the case cannot go on. So what did we do? The Cabinet of this country, under Prime Minister Dr. Rowley, approved the entire structure of the Public Defenders Department so that if after three occasions your lawyer is not ready, your counsel of choice is not ready, you get competent counsel. Your matter continues. So in law we have already passed—we have done the proclamation for the Criminal Division. We have improved the judicial complement by 77 per cent. We have added Masters, we have added rules of court, we have specialist courts. We went to the defence attorneys. What did we do next? Not what we are doing, what did we do? In the DPP’s department we increased their capacity by over 100 per cent. The Office of the Attorney General which pays for the legal services done at the DPP’s Office, spent 80 per cent of the fees budget in the AG’s office every year on

the DPP.

What did we do next? We opened the Tobago office for the DPP. What did we do next? The Cabinet has approved the new locations for the Port of Spain offices for the DPP. And what did we do next? We have also approved and it is being built out right now, the San Fernando offices for the DPP.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us go further. What did this Government do in terms of managing further criminal justice reform that relates to this report? We said you need to have evidence, and in treating with evidence we specifically have created, and we will bring to Parliament very shortly, an Evidence Bill that treats with the giving of anonymous witness evidence. If you are afraid, if there is reason to believe that you are in jeopardy, you will not need to face a court in person. In that will come the evidence to treat with gang activity in particular, because one of the reasons that the anti-gang legislation has to be treated with very carefully, is in having the physical human evidence introduced. Mr. Deputy Speaker—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Member, your initial speaking time has expired. You have an additional 15. You care to avail?

Hon. F. Al-Rawi: Yes Sir, thanks.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Proceed.

Hon. F. Al-Rawi: So let us get down now to crime and criminality and the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, and something that we have in mind, in gear, and have produced. Let me tell you what we have done. The Government's stated focus to treat with crime and criminality is to follow the money. Drug dealers are not in business to not make a profit. They must do something with their profit. Their profit is going to be invested

some way, somehow. It may be in cash, it may be in property, it may be in businesses, we do not know. How does one go about finding that information?

We have brought to this Parliament a suite of legislation: the Income Tax (Amdt.) Act—and I will say no more because it is before the House right now. We brought forward the FATCA legislation. We brought forward several pieces of law to meet our FATF obligations. We brought forward amendments to the Proceeds of Crime Act, the Financial Intelligence Unit Act. We increased the manpower in the Financial Intelligence Unit by hundreds of percentage points. That resulted in the reporting of financial crimes moving, if you aggregated the years 2011 to 2015, it is \$4.5 billion of suspicious transactions, and in one year, because we improved the complement of the FIU, it jumped to \$22.1 billion.

But what we did very importantly is we went to work on the golden pot that is the Land Registry. And I said that I would have come back to that point. Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the Land Registry there are three registries: Civil Registry, which is births, deaths, marriages, et cetera. We have the Land Registry, which is all the records of land transactions in Trinidad and Tobago, and of course you have the Companies Registry. There are 11 million land volumes. There are 400,000 company records and there are four million records to treat with births, deaths, marriages, et cetera.

We took that entire registry. We inherited software which was out of date, no servers, no operational function. We built up two of the registries already. We took the entire registry and physically relocated it to the Richmond Street Plaza, after retrofitting the vault to make sure it could work right and to avoid the terrible design that was in place before. But we

digitized the land records. We have done millions of land records. And why have we done millions of land records, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Because you will find the criminality in land records.

You will find fake companies, you will find beneficial ownership that has not been declared in the land records in this country, as the suspicious transactions in the FIU demonstrate happened last year, with \$22.1 billion of suspicious transactions. I am not telling you what we are going to do. I am telling you what the Government has done already. Now, let me plug in to what we are going to do in the coordinated position.

Laid on the table of this Parliament—as a matter of fact, something I left out in the criminal justice system, today you will see the Administration of Justice (Indictable Proceedings) (Amdt.) Bill, 2018. We intend to move the Parliament with immediacy to abolish preliminary enquiries. Let me give you an example, without going into anticipation; that solves the backlog of 20 years of work. Let us go back to follow the money and crime.

Obviously, the amendments that we have in consideration for the Global Forum for FATCA, for FATF, apply to the follow the money transactions. We have completed and will bring to Parliament after Cabinet has had its final view, the Civil Asset (Explain Your Wealth) Bill. Civil asset forfeiture, explain your wealth legislation, on a civil standard in a civil court, where there are no delays of the type in the criminal justice system. We have completed and will bring to Parliament the removal of beneficial ownership. What does that mean? Who is the real owner of the company? Who owns the share? We have completed and will bring to Parliament the abolition of secret trusts, or trusts in general, so that the real owner of land must be discovered.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me put this for the people of Trinidad and Tobago into context. If you cannot find a gun, if you cannot find the drugs, if you cannot find the corruption, in flagrante, “where yuh ketch de man red-handed or de woman red-handed”, it helps to be able to ask them, “Wey yuh get dat?” Explain the BMW, explain the mansion, explain the multiple homes, explain the gold that you are “blinging” on your neck, and if you cannot explain that in a court of law, you lose it. So what do we do? We created the connection to the Income Tax Procedures. That is no secret; that is a stated intention.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us go further. In that matrix Trinidad and Tobago has the opportunity to change its culture. So what did the TTPS say? I took note of it, and I commend the TTPS for this. Commissioner Griffith is reported in the papers yesterday as announcing what I think is a radical improvement in the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, the creation of a Financial Investigation Division, which takes the amalgamation of the Anti-corruption Investigation Bureau, the Financial Investigation Branch, the Fraud Squad and the Cyber Crime Unit.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that, in the domain of the TTPS acting in its constitutional independence with the safeguard of the Director of Public Prosecutions, in section 90 for the DPP and 123A for the Commissioner of Police, in the court of law from section 99 of the Constitution go forward where the court stands separate, that is nuclear to the fight against crime. If you start adding the pieces of the puzzle together, what I have just described as having been completed and what is about to come to finally complete it, this has never been done before in the history of Trinidad and Tobago where a government in three years could have created backlog jammed destruction,

where we dynamite the backlog by creating divisions, by moving offences, by digitizing data, be it in Licensing Authority, motor vehicles. Because I have not told you about all of the things we already passed in the motor vehicle realm, and you know them: red light enforcement, spot/speed camera, et cetera.

Add that now to the anti-corruption package in a criminal justice system that finally has rules of court, that has Masters, that has a criminal division, that has specialist courts, improved DPP, public defenders, witness anonymity. That has never been done before in the history of this country. What I have just described to you, and to the nation listening on, is a connecting of the pieces of the puzzle.

If this country wants to note the difference between the plan from Naparima which is, “Ah not quite sure what I am going to amend, maybe the domestic violence legislation for women”, compare that with what we did for children and women. Compare what was not done by the four Ministers of Justice, seven Ministers of National Security, two Attorneys General, one Prime Minister and a Cabinet of 35 people opposite in the criminal justice arena. No rules of court, no new Masters, no specialist structures, no improvement. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, all of that nothing cost the country billions of dollars; \$400 billion was spent by many colleagues opposite. And I notice that they have a penchant for standing in this Parliament when in Opposition and naming people who died by name. How come Couva South was not naming people who died by name when he was a Minister in the Government of Siparia, of the UNC?

My dear friend, Couva North, who fights for her constituents, as I recognize, I hear her call people by name. I hear my friend from Princes

Town calling people by name. Whether we were in Opposition or now in Government, you do not hear us coming to “drag people name in de mud” in Parliament here. [*Desk thumping*] Not in Opposition, not in Government. Our record on the Parliament floor in Opposition is that we supported 96 per cent of the law that my learned friends brought opposite. Even when Independent Senators said no, as they did in the Children Act, it was the six Opposition Senators that supported that law.

We did not ask for it to go to Joint Select Committee. It was over 200 clauses long. We sat and dealt with it on the floor of the Parliament. I myself moved 202 amendments to that Bill that night. We did not gallery about joint select committee. We did not go to a joint select committee, have a unanimous report and then come to the floor of the Parliament and change our minds, as we did with the income tax or the anti-terrorism or the anti-gang or any one of them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I forgot something. We abolished child marriage. We did that by removing a three-fifths clause. My friends opposite fought it to the bitter end, said I was a strategic Attorney General. “Dey bring in outside speakers”, a member from the Muslim faith, a member from the Hindu faith into the Senate; I was there. What did they say? “Doh touch de law, leave it just so.” We said 18 stone cold, and we passed the law, and Trinidad and Tobago as a leading country in this region has come in for open commendation. But did I have—did this Government have the support of my friends opposite? No, Sir, we did not.

So I have now reported to the House and to the nation, and to the people listening to this debate and the outside world, not what we intend to do, but what we have done, what is being done and what is about to come.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Two more minutes.

Hon. F. Al-Rawi: And dare I say this is nuclear. It has the potential to right the wrongs in our country, and if my learned friends opposite would just put down the politics and agree to good law. We could fight each other on the political platforms, but this Parliament ought to be a place for unanimity of purpose when it comes to bona fide material. I can only urge my colleagues to remember that the population is quite discerning. They will eventually see, by the fruit of what has been produced what can be our future and they will remember us to a man for our positions taken against.

I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Dr. Roodal Moonilal (*Oropouche East*): Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to intervene in this matter before us.

I think with the exception of Laventille West who moved the Motion, I am the next person to speak who has actually been on the Joint Select Committee. Therefore, I would like to bring to bear in my contribution some of the issues that arose at the Joint Select Committee which has been a joint select committee charged with the responsibility for taking this matter further, the report of the Deosaran committee, and bringing this matter to the Parliament today.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, just for the record let me say that our colleagues, the Member for St. Augustine and Sen. Saddam Hosein served before on this Joint Select Committee addressing this matter, and thereafter Sen. Gerald Ramdeen and myself were appointed to the Joint Select Committee on National Security that continued really the discussion and the work. So that both the Member for St. Augustine and Sen. Hosein also participated, and in some way I think they participated in a more full manner than myself and

Sen. Ramdeen, because when we joined this Committee the work was already advanced in some way. So I want to just give credit to them for their contribution as well. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Attorney General who spoke before me, I think had a wonderful opportunity today to finally deliver his budget contribution which, for one reason or another, he was denied of an opportunity a few weeks ago. So we got it, and it was long in coming and we saw what the Attorney General reflected on as his achievements.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, where I am going with my contribution, to tell you in the beginning, is that I intend to work my way in the report to establish some of the issues and some of the bothering problems that myself and Sen. Ramdeen in particular would have had with the report. While we are in agreement with the thematics, and we are in agreement with some elements of the content, we believe that there is some value in this report and in this thinking, we did have some difficulty in the structure of the report—and I think Caroni Central touched on that issue—some of the recommendations, and we would have liked to go further to flesh out a bit more some of those issues.

Clearly we are in disagreement, as the Government and Opposition today admitted, with some of the recommendations of the Deosaran committee as it relates to the change that we would all like to see.

In the beginning let me say that the problems in the police service did not start yesterday, and they will not end tomorrow. This report is not a magic formula to transform the police service, as far as I can see, in no time in the short future ahead, in the short-term. This report will not transform the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service in the short-term. This is not a magic

formula, as Prof. Deosaran himself admitted. So what we are trying to do is to discuss policy and long-term approach.

The Government must also admit today that whatever is decided upon to go forward today, it is not only this Government but a future government that will have to provide continuity. So that if the work has to continue, it is not this administration. It would be the next administration and maybe another administration after that will have to continue that work, because this is deep policy work to be done involving fundamental legislative change. Because the belief is that you will not get the cultural change unless you make the institutional change.

The institution today, as all of us admitted in one way or another, we have a crisis with institutional credibility and institutional integrity, and we could explain that in every which way we want, to how bad things are. In fact, a thematic emerging today is really every speaker told us how bad things are with the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, how terrible it is. So there is no need for me to repeat that. I think people know that. I mean, I just want to summarize by saying that police officers do not trust police officers. If you poll, and they did poll, and you ask a policeman, “Would you consent that the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service would investigate you?” He said, “No, let somebody else do it, not the TTPS.” So the police service does not trust the police service and that is how bad it is.

But this did not become bad yesterday, or last year or might I say in the five years of the Partnership. It was former and deceased Minister of National Security, Martin Joseph, who alluded to this many years ago—I think over 10 or 15 years ago—when in a bipartisan meeting, St. Joseph, between the Basdeo Panday then Opposition, and Patrick Manning

Government, it was said at that time by 2005/2006 somewhere, that the police service had more or less collapsed as a functioning institution, and I am talking about over a decade ago. What we have done over the years is try to work with a creature that is certainly not perfect and maybe not even well. We have tried to work with that creature and to deliver results.

5.00 p.m.

The other point is that, while we appreciate the Attorney General's confidence, and clearly he believes that he has done some good work, and I am sure in time we will see the results of that work, the rules and regulations and the new structures and so on, in time we will see. But we also have a crisis that the Member for Couva South alluded to, that the Member for Naparima alluded to, we have the crisis of today. We have the crisis of today to face, and that is a crisis that we face on an hourly basis.

The Attorney General, I think without intending to, invited us to depersonalize the debate because the Attorney General, and I think the Member for St. Joseph, had a difficulty with the Opposition Members now calling the names of victims and so on, and while I understand that perspective, there is a counter perspective. If you stop calling the names of victims, you will forget who are the victims. You will see "organization" as the victim, you will see "institution" as the victim, and you will not see "flesh and blood" as the victim. [*Desk thumping*] So, there is a real danger when you forget the names of victims.

And today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I had this ghastly view today on my phone when someone, well-intentioned, sent me a picture of Danielle Yearwood and what appeared to be the unborn baby in a funeral, and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I saw that and my stomach churned and I felt a heaviness

inside me. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we forget her name, we will forget the human side to what we are doing. [*Desk thumping*]

So, I encourage the Attorney General in all the work that he will be doing, and all the good work that he is announcing, never forget the names, never forget the human being, never forget the flesh and blood, because they are really why you are doing what you are doing, do not forget them. And we call their names, well they are dead, they cannot complain, but we call their names, but we want to remember them, we want to remember that situation. We want to remember the victims in my constituency, in Couva South and in San Fernando West.

You know, just a couple weeks ago I was speaking to relatives of a victim in San Fernando West and they were explaining what happened in a crime scene and so on. The day we forget victims is the day we forget what is our purpose in the Parliament, and I say no more on that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Attorney General, of course, reminded us that the UNC had six or even seven Ministers in the Ministry of National Security, but failed to tell us in three years they have had about four or five. And that is not a problem, I could understand that because your term is not yet finished so it may be more, but you are on the rack counting, and I think you have had three or four. One, I think, even Government Members forget who it is. So the point there is that we need to—[*Interruption*] yeah; one they forget who is that.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the report deals with restructuring the police service, and I can tell you, I do not want to waste time going through and quoting from, you know, verse and so on, but I took a read of it and, of course, we were part of doing it. And I want to say that the human resource

strategies and the human resource techniques dealt with here are good. They deal with discipline, we deal with promotions, we deal with entry points, we deal with recruitment, we deal with creating a fresh professional cadre of people, and those are fine.

What we would have liked to see quite frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we had asked for it, in our Minutes will reflect. If we could have separated in some way what the Police Management Audit Report, what the Deosaran report recommended, and what the JSC recommended. If you could have separated it, because now it is a little cumbersome. What did the Deosaran report say and what did you say, because clearly, as the Government admitted, you are here today to support a report, but there is a recommendation of the Deosaran committee report, which you said, "Listen, we do not want no part of that, you know. That is an elected Commissioner of Police." You all said, you do not want no part of that. So clearly you are not here to support the Deosaran committee report in its entirety. You are here to support a report of the Joint Select Committee on the Deosaran committee, and the recommendations must be separated, clearly, because we do not support that.

In fact, the Ramesh Deosaran committee and Prof. Deosaran said that they were not in support even of a civilian becoming Commissioner of Police or a non-police officer; so said so done. So, we had to work that out and flesh it out, and I am happy today that, at least, those matters are coming up.

The other difficulty we had and the Attorney General, I will come to it because I want to comment so much on earlier things before I get to it. This morning, of course, we heard from the mover of the Motion who was

surprisingly non-adversarial, and surprisingly so, but the Member for Port-of-Spain North/St. Ann's West did something this morning which I want to put on record and I am concerned with. You see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the police service as we know it today and maybe that is why I regret that I am speaking after the Attorney General because I would have liked the Attorney General to speak after me, because he may have been able to guide me actually on a matter.

You see, the police service is a special creature in the system of government. Today, by virtue of the constitutional amendment 2006, you see, the police service today by section 123A in particular, the Constitution spells out an independent role for the Commissioner of Police; it spells that out. So that when you are in Government, the Minister of Education, the Minister of Sport, the Minister of whatever, nothing is wrong if they are presenting in Parliament and the Permanent Secretary and all the directors of the Ministries are here to hear their Ministers and so on, that is fine.

I would have a difficulty, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the Commissioner of Police and the police service themselves. I took note that I did not think it was something completely proper to have the hierarchy of the police service corralled into the Parliament to listen to the Minister of National Security. [*Desk thumping*] Because before I spoke I wanted to put through a call to the Commissioner and ask him if he can come here to hear me, and if he could have brought [*Desk thumping*] the other 10 leaders of the police service because they may be interested in what I say.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will take the *Hansard* and send it to him in an envelope and invite him to read my comments which I thought the Minister of National Security should have done because it is a special—or

he could have gone to the YouTube and looked at it, but I do not think that the Commissioner, so I would have highlighted certain points and sent to him. But the difficulty I have is that the police service and Commissioner have an independent role away from the Executive. [*Desk thumping*] And apart from that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not talking about wasteful employment of police time. I think the Member for Arouca/Maloney would know about that, but I am talking about the separation between those institutions. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Members, please.

Dr. R. Moonilal: It is not a Ministry. The Permanent Secretary in health could come here, the divisional leaders, the chairmen of boards and so on to hear the Minister of Health, but I am not sure it operates that way with the police service, [*Interruption*] and they are mandated to come to finance committee.

And the Minister of Health reminds me that at the finance committee all the divisions including the Judiciary, including the President, including the Parliament, they will come with the Minister of Finance to explain themselves by way of their expenditure and, you know, what they are asking for and so on, so it is a completely different ball game, I am very conscious of that.

And I am conscious of that because of the Constitution. You see, at 123A, which was not there before, it was the amendment. It says:

“Subject to section 123(1)”—which deals with the Police Service Commission incidentally—“the Commissioner of Police shall have the complete power to manage the Police Service and is required to ensure that the human, financial and material resources available to

the Service are used in an efficient and effective manner.”

I am concerned with that word “complete” power to manage. And why I am concerned is that, what happens in Government is that the Parliament makes law. We make law. What is before us today is not a Bill. [*Desk thumping*] What is before us today is not a Bill. It is a policy document. It may be a very serious policy document, but it is not a Bill. When you make a law you give that to the Commissioner of Police, and you say, “Mr. Commissioner, this is the law of land, please implement”. He has to abide by law.

Today, we are discussing policy. Now, there is a policy track as well. The Cabinet can determine policy, and the Cabinet can easily go to another committee of the Cabinet called the National Security Council which includes Cabinet members, and in their weekly meetings with the heads of the protective sector and so on, they can say this is the policy as approved by the Cabinet, and we will ask you to consider and implement within the law, but not the Parliament. The Parliament, I think, there is a risk that we are discussing and debating policy for which we are not even approving yet, we have not voted on this matter.

And the Minister of National Security told us that this matter that we are debating today, “Hold on, we have already sent the report to the Commissioner”. Look, he has already decided how we are implementing this. So, why are we here today? [*Desk thumping*] Why are we here if the report was already sent to the Commissioner of Police? The Commissioner has already made a matrix of what he is doing, and they are implementing according to the report. What are we here for?

Suppose the Government decides today that they are not supporting it. Suppose the Parliament does not vote on this. The Commissioner already

has the report, he has a matrix and he is busy implementing, and maybe doing a good job. But he came today, the Minister of National Security, waved paper, he say, “Look, the Commissioner has already gone ahead and implementing”. But what are we debating here then? [*Desk thumping*]

And, again, I want to say this in the context of nothing is wrong if a policy document is shared with the Commissioner, and the Commissioner has to implement policy. You can do that, I mean, I will go and say, yes, you can do that, it is the will of the Parliament and so on. But I was taken aback that document has already been sent, matrix worked out, implementation plan on song, and you come to the Parliament and say, “Listen, notwithstanding Mr. Griffith implementing everything, let we debate it first nah. Whey is dat?” I mean, in a local thing, “Whey is dat”?

Hon. Member: “Mamaguying” we.

Dr. R. Moonilal: So having said that, let me move forward because I mean—and of course the Minister from Port of Spain North/St. Ann’s West will lose no opportunity to frighten everybody about white collar crime and who is arrested and who not. And I like the style, they say, extend your hand, and when we extend our hand, they point fingers at us. So that is a style. I do not think that the national community buys that anymore, so they could continue doing that because I want to alert them, I think it helps us politically and otherwise. It helps us. [*Desk thumping*]

The Member for St. Joseph, of course, the Member— I was really concerned with this Member. The Member spoke about the Police Service Commission having no soul—

Mr. Deyalsingh: No. Not the Commission.

Dr. R. Moonilal: Who had no soul?—the service.

Mr. Deyalsingh: The police.

Dr. R. Moonilal: The police service did not have a soul.

Mr. Deyalsingh: I said that is what the report said, not me.

Dr. R. Moonilal: The report said that. And I was very concerned with that and he dropped his voice in a way and dealt with that, so I do not know how to respond to that, I will just move. I have no response for that one. And let me tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I could tell you that I have no response to something—[*Laughter*] The Attorney General, of course, spoke.

And the Attorney General is not having a good week, I think. Regrettably, the Attorney General got into a tiff with a Senator, Sen. Hosein, and pursuant, of course, to this matter because we are dealing with legislation, and the Attorney General himself spoke about it. The Sen. Hosein was simply saying, given what is before us, the matter dealt with any offence under written law, and any offence under written law means any offence under written law, not just the Proceeds of Crime or the anti-terrorism. And there is a dispute and regrettably the Attorney General, the titular head of the Bar and maybe a candidate for Senior Counsel had said that they should take back the law degree of the Senator and so on. [*Crosstalk*] I mean, but you see—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Members, please.

Dr. R. Moonilal:—but this is the operation of the Government, take back law degree, take back house, take back money, take back everything, and eventually the people will take back the government. [*Desk thumping*]

So, I really am not asking San Fernando West to apologize to the Senator, but as a more dignified person, he would know what he has to do.

But that was not the beginning of—[*Laughter*] Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was not the beginning of his troubles. You see, today was a significant day as well. Today, in the High Court of Trinidad and Tobago a matter involving police, I drop it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A matter involving the police, a woman police constable, like Arouca/Maloney, a woman police constable Sharon Roop won a matter against the Attorney General in which—

Hon. Member: Again?

Dr. R. Moonilal:—the *Sharon Roop v the Attorney General of Trinidad and Tobago* won the matter in which the High Court, this is a matter involving police officers, so I am dead on target here. And the—

Mr. Al-Rawi: The CV number.

Dr. R. Moonilal: 2017, the claim number. And in the conclusion of the judgment, I do not want to—the claimant's right, the court ruled in a High Court ruling today, the claimant's right under section:

“...4(h) of the Constitution”—has been—“...breached,...”

Since the aim of the TTPS in not permitting her to where the hijab is:

“disproportionate to its aims of maintaining a neutral religious environment.”

So that a police constable has gone to court and in a landmark judgment the court ruled that the female member of the Islamic faith ought to wear her hijab while in conduct of her duties as a police officer in Trinidad and Tobago.

And the Attorney—[*Interruption*]

Hon Member: “Take way the AG degree.”

Dr. R. Moonilal: No. No. No. I will not suggest that the Attorney General's

degree should be withdrawn, but the instant proceedings and in the matter, of course, I mean, the judgment is a long judgment about 70 pages or so goes through a lot of the law. But the lady police, the woman police took the Commissioner of Police and the Attorney General to court on that matter of her constitutional rights, and the role of the Opposition is to protect the constitutional rights of citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*]

Before the Attorney General interrupts me, which I will give way, I just want to just needle him one more because I want to tell him that I know the matter what will infuriate him the most is that the claimant was represented by Mr. Anand Ramlogan SC [*Laughter*] and Mr. Gerald Ramdeen and others. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: AG, before you speak, take your correct seating, please.

Dr. R. Moonilal: Okay. I will continue to allow him to move. Mr. Deputy Speaker, so this is not his best week and he will—yeah.

Mr. Al-Rawi: Much obliged. Thank you kindly for giving way. I would just like to put on to the record that I too took a case to court on behalf of hijab wearing and burka wearing and succeeded. That claim which was brought was against the Commissioner of Police. The Attorney General was a related party. I, in fact, support the decision made. It was a decision made by another functionary. So it is very important to put on to the record that I myself have represented the burka and hijab issue and have been successful in court. And, in fact, the case that they relied on was my case. So, I do not share the same view that my friend does. Thank you.

Dr. R. Moonilal: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was in anticipation of that I allowed him to intervene, [*Laughter*] because I knew that he would have

agreed with the judgment notwithstanding the Attorney General is named as the defendant. All matters are taken against the Attorney General in our system, so that the Attorney General himself, not the Member for San Fernando West, but the Attorney General ends up on the losing side of it. But having said that, the Attorney General is on record with his position on this matter.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the issue arose today as well, and I want to touch on it, that the matter of crime and criminality and the role of the police service. Now, I know Members opposite like to make light of when Members on this side speak about Singapore and so on, and they make light of it because they feel we are over-quoting that area. But unless I am mistaken, Singapore is one of the few places on the planet where their leadership fired an entire police service at some time. And they have a different political structure and different political evolution that allows some of those things to happen. We are not today suggesting that we do the same thing that we did to Petrotrin with the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, because the police service here is represented in a worse position than Petrotrin.

Hon. Member: Correct.

Dr. R. Moonilal: So, we are not suggesting that, but we are reminding the Government that in dealing with the police service, one has to be very cautious because of the constitutional independence of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and the Commissioner of Police. And today, I thought that there was a border that was crossed today when I heard that the Commissioner of Police was already—and the Police Commissioner is known for many things, and one thing that he is known for is that he is a

very enthusiastic person, and he is zealous and he is like that. And if you ask him to do something, I do not think he will waste much time. He is known as that. In fact, if there were commissioners over the years who would take long to respond and so on, this Commissioner may be blamed for responding too quickly. So, I was not surprised to know that he already has his matrix and moving. I was surprised to know that without Parliament approving this matter—

Hon. Member: Correct.

Dr. R. Moonilal:—that it was already sent to an independent office to proceed. [*Desk thumping*]

Now, the Minister from Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West, I am praying that before the next general election he will wake up and realize that he is the Minister of National Security because there are statements being made, there are threats being issued all the time, there are points of arrogance which are really unbecoming of a Minister of National Security, particularly—

Mr. Indarsingh: DPP.

Dr. R. Moonilal:—and yes, and he will understand that.

Now, to the Attorney General and I want to focus on this matter of white collar crime, and I was mentioning to my colleagues earlier that I even have a problem with calling something white collar crime because it connotes a colonial dichotomy of deep psychological resentment when you call something white collar crime, you are suggesting well it is complex, it deals with intelligence, it deals with rich people and big money so it is white, and anything beyond that street is something else. I suggest, I always say economic crimes because they deal with much business of economy and

economic crimes against people and so on.

But I want to encourage the Attorney General because I want to tell him that I have really been a convert to his campaign on follow the money. And you can now testify that I am now helping you to follow the money. And more than following the money, we on this side are concerned with finding that money [*Desk thumping*] and we are concerned with finding the money, and in presentations before I alluded to where money can be found. It created a problem, I think I was thrown before the Privileges Committee and the court, but I will continue to help the Attorney General on that matter. And the Attorney General in discussing the Ministry of Legal Affairs essentially and the tracing following the money, spoke of the companies division, the land and one more before—

Mr. Al-Rawi: Civil.

Dr. R. Moonilal: And civil. Right? And civil is the registration of births and deaths. But the Attorney General will also in his matrix as he follows the money and finds the money, I want to point you in a direction of Customs. Customs which falls under the Ministry of Finance, I think it does. You will find if you follow the money and you focus on Customs, you may well find that you will have the importation of items, for example, vehicles and luxury vehicles coming in for a particular person, but that person may not be using it. That person may not have it in their possession, and somebody else may be the beneficial user or in occupation of an item whether it is a vehicle or otherwise.

And if you follow the money, where moneys are paid to contractors or moneys are paid to people, and you see that they are importing over a period of time vehicles, four vehicles, five vehicles. They are importing, well I do

not want to call the vehicle. I could call the vehicle number but, listen I cannot take a hat-trick before the Privileges Committee now. [*Laughter*] I mean, I just cannot take that hat-trick. But if you see that they are importing vehicles, and the vehicles are not on their compound, it is not being used clearly by the people who are importing, but it is being used by others. It is being used by children of others. It is being used in a way, then you could easily say, look these vehicles for the net value of \$3 million, \$10 million was imported by someone, it is not in their possession, it is on loan to somebody else, and you can follow the money. So that your concern with land which I understand very well and I support that, that you must look at land acquisition as well in your follow the money trail, you must follow also vehicles and other items that come through Customs [*Desk thumping*] because the Customs will keep records.

So when someone, for example, takes money, a contractor or so, they send it to America and say, this is to buy equipment. But when you look at Customs and you find that there is no equipment coming back into the country, you can follow the money to know that that money has not been used for the purpose for which it was obtained from the banking system in Trinidad and Tobago, goes elsewhere, but there is no equipment, there is no customs declaration, and if there is a declaration, it is not for the quantum.

So US \$3 million leaves to go, but equipment worth US \$500,000 comes back, and I give you a good clue as to where you can put that, you know, that Sherlock Holmes hat on, get your magnifying glass and go in that direction. It will help you along with, I am not saying abandon the land focus or the company focus. I am saying that in [*Interruption*] Customs, yeah, you can see some of these matters that I think will help you in your,

Mr. Attorney General, in your journey looking to find money, looking at Customs will help you.

Mr. Indarsingh: But you leave out Port of Spain South and St. Ann's West.

Dr. R. Moonilal: Listen, I do not want go there. And the Attorney General, of course, spoke about the creation of new institutions. And institutional change is very critical to fighting white collar crime. And you know why I like this debate on white collar crime. And you know why I like about this debate on white collar crime, I welcome these debates on white collar crime.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member—

Dr. R. Moonilal: “Doh say that”. My time is up?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Your initial 30 minutes have expired. You have an additional 15. Do you care to avail?

Dr. R. Moonilal: Yes, please. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Member for Naparima, please. Proceed.

Dr. R. Moonilal: Thank you very much. I want to alert the Government and the Attorney General and the Member for Port of Spain North in particular. There are many countries in the world that create this veneer of fighting corruption and they are always fighting corruption and fighting white collar crime and so on, and you what know what they do? They invent institutions, populate them with persons who are supportive of the Government, and they go after political targets. I will not call the names of countries because I do not want to bring countries into the debate, but you follow certain countries of the world. Every time government changes, one Cabinet goes to jail, and the next Cabinet comes in, and when the next government changes, the current Cabinet goes to jail. They are doing that in

the world and it is undermining as well the quest to deal with real, serious white collar crime.

So, a Prime Minister will be in jail one day, and the current incumbent as soon as he leaves office, he moves from the Prime Minister's office to the State jail. And it will work the other way around, it will work the other way around, and that is happening in a lot of the "banana republics" of the world, that just set up ad hoc, politically-motivated institutions on the guise of dealing with corruption and dealing with white collar crime, and they end up having this type of tag team going in and out of the State jail, and all the parties and all the Prime Minister, you looking for a Prime Minister today, he is in jail. You look for him again, he becomes the Prime Minister and the fella who was there, "he gone in". And that is not healthy for countries, it undermines the very democratic fibre of countries; so be careful of this thing.

And I want to remind the Attorney General, I always hear this boast coming from opposite that when they were in Opposition they gave 90 per cent support, I think today you said 96 per cent support. Well, by next week it might be 97 per cent support. I want to say, unless I am mistaken, and I stand corrected, so far you are in your fourth year, has this Opposition failed to support any matter that required a constitutional majority to fight crime? We eventually supported it. So, I want to stand proudly to say, the Kamla Persad-Bissessar Opposition [*Desk thumping*] has supported 100 per cent of the legislation to fight crime; so we beat you there too. It is 100 per cent of the legislation to fight crime we have supported this Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Members, please, he can handle it himself. Please, Naparima, Princes Town. Proceed.

Dr. R. Moonilal: Thank you for your confidence, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So the matter before us now which I am not talking about the contents of the matter, yes, we are in a committee stage, but that does not mean that you will not get the support or you will not receive our support for that, if it is good legislation. But remember, we have passed 100 per cent of your legislation to deal with crime. [*Desk thumping*]

Yes. We delay it because we wanted better legislation. Yes, you listened to us eventually, but in dealing with you, you will always do the right thing with us, but you will go kicking and screaming. So, we will carry you the journey and we will help as the time comes, but you cannot stand and say this Opposition has been an obstruction to fighting crime. [*Desk thumping*] You cannot say that; that you cannot say. I do not want to get into the anti-gang legislation, what has happened, I think Couva South and Naparima dealt with that, but the Opposition stands ready and willing to support you.

Even with this matter today, as we have some difficulties here, and I just want to reflect on two matters, again, before my time is up. We had some difficulty here because in the routes, I just want to reflect on the quickly, as they said in the report. I had a difficult, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with proposing reports in which different routes are proposed and so on. I thought that we should have agreed on something as a committee and come to the Parliament and say, listen this is what we agree with, not leave it to the Parliament to go and explore what we are doing. The purpose of a joint select committee is to have a report that says the joint select committee agrees with that or a minority report, to say the minority disagrees.

Interestingly, we do not have a minority report here, and I just want to

explain that. We do not have a minority report here for one profound reason. We had a difficulty with the entire structure of the report, so it was not a case of identifying item 4, item 25, item 36 and saying we disagree. It was a case where we had a problem with the entire structure, and to do an minority report, is almost as if we have to do over a whole report, you know, because we believe that we should have gone there, look at the Deosaran committee report and say, put that aside, we are now pulling five or six key issues from that, debating it, agreeing to it and coming back to the House.

5.30 p.m.

We did not believe we should have jumbled the two and come to the House with a sort of mixture, a cocktail of the Deosaran report and the Joint Select Committee thinking. Because if I ask Members opposite, or even on this side, I say, what really are the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee that are specific to the committee, not the Deosaran report, I do not think Members can find that easily. But there are issues there that members of the Joint Select Committee—if you read the minutes—said no, no, no, we want to do something separate. We want to state something separate. I think with the SRPs, that was one issue that we spent some time on, discussing the SRPs, discussing qualifications of police officers.

We were very clear, Mr. Deputy Speaker—how much time do I have left?

Mrs. Newallo-Hosein: Three minutes.

Dr. R. Moonilal: How many minutes, three? We were very clear, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we had to do more work—[*Interruption*] Yes. We were very clear, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the matter of the SRPs posed a problem, whereas this was a sort of postcolonial appendage to the police

service, and it worked in a certain way early in our history. We were not sure that system of SRPs was working today, that we should have looked at another way of expanding the police service; that was one.

Secondly, in terms of qualifications, as the Member for Caroni Central—I think he put it better than I could. Having necessarily persons to say, we take five subjects, we take six subjects, we take eight subjects, I am not sure that that by itself will bring the fundamental change that you need because of the culture. So that some of us were not key on that. A major point—and I think Sen. Ramdeen was a main campaigner for that, and I want to put on the record, Sen. Ramdeen was a driving force behind a line of argument. Sen. Ramdeen and myself agreed, but he advocated strongly that there were issues now that we need to deal with that are not in the report. They are not in the report, but if dealt with they can make an immediate impact on dealing with crime. With all the Attorney General told us today, and some of us—I was surprised when he was calling out all these things, we still have 450 murders and counting. Now, whatever we are doing, it may be good, but it is not impacting.

Dr. Tewarie: A dozen-plus a week.

Dr. R. Moonilal: Eh?

Dr. Tewarie: A dozen-plus a week.

Dr. R. Moonilal: A dozen-plus a week. And the Member for Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West, I want to tell you that your headache is now beginning. So, if you are feeling frustrated or tired, it is now beginning. That job you have there, whatever—that job is a job that will give you enormous pressure, because as the hours go by and the murder rate piles up, the country looks to a government generally to bring some type of order in

the short term.

These recommendations, let me give you the sequencing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And this is an important point to make as I conclude. We have before us a committee report on a committee report. Yes, the police service is already working, we are told today. Mr. Deputy Speaker, these changes require legislative change. The Government, if you look at the week, the working week is Monday to Friday, and you call that a term of office. The Government is on Thursday. You have one day left. They are in their fourth year. They are 12 months away from one election and 20 months or so away from another election. We have Christmas coming up, then you have Carnival, then you have the holiday period coming up. So, the Government has very little time in office assuming that they will complete their term of office. When they go they have to make legislation to give impact to effect most of these things, legislation. Legislation will come next year. When that comes next year, given the fact that the legislation may be a profound piece, comprehensive and so on, that may go to a joint select committee. That means by the end of next year you could be in Parliament debating something. That “doh” mean you will pass it. It could be in 2020 that we pass legislation. You then have to implement legislation, and as we all know, from the electronic monitoring device in particular, and others, DNA, electronic monitoring—call again, these big ones. It takes time, in some cases years to implement. I say with great respect to the Government and with the enthusiasm of the Commissioner of Police, that many of these recommendations will not be implemented before 2020. They will not be. Many will not be.

So that today we must not give the population by the same token, a

false sense of hope by what we are doing today. The immediate issues today, as Sen. Ramdeen said in the report, the Witness Protection Programme. It is a critical programme. The manpower requirements, the requirements for vehicle. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to give a personal account. In office some years ago, because I live and I have always lived in San Fernando, even when in office, I would be coming down on the highway from Port of Spain late hours of the night, leaving in the morning, but generally late hours coming down, and I remember several times I would call, not the commissioner, because I am no friend of a commissioner, and I know the line between politician and police. I would call the Minister of National Security, whoever he is, because that is my Cabinet colleague, and I would say, "Listen, I just left Port of Spain at 11 o'clock, I have reached home in San Fernando and I saw not one police vehicle on the road". And I say, "Listen, that is your business, security is your business, you have to deal with that". And one day I met the Commissioner of Police then, and he met me in a function and he said, "How much police car you see on the road last night"? So the message got through, and as time goes along, you would see more, and you would see more, and you would get that. But patrolling, you know we underestimate the basic because we always—our mind always looks to the complex and the comprehensive, but we underestimate the basic.

The patrols, the stop and search, the joint army patrol and police patrol operations, Christmas is upon us Mr. Minister, and the Minister has fundamental responsibility. I am calling on this Minister not to subcontract-out security to the Commissioner of Police. Not to see the Commissioner of Police as the super hero who is on the charge dealing with crime, and if he

does something good you push yourself, you elbow next to him in a press conference. [*Desk thumping*] And if something bad goes, you take off and leave him alone standing and tell him go and hold a press conference and explain that. You cannot subcontract-out the political responsibility for dealing with national security. [*Desk thumping*]

So, if the people complain, the people vote for a government. Whether they regret it or not, they vote for a government. And the people must complain to the Government. They assume authority, executive authority for public policy and for change; not the Commissioner of Police. So this what we are seeing developing here, and I agree with, I think, San Fernando West, I agree with him that with the advent of a new Commissioner of Police there will be hope. There will be hope that something will change, and this Commissioner, because he has this capacity to be present and omnipresent almost, he brings that level of hope. He brings that level because people see and people hear quickly, and he has a rapid response character. But, that is not the be all and the end all. The Commissioner of Police by himself will not make the change we need. It is the political directorate through policy, which we are discussing here today, through resources, that can make that change. And, I am very conscious of this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that at the end of the day the Government must account to the people on crime, not the Commissioner of Police. [*Desk thumping*] The Government must account. The Commissioner of Police incidentally must account to the Police Service Commission. They have a process to deal with that. But the Government accounts for crime and insecurity, and no one in this House, on both sides of the House, can stand today and say that citizens feel safe and feel secure. No one can do that.

And, Mr. Attorney General, again, I want to remind you, that when people go to court—“look your Prime Minister gone to court”. “The Prime Minister take me to court”, but that is his right. If he believes that his rights are being violated, the Prime Minister of this country has a right to take me to court. Which he did. So, you cannot say that the Opposition took the Commissioner of Police Order to court, and they were wrong. They went to court for the same reason. They believe that rights were being violated. [*Desk thumping*] And the court ruled that they were and amended the order. So the Opposition UNC did not intend to delay you. We intend to go to court so that this country could continue to be a country upheld by the rule of law. [*Desk thumping*]

What is the Government asking us to do? If we believe that they break the law, turn a blind eye? Give them a “bligh” and say, “Well, your cause good”. “You have good intention, you could break the law.” It does not work like that. If we believe the law has been violated we have a right to go to court, “as Diego Martin West gone to court”. Not now, he went to court—many years he has been in the courthouse. So, do not blame the Opposition for that. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Member, your—

Dr. R. Moonilal:—we stand with these few comments on the matter. Thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Leader of the House.

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Planning and Development (Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis): Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that the House do now adjourn—you all thought I

was going to speak?

Hon. Member: No. [*Laughter*] We are disappointed.

Hon. C. Robinson-Regis: —to Wednesday the 13th day of—the 14th day of November, 2018, at 1.30 p.m., at which time we will do the Miscellaneous Provisions (Heritage Petroleum, Paria Fuel Trading and Guaracara Refining Vesting) Bill, 2018. Thank you very much.

Question put and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 5.40 p.m.