

**THE  
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
OFFICIAL REPORT**

**IN THE FIRST SESSION OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO WHICH OPENED ON JANUARY 13, 1992**

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**SESSION 1992**

**VOLUME 34**

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**SENATE**

*Monday, January 13, 1992*

**10.00 A.M.**

*The Senate having assembled, and it being the first meeting of the Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the Clerk of the Senate read the following Proclamation:*

REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

No. 1 of 1992

[L.S.]

By His Excellency Noor Mohamed Hassanali  
T.C., President and Commander-in-Chief  
of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

NOOR M. HASSANALI

*President*

**A PROCLAMATION**

Whereas it is provided by subsection (1) of section 67 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago that each Session of Parliament shall be held at such place within Trinidad and Tobago and shall commence at such time as the President may by proclamation appoint:

And whereas it is expedient that a session of Parliament should be held:

Now, therefore, I, Noor Hassanali, President as aforesaid, do hereby appoint the Red House, Port of Spain, as the place at which the First Session of the Fourth Parliament shall be held at 10.00 a.m. on Monday the 13th day of January, 1992, as the time at which the said session shall commence.

Given under my hand and the Seal of  
the President of the Republic of  
Trinidad and Tobago at the Office  
of the President, St. Ann's, this  
13th day of January, 1992.

*Election of President*

*Monday, January 13, 1992*

#### **ELECTION OF PRESIDENT**

**Clerk of the House:** Hon. Senators, it is my duty in accordance with Standing Order No. 3, to have the nominations for the office of President of the Senate.

**The Minister of Planning and Development (Sen. Dr. The Hon. Lenny Saith):** I beg to nominate Mr. Joseph Emmanuel Carter to be the President of the Senate of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

*Seconded by Senator W. Mark.*

*There being no other nominations, the Clerk of the Senate declared Mr. Joseph Emmanuel Carter duly elected President of the Senate.*

#### **OATH OF ALLEGIANCE**

*Mr. Joseph Emmanuel Carter took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance as required by law.*

[MR. PRESIDENT *in the Chair* ]

#### **ELECTION OF VICE-PRESIDENT**

**The Minister of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Joan Yuille-Williams):** Mr. President, I beg to nominate Mr. Ainsley Mark as Vice-President of the Senate of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

*Seconded by Sen. S. Capildeo.*

*There being no other nominations, Sen. Ainsley Mark was declared Vice-President of the Senate.*

#### **OATH OF ALLEGIANCE**

*Sen. Ainsley Mark took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance as required by law.*

*The following Senators took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance as required by law:*

Sen. Dr. Lenny Saith

Sen. Russel Huggins

Sen. Barry Barnes

*Oath of Allegiance*

*Monday, January 13, 1992*

Sen. Brian Kuei Tung  
Sen. Joan Yuille-Williams  
Sen. Gordon Draper  
Sen. Camille Robinson-Regis  
Sen. Stanford Callender  
Sen. Deodath Ojah-Maharaj  
Sen. Jean Elder  
Sen. Harry Kuarsingh  
Sen. John Rahael  
Sen. Pundit Ramcharan Gosine  
Sen. Wade Mark  
Sen. Surendranath Capildeo  
Sen. Salisha Baksh  
Sen. Roi Kwabena  
Sen. Carol Merrit  
Sen. Muntaz Hosein  
Sen. Michael Mansoor  
Sen. John Spence  
Sen. John Rooks  
Sen. Diana Mahabir-Wyatt  
Sen. Hydar Ali  
Sen. Martin Daly  
Sen. Everard Dean  
Sen. Carol Mahadeo  
Sen. Rev. Daniel Teelucksingh

*Congratulations*

*Monday, January 13, 1992*

**PRAYERS  
CONGRATULATIONS**

**The Minister of Planning and Development (Sen. Dr. The Hon. Lenny Saith):** Mr. President, I rise to offer congratulations on behalf of my colleagues on this side and on my own behalf, to you and the Vice-President, on your elections earlier this morning.

I wish, in particular, to say how pleased we are to have someone with your experience as head of this Chamber to guide us through the coming sessions. Many of us are here for the first time and we are reassured that your competence, your integrity and your humility will serve as a role model for we who sit in this Chamber.

I offer you the full support of the Members on this side and you can count on our co-operation to maintain the decorum and dignity of this august House. I thank you.

**Sen. Wade Mark:** We, on this side of the House, take the opportunity to extend our profound congratulations to the President and Vice-President of this Chamber on their election to office and wish them well during the course of the term of this Parliament.

I have had the honour and privilege of serving in the Senate for a relatively short period of time under the President who is quite able, capable and astute. He has always demonstrated a great sense of balance and a great degree of wit, firmness, tact and of course mutual respect. He is therefore an extremely competent and worthy person, and we congratulate him on being appointed as President.

We on this side, shall endeavour at all times to provide the maximum co-operation and goodwill so vitally required to allow the President to execute his duties and onerous responsibilities.

We should like also to take this opportunity to extend our warmest and sincerest congratulations to the Vice-President on his election to this very important office.

I myself have known him for some time, whilst not in this Chamber, but he has demonstrated a sense of balance, objectivity and fairness. It is hoped that these lofty traits of our Vice-President would be transferred to his office and to the Chair in discharging his responsibilities whenever called upon.

*Congratulations*

*Monday, January 13, 1992*

As part of the Opposition in this House, as well as the alternative Government of the country, we shall be executing our responsibilities and duties without any fear, favour, hatred or malice, and to the best of our ability.

On behalf of my colleagues and fellow Senators, let us welcome all new Senators to this Chamber, both on the Government and Independent Benches and wish them all a productive, healthy and positive term of office.

We are all here to serve our nation's interest and to promote and safeguard our people's rights and fundamental freedoms in a manner that would facilitate the improvement in the quality of life of all our peoples, particularly the poor, the weak, the lame and the disadvantaged in our society.

Mr. President, many years ago the late Sir Learie Constantine shared with a very close friend his philosophy of service to this nation and I quote:

"Trinidad and Tobago is no longer anybody's plantation. It is our country and I have a right to serve it. I cannot claim to serve it in any and every way I might wish, since there are some forms of service that others must authorize. But there will always be some way in which, without authorization of anyone else, I will be able to render some service to our country. It is my right to do so, not a favour anyone is doing me."

Mr. President, that is what public service is all about. May God shower his choicest blessings on our nation in this challenging and most exciting period in our country's history. Thank you very much.

**Sen. Michael Mansoor:** Mr. President, I rise to join the voices of the Independent Senators to the words of congratulations that have been expressed to you today.

Your contribution to parliamentary life in Trinidad and Tobago is perhaps singular and unequalled, because you have served at all stages of the development of our constitutional processes and also, I believe you have served at all levels in the Parliament of this country.

We congratulate you on your appointment and we look forward to your leadership. I can say from previous experiences that your conduct of the affairs of this honourable Chamber will be fair; your advice will be wise and pragmatic.

I should like also to congratulate in a very special way, the appointment of Mr. Ainsley Mark as Vice-President of the Senate. His career as an academician and as

*Congratulations*  
[SEN. MANSOOR]

*Monday, January 13, 1992*

a professional man is unequalled and perhaps he is one of the youngest men to have held the office of Vice-President of the Senate. Our warmest and sincerest congratulations.

Mr. President, I thank you.

**Mr. President:** Hon. Senators, first of all, let me thank the entire Senate for the great honour that has been bestowed on me by unanimously electing me as President of the Senate for another term.

I thank all those who spoke on behalf of the various parties and groups in the Senate for the very kind sentiments which they have expressed this morning.

It is very good to see so many familiar faces, some from the previous Senate; some of whom I have known well for a long time; and others whose reputation has preceded them. I think we have a very good combination to make a meaningful and significant contribution to the Parliament of our country. This is the second time that I have accepted the challenge to assume the reins of this high office. In the previous Parliament I did so at the invitation of the former Prime Minister, Mr. Raymond Robinson, who opened the door to this new phase of my career.

On this occasion I accepted the invitation of the present Prime Minister to continue in office. I have always taken great pride in my independence and neutrality throughout my career in the public service, and I give you the assurance today that I will make every effort to discharge the duties of this office with the impartiality, the dignity and the decorum it deserves.

As President, I am here to serve all Senators and I look forward to the full co-operation from everyone. I was very pleased to hear the pledge of those who spoke to give their co-operation at all times.

My door is open to all Senators at all times. At this stage I am inviting all Senators to a briefing session, either as a full group or as individual groupings, at the earliest possible convenience. I thank you all once again for this very high honour and I shall make every effort not to let you down during our deliberations of the Senate. Thank you very much.

**Mr. President:** Hon. Senators, His Excellency the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago desires to address all Members of Parliament. This sitting is suspended.

**10.45 a.m.:** *Sitting suspended.*

*Congratulations*

*Monday, January 13, 1992*

**10.55 a.m.:** *The Senate joined Members of the House of Representatives in the other place.*

**11.16 a.m.:** *His Excellency the President, accompanied by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives arrived in the Chamber.*

#### **PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS**

**His Excellency Noor Mohamed Hassanali, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago** addressed both Houses of Parliament as follows:

*Mr. President of the Senate, Madam Speaker, hon. Members, I thank you for the opportunity to address you on the occasion of the Opening of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago; and I could not be thanking you on a more beautiful day. We thank the good Lord for this beautiful morning.*

*I extend cordial greetings to you with my prayer that God's peace be with us all. Hon. Members have each subscribed an oath or affirmation of allegiance and of office. That of the Hon. Prime Minister, other Ministers or of Parliamentary Secretaries reads—*

*"...that I will bear true faith and allegiance to Trinidad and Tobago and will uphold the Constitution and the law, that I will conscientiously, impartially and to the best of my ability discharge my duties..."*

*as Prime Minister or Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, as the case might be;*

*"...and do right to all manner of people without fear or favour, affection or ill-will."*

*That of every other Honourable Member whether elected or appointed, reads—*

*"...that I will bear true faith and allegiance to Trinidad and Tobago, will uphold the Constitution and the law and will conscientiously and impartially discharge the responsibilities to the people of Trinidad and Tobago upon which I am about to enter."*

*I feel sure that hon. Members will do their best to remain mindful of and faithful to their respective oaths or affirmations of allegiance and of office. They are meaningful solemn promises.*

*President's Address*  
[HIS EXCELLENCY]

*Monday, January 13, 1992*

*I trust, too, that throughout every Sitting, hon. Members will remain mindful of the prayer which initiates every Sitting. In each case, in the Senate and in the House of Representatives, it is a meaningful and appropriate prayer in which hon. Members, among other things, acknowledge Almighty God as the Source of all Wisdom, and as Protector and Guide, and you beseech His protection and His guidance.*

*The promise to discharge one's responsibilities conscientiously, involves the role of the human conscience; that functional agent of the spirit—God's spirit in man—sometimes referred to as "the still small voice within", whose role is the supervision of the intellectual judgement. It is, I perceive, the responsibility of civilized man to cultivate and promote the enlightened conscience while exemplifying the basic human virtues rooted in self-respect and respect and due consideration for fellow human beings.*

*The people of Trinidad and Tobago have, since 1962, by the Constitution, affirmed their recognition of the supremacy of God our Creator, and of mankind as comprising members of one large human family. We are accordingly committed to individual and public awareness of God's presence and supremacy, and to caring and sharing in our society. We are fortunate to have in Trinidad and Tobago an active Inter-Religious Organization. It can contribute to such individual and public awareness of God's presence and supremacy and to such virtues of caring and sharing. We can and we ought to help the Organization to make its contribution accordingly.*

*Let us re-affirm our faith in the importance of the family unit in civilized society—in the words of our Constitution—*

*"....a society of free men and free institutions..."*

*We have also, since 1962, committed ourselves to respect for moral and spiritual values in addition to the rule of law. Implicitly, we then committed ourselves to truth, a commitment which is a sine qua non condition of integrity in public as well as in private life. These commitments are binding upon us all, of whatever station or occupation in life, both inside and outside of Parliament, and in every one of our activities. Indeed, I respectfully suggest that the society that ignores moral and spiritual values does so at its own peril.*

*Accordingly, in these and related commitments, hon. Members, occupying as they do, the senior level in "the science and art of government", as the word*



*President's Address*

*Monday, January 13, 1992*

*"politics" is defined, constantly bear a measure of responsibility as exemplars for your colleagues at other levels in public life.*

*Hon. Members, whether you perceive yourselves as now vested with power or with privilege, you will, I trust, remain ever mindful of corresponding responsibility. For its stability, its welfare and progress, a society will wish to secure as a base, peace, goodwill and mutual trust, among its members.*

*Whether or not austerity measures are necessary for our well-being, we ought, as a caring and sharing people, to promote humility and the simple life, and avoid extravagance and waste. Let us also cultivate the virtues of self-help, of thrift and of conservation. Let us exercise patience, and recognize our responsibility to make necessary sacrifice. Let us distinguish our needs from mere desires. Let us distinguish selflessness from selfishness—consulting not only our own interest and ambition but considering the interest of others as well as our own. We must distinguish community from self, and national interests from sectoral interests.*

*Hon. Members will, I trust, use available opportunities both in and out of Parliament to exemplify and otherwise promote those several virtues which, hopefully, I have identified, as well as, of course, others of your own perception.*

*We need to build a national character which would ensure that we remain united in spirit and purpose and in resolve, not only to discharge present responsibilities, but also to meet challenges which we may face from time to time in the future.*

*The responsibilities to the people of Trinidad and Tobago which hon. Members have undertaken involve a measure of sacrifice, varying in extent and intensity. It may be a sacrifice of time, or of income, or of family life. Responsibilities may prove difficult to discharge, exacting or, indeed, exasperating. I urge with all my strength, that on such occasions you draw upon your resources of character—including your self-respect, your patience, your courage, your common-sense, and not least of all, your good sense of humour.*

*At all events, I plead, by your word and action, please remain steadfast in faith and allegiance to Trinidad and Tobago and in your faith in our system, the democratic process and institutions.*

*Hon. Members may at times be disappointed, even discouraged, but hopefully, never downcast as you reflect on those responsibilities and on such true faith and allegiance.*

*President's Address*  
[HIS EXCELLENCY]

*Monday, January 13, 1992*

*I extend my best wishes for an enjoyable and successful session of Parliament. To this end, I trust that you will earn God's favour in your efforts. I pray that He will, in and out of Parliament, protect you from evil and error, and that He will guide you in your deliberations, in the decisions which you make, and in the actions which you take from time to time in the discharge of your responsibilities to the people of our beloved country.*

*Mr. President of the Senate, Madam Speaker, hon. Members, I extend from my family to you and to the members of your respective families our best wishes for peace and for your health and happiness in 1992, and thereafter.*

*May God bless us all, and may God bless our nation.*

**11.45 a.m.** *Joint sitting adjourned.*

**11.52 a.m.** *Senate resumed.*

#### **PAPER LAID**

Address by His Excellency the President to both Houses of Parliament at the opening of the 1992 Session on Monday, January 13, 1992. [*The Minister of Planning and Development (Sen. Dr. The Hon. Lenny Saith)*]

*To be printed as a Senate Paper.*

*Motion made and question proposed, That the Senate do now adjourn to a date to be fixed by the President. [Hon. L. Saith]*

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Senate adjourned accordingly.*

*Adjourned at 11.55 a.m.*