

**THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
OFFICIAL REPORT**

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

SESSION 1992 - 1993

VOLUME 39

SENATE

Wednesday, September 15, 1993

10.00 a.m.

The Senate having assembled, and it being the first meeting of the Third 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. 7 of 1993

[L.S.]

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

NOOR 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:

Now, therefore, I, Noor Mohamed Hassanali, President as aforesaid, do hereby appoint the Red House, Port of Spain, as the place at which the Third Session of the Fourth Parliament shall be held at 10.00 a.m. on Wednesday the 15th day of September, 1993, 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 30th day
of August, 1993.

Prayers

Wednesday, September 15, 1993

PRAYERS

[MR. PRESIDENT *in the Chair*]

**KUARSINGH, DR. HARRY
(Death of)**

Mr. President: Hon. Senators, before suspending the sitting, I believe that all of you are aware that since we last met in the previous session of July 20, one of our colleagues, Dr. Harry Kuarsingh, passed away. Due to the time constraint for today's programme, I do not consider it convenient for Members who wish to pay tribute to him to do so today. But as this is the first occasion we are meeting since his death, I feel we should stand in silence for one minute as a mark of respect for our departed colleague.

The Senate stood.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Mr. President: Hon. Senators, His Excellency, the President desires to address both Houses of Parliament. The sitting will therefore be suspended to allow the presiding officers to meet His Excellency on arrival at the Red House and to allow the Senators to proceed to the Chamber to listen to the address by His Excellency.

After His Excellency has departed, Members of the Senate will return to this Chamber to continue the sitting and complete the items on the Order Paper. The sitting is now suspended.

10.07 a.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

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

10.28 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 Mr. 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 of Parliament, I greet you today with my prayer that God's peace be with us all, not only now but

President's Address

Wednesday, September 15, 1993

always. I extend on behalf of the national community our grateful thanks to the representatives of religious faiths for the prayers which they have said this morning, asking God's protection and guidance for the welfare of the people of our beloved country.

I extend my best wishes to hon. Members for success in the Third Session of the Fourth Parliament of our Republic.

Admittedly, our country continues to experience serious problems—financial constraints, crime, unemployment, to mention some.

The incidence of crime involving violence has recently been a matter of much concern to law-abiding citizens. This is not to say that crime not involving violence is not or has never been a matter of much concern to the population. For indeed, there is still crime of dishonesty, of fraud or corruption, sometimes involving insidious abuse of trust, or abuse or compromise of office.

It does not appear that the perpetrators of crime of violence comprise any more than a relatively small percentage of the population. Nevertheless, having regard to the astonishing pattern of criminal conduct, it seems that there are persons in our society who believe, as someone wrote many years ago, that it is a "convenient thing after all to be a reasonable creature since it enables one to make or find a reason for everything or anything one has a mind to say or to do".

The apparent disregard for law and order suggests that yet some of us entertain the pernicious perception that good and evil, right and wrong, can be nothing else but matters of mere personal opinion. On such perceptions, yet some others of us may seek immorally, if not illegally, to circumvent relevant laws or rules, unrestrained by any consideration of self-respect or due regard for the rest of the community.

One gets the impression that there is fear in the home, in the workplace, on the street, and that there is corresponding increase in the use of security measures including alarm systems or other improved systems.

Society is hopefully aware that the authorities have initiated steps pursuant to addressing the incidence of crime. Resolving it satisfactorily, of course, will not be a short-term achievement, whatever steps are taken to deal with the present problem.

Citizens look, however, to Parliament, the highest forum in the land, for leadership in their quest and their hope for adequate protection from violence and

President's Address

Wednesday, September 15, 1993

for improvement of the quality of life. I appeal to hon. Members, to the extent that they can conscientiously and reasonably do so, to pool their best ideas and efforts to identify the cause or causes of the high incidence of crime; to take steps to arrest or reduce such incidence; and to introduce such measures as will prevent a recurrence and which measures may serve as the basis for addressing the problem of crime in the future.

I appeal to individual members of the public to do all they legitimately can to assist, and to cooperate with neighbours and with law enforcement agencies in pursuance of what must remain a national effort in this country.

Public discussion of any problem assists those who must make decisions regarding a solution. In democracy emphasis is on the welfare of the people of the country and therefore upon openness, communication, mutual respect and trust in human relationships. Hon. Members, democracy, as you know, thrives on informed public opinion emerging from public debate.

I am pleased to note that in our country the electronic media has been promoting public discussion on public issues and that accredited leaders in the community, including hon. Members, participate with members of the public in these hopefully fruitful exercises. The print media continues to be likewise involved in focussing public attention on public issues through editorials and letters to the editors and column contributions from staff as well as from members of the public.

Hon. Members, democracy requires that leaders, including hon. Members, who are vested with responsibility for making decisions on particular subject matters, ought before reaching their decisions, to consider the known views not only of colleagues in authority but also of all other persons whose interests may be affected by such decisions.

Quite apart from addressing the problem of crime by legislation on aspects of the administration of justice, as for example, that relating to the question of bail, or to the question of penalty, we need, in the meantime, to continue to build the character of the individual citizen by a process of training and education commencing at the age of discretion. This, I suggest, is a fundamental step in the national effort ultimately to remove the source of fear that pervades the country and effectively to reduce to manageable proportion the incidence of criminal behaviour in our society.

President's Address

Wednesday, September 15, 1993

This process in education and training must start in the home or family—the first training ground for discipline, love and service, and indeed for every kind of morality. We have disapproved as wrong, sometimes condemned as wrong or undesirable parental use of the rod. Unfortunately, I suggest with respect, we have not effectively replaced it with the right and full substitute, that is to say with the virtues of love, kindness, patience, communication, mutual respect and trust in the home or family. The family, alas! Can it survive? Or will we ever restore its true position as the first unit institution in the structure of civilized society? And yet for the best results the process of education and training must involve the joint efforts of the home, or family, the church, and the institutions of formal education, along with public libraries, supplementing those of schools, to help promote wider literacy levels throughout the country.

Hon. Members, we have a system of law and order designed to protect the individual's right to peaceful enjoyment of life and property. Every citizen, therefore, has a personal responsibility, by his own behaviour to assist in the preservation of that system. As we citizens reflect on the problem of lawlessness, it behoves us as individuals to reflect, also, whether and to what extent we have, or may have conscientiously discharged that responsibility or whether we have failed to do so and thus perhaps contributed in however small measure to the current incidence of crime.

On the subject of crime the view is sometimes expressed that the course of justice through our courts is inordinately slow with the result that justice is denied when it is delayed. However, let us remember that justice is and must remain the product of the conscientious efforts of the administration and other support staff of the courts with adequate facilities, and judges (or magistrates), lawyers, accused persons (in criminal cases), police officers and other witnesses as are available.

I have in my remarks, hon. Members, referred particularly to one problem, but there are several others which hon. Members will be addressing during the Session.

I trust that hon. Members in addressing the national problem of the high incidence of crime will do so as they will address any other national problem, that is to say, with due regard for and remaining unswervingly faithful to their respective oaths of office.

President's Address

Wednesday, September 15, 1993

I thank hon. Members and their respective families for their services in the past, including sacrifices which they may have made in the course of discharging their responsibilities to our beloved country.

Mr. President of the Senate, Madam Speaker, hon. Members, as you embark upon the new Session, I pray God's guidance and protection in all your endeavours, and I wish that this Session of Parliament will not only be successful but also enjoyable for you. I extend my best wishes also for your health and your happiness.

May God bless us all. May God bless our Nation.

10.55 a.m.: *Joint sitting adjourned.*

11.00 a.m.: *Sitting of the Senate resumed.*

PAPERS LAID

1. Address by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago at the Opening of the 1993-1994 Session of Parliament on Wednesday, September 15, 1993. *The Minister of Planning and Development [Hon. L. Saith]*

To be printed as a Senate Paper.

2. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for the year ended December 31, 1992. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

3. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Legal Aid and Advisory Authority for the year ended December 31, 1992. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

4. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund for the year ended December 31, 1985. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

5. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund for the year ended December 31, 1986. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

6. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund for the year ended December 31, 1987. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

7. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund for the year ended December 31, 1988. *Hon. L. Saith]*

8. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Public Transport Service Corporation for the year ended December 31, 1989. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

9. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Public Transport Service Corporation for the year ended December 31, 1989. *[Hon. L. Saith]*
10. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Public Transport Service Corporation for the year ended December 31, 1981. *[Hon. L. Saith]*
11. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Public Transport Service Corporation for the year ended December 31, 1982. *[Hon. L. Saith]*
12. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Industrial Development Corporation for the year ended December 31, 1981. *[Hon. L. Saith]*
13. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Industrial Development Corporation for the year ended December 31, 1982. *[Hon. L. Saith]*
14. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of National Agro Chemical Limited for the year ended March 31, 1992. *[Hon. L. Saith]*
15. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts and Financial Statements of the Non-Reimbursable Technical Co-operation Agreement ATN/SF-3388-TT between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Inter-American Development Bank for the year ended December 31, 1992. *[Hon. L. Saith]*
16. Report of the Auditor general on the Accounts of National Broadcasting Service of Trinidad and Tobago Limited for the year ended December 31, 1990. *[Hon. L. Saith]*
17. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of National Broadcasting Service of Trinidad and Tobago Limited for the year ended December 31, 1991. *[Hon. L. Saith]*
18. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of National Maintenance Training and Security Company Limited for the year ended December 31, 1992. *[Hon. L. Saith]*
19. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Trinidad and Tobago Television Company for the year ended December 31, 1991. *[Hon. L. Saith]*
20. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Trinidad and Tobago Television Company for the year ended December 31, 1992. *[Hon. L. Saith]*
21. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Custodian of Enemy property for the year ended December 31, 1992. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

Papers Laid

Wednesday, September 15, 1993

22. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the St. Patrick County Council for the year ended December 31, 1984. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

23. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the St. Patrick County Council for the year ended December 31, 1985. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

24. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the St. Patrick County Council for the year ended December 31, 1986. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

25. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the St. Patrick County Council for the year ended December 31, 1987. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

26. Report of the Auditor General on the audit of the records and accounts for the year ended December 31, 1991 relating to the Structural Adjustment Loan 3152-TR and the EXIM SAL Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Export-Import Bank of Japan respectively. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

27. Report of the Auditor General on the Accounts of The Committee of the San Fernando Carnegie Free Library for the year ended December 31, 1991. *[Hon. L. Saith]*.

TRADE (AMDT.) BILL

Bill to amend the Trade Ordinance No. 19 of 1958 *[The Minister of Planning and Development]*; read the first time.

Motion made, That the next stage of the Bill be taken at the next sitting of the Senate. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

Question put and agreed to.

CHILDREN (AMDT.) BILL

Bill to amend the Children Act, Chap. 46:01 *[The Minister of Planning and Development]* ; read the first time.

Motion made, That the next stage of the Bill be taken at the next sitting of the Senate. *[Hon. L. Saith]*

Question put and agreed to.

Motion made and question proposed, That the Senate do now adjourn to Tuesday, September 21, 1993 at 1.30 p.m. *[Hon. L. Saith]*.

Question put and agreed to.

Senate adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 11.08 a.m.