

*Appropriation Bill (Budget)*

*Monday, December 13, 1993*

**SENATE**

*Monday, December 13, 1993*

The Senate met at 10.00 a.m.

**PRAYERS**

[MR. VICE-PRESIDENT *in the Chair*]

**LATE ARRIVAL**

**Mr. Vice-President:** Hon. Senators, Senators Saith and Capildeo have asked to be excused for having to be late at this morning's sitting.

**PAPER LAID**

Report of the Committee appointed to examine and make recommendations with respect to a review of the legislation relating to tendering and, in particular, to the establishment of appropriate guidelines for the procurement of goods and services. [*The Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Hon. G. Draper)*]

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[THIRD DAY]

*Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question* [December 9, 1993]:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

*Question again proposed.*

**The Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Sen. The Hon. Gordon Draper):** Mr. Vice-President, as I rise this morning to lend my support to this Bill and also to add my own words of congratulation to my colleague, the hon. Minister of Finance, I wish to take as a point of departure, not only the Bill itself, but also some of the comments Sen. Michael Mansoor made in his contribution some days ago. Because he made the very important point that, as we discuss the issue of transformation of our economy, we cannot focus only on the 1994 Budget, we need to focus on a number of other things. We need to focus, as well, on some of the other documents that have been laid in this House: *The Medium Term Policy Framework*, the *Review of the Economy*, and the *1993 Public Sector Investment Programme*.

He also pointed to the importance of focusing on leadership, values and changing culture. Whether we look at it in the context of the society as a whole, or

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of the public service, which is where I will treat with most of my presentation this morning, we are essentially talking about a process of change which involves leadership, change in values and changes in culture. Leadership, which Sen. Mansoor also alluded to, demands among other things a clarity of vision and an ability on the part of the leader to communicate that vision.

The changing culture of which he spoke speaks also about leadership, and vision, and he made the point that we need to approach these things in a holistic manner. But when we talk about change in culture, we also need to understand that we speak, as well, about a long-term process.

Mansoor raised the question: what has happened over the last two years in public service reform? I wish to respond to him in large measure, this morning, but to make the point as he himself recognizes, that we are into the business of changing culture, visioning and, therefore, we are not in the business of quick-fixes. While I understand the frustrations of Sen. Mansoor—because he has been here for some time—let us understand that my own accountability to this Senate, and this Government's accountability at this stage, will treat with our two years of implementing public service reform, because as we think about the public service, there, too, we have a vision which needs to be shared. And we invite the society as a whole, including all public servants, to participate. That vision, indeed, includes a vision of a public service that is efficient, performance oriented, and oriented to the development of the people who work in that service.

Over the last two years or so, from time to time, I myself have made some interventions in this House to try to deal with programmes and the results, as they were, of those programmes. Today, I do that yet another time. I do it, as well, recognizing that the budget itself, at varying points, points to the importance of a bureaucracy that is efficient. Indeed, on page 2 of the Budget we note the importance being placed on a bureaucracy that is international in outlook, efficient and responsive—a vision which recognizes the critical role of a transformed bureaucracy as we seek to transform and modernize Trinidad and Tobago.

But the Budget goes on, on page 14, identifying priorities for action and implementation in 1994. We see the Budget telling us that there must be institutional reform and encouragement of enterprise; it speaks to investments in energy and tourism; a tight and comprehensive social safety net; and it speaks, as well, to innovation and efficiency in Government. It is this latter priority that will attract my own attention this morning. But that itself is further underscored when

we look at the *Medium Term Policy Framework* which was also laid as part of the Budget presentation.

**10.10 p.m.**

On page 54 of that document, we see "Public Service Reform" as being one of the key policy areas and objectives of this Government. We see there the improvement of efficiency and accountability in the public service and an identification of a range of strategies and measures which are planned for implementation over the period 1994 to 1996 to achieve that policy objective, we see that it is important to:

"Maximise the human resource potential through the:

- (i) development of Human Resource Units in each ministry;
- (ii) establishment of Centralised Human Resource Management;
- (iii) introduction of an Integrated Human Resource/Payroll Information System;
- (iv) introduction of a new Performance Appraisal System and new Compensation Management System;
- (v) installation of an Employee Assistance Programme in the Ministry of Education.

Installation of Management Information Systems in Ministries and Departments.

Reform the present system of Financial and Budgetary Management.

Provide an efficient delivery of services in highly client-oriented public ministries/agencies.

Remove from the permanent establishment positions currently vacant because of VTEP—

Review and rationalise the services currently provided by the Public Service."

I will add to that: through a review of the procurement system and through a review of rules and regulations. In short, an understanding of the holistic nature of this changed process in which we are engaged and an underscoring of the commitment that the Government has to this area of transformation in Trinidad and Tobago.

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When, therefore, Sen. Mansoor asks of us what has happened in the last two years, I would turn to issues in each of these areas to report on progress over the last two years.

Let us first deal with the issue of human resource management. Let us recognize, as we have stated in the *Medium Term Policy Framework*, that one of our policy goals is the establishment of a modern human resource management system in the public service. A recognition of the importance we attach to the human resource within the service and, indeed, within the wider society, but a recognition as well, that if we are to treat with issues of efficiency of productivity then we need to treat with how we establish an environment within which these human resources can best function.

So it is that one of the tasks we set ourselves was one which, in fact, has three prongs. One, to streamline the central human resource management agencies in the public service; two, to decentralize aspects of that function to allow line ministries to be able to manage the human resources in their ministries more efficiently and effectively. Thirdly, to treat with the issue of restructuring of the Service Commissions.

In my presentation here last year in the Budget debate, I indicated that Cabinet had at that time established a task force to make recommendations on this process of streamlining. I indicated that in late October, Cabinet had indeed received the report of that task force and that in 1993 we would have proceeded to start implementing the recommendations of that task force. Mr. Vice-President, we have begun the task of implementation.

What does it involve? It involves, as I say, on the one hand, establishing within line ministries human resource management units which could carry out delegated human resource management functions in the line. We used, as we did for some other activity, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources as a pilot for that activity. We are satisfied that we now have a clear sense of what that new structure would look like, of the mandate for those units, and for the kind of staffing that would be required to carry out the work in those units. We have therefore now moved to put in place a consultant working with us whose mandate it is to implement that aspect of the work, in addition to some other aspects.

A couple of weeks ago, Cabinet took the decision to start that process by moving out into those line ministries staff with competency and staff who could drive the process of implementation of those units within ministries and departments.

I refer to a decision relating to the decentralization of the Organization and Management Unit of the Office of the Prime Minister. I have heard it said that we have disbanded O&M and that we are seeking to bring consultants from outside to do work. Let me assure the Senate that what we are doing is implementing what I said we would implement when I spoke on the budget of last year. More than this, that implementation itself, has taken place with the involvement and concurrence of the public servants.

I want to quote a few things from the Strategic Plan of the Organization and Management Division. I would be quoting some strategic plans as I go through my contribution, in order to give Sen. Mansoor some comfort that we do, in fact, have plans which went into the making of the 1994 Budget. The O&M mission statement for instance speaks of that Division facilitating organizational efficiency and effectiveness by providing management consultancy services to and on behalf of the Government and its related organizations. It visions itself as a dynamic and progressive professional management consultancy organization. It goes on at page 14 of their document to say that:

"In keeping with our role as Management Consultants, the Division will take action by June 1993 for a more appropriate Division Title and will similarly take action for the redesign of Job Specifications—"

In short, the Division itself was integrally involved in the task of looking at its own restructuring and setting its own mandate in keeping with the overall mission of reforming the public service.

But, I can also point to one of the other central agencies which are going to be particularly involved in this restructuring—the Strategic Plan of the Central Training Unit which talks about:

Assumptions of their future state:

A single agency with responsibility for human resource management in the Public Service will be established within a year."

the public servants speaking—

"Human Resource Units will be established in Ministries and Departments and will be responsible for those personnel functions devolved by the central Human Resource Agency, particularly the training and development of staff."

It goes on:

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"The Training Division is of the opinion that the proposal to merge the functions performed by the central personnel agencies in the Public Service under one co-ordinated agency ought not to be regarded as a fatal omen for the Personnel Department... Rather, it should be viewed as a valuable opportunity for effecting more rational approaches to the management of human resources in the Public Service—"

Our sense, therefore, of sharing that vision, of ensuring participation, has led public servant agencies themselves to begin to articulate elements of that new vision for themselves.

A restructured Organization and Management Division will see some of their staff going to line ministries, will see other members of their staff consolidating into a well-structured consultancy organization, and will see the beginnings of the other phase of activity, namely, the co-ordination into one agency of work now being carried out by the Personnel Department, the CPO's office and the DPA's office to allow a much more streamlined human resource function—among other things, to treat with one of the issues that have tended to fall through the cracks, the issue of manpower planning in the public service.

But we also recognize and accept that the issue of the Service Commissions also needs to be addressed. I am sure hon. Senators would recall that we have already put out for comment proposals relating to the Police Service Commission which signals some of our vision in that regard a vision for these commissions becoming audit bodies, becoming bodies for appeal, while we delegate to managers, with appropriate safeguards, the authority and responsibility for functioning as managers in the human resource area, as well as other areas.

Even while that process is proceeding, we have continued dialogue with the Chairman and members of the Public Service Commission to treat with issues of delegation within the context of the existing law.

It is clear that the legal environment within which the public service operates also needs to be treated. Therefore, we have spent time through this year identifying that the issue of the revision of rules and regulations will form a key part of our public service reform activity. In a sense, that work has slowed somewhat as we seek to ensure that the regulations we write are indeed totally consistent with the new human resource management vision. The drafters have in fact prepared first drafts of the Fire Service Regulations, and are fairly advanced with the Police Service Regulations and as well with the Prison Service

Regulations. All of them are now being subjected to scrutiny to ensure that our legal drafts-people are, in fact, consistent with a human resource management philosophy and direction. That work is continuing and we believe that in 1994 we shall begin to see the fruits of that, in terms of matters coming before us here in the Parliament.

**10.20 a.m.**

We also signalled that we would look at the issue of performance appraisal. On page 5 of my budget contribution of last year, I talked then about the performance appraisal system, the testing which we are carrying on in the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources and I said then that the test would proceed until June 1993, at which time we will review it and start introduction into the wider public service. As that test proceeded, we recognized that we needed, perhaps, to spend a full appraisal period and not a truncated period, as was being proposed for the testing.

The first appraisals using the new instruments were therefore done in October/November of this year in the Planning Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources. There are some revisions that are being made as a result of that. Cabinet, a couple of weeks ago, took a decision to again hire a consultant to work from here to 1994 to introduce that new instrument in the rest of the public service. So that by the end of 1994, we would have done the training, the establishment of standards, the establishment of the manual in all of the public service so that the first set of appraisals could be done, hopefully, early in 1995.

Again, let us recognize what is involved here. We are moving to a state where we are using standards as a basis for performance, because if we are to talk about productivity and efficiency, we have to do it against a background of clear standards. We are also moving from a state where one's Confidential Report may have been written and one knew not what was said, to one where consultation and involvement become absolute essentials as part of that appraisal process. That is a culture shift, in fact, to use Sen. Mansoor's words, and that is a culture shift that cannot happen overnight. We are taking our time in a participatory way to put in a modern performance-appraisal system for the public service of Trinidad and Tobago. That is our commitment and that is what we are working towards in 1994. What has happened in these two years? We have laid the groundwork. We are clear now on the system; we are clear on the manual; we have tested it in a

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ministry, and we are about to move to the rest of the public service. That is how one proceeds in changing cultures.

Then we deal with our other vision which has to do with a new compensation management system in the public service. Again, I had articulated in my last budget presentation that the Government intended to review the entire system of classification and compensation within the public service. I signalled then our intention to have the Central Tenders Board award a tender for a consultant to do that work. I also signalled then that given the nature and the size of the public service, that task will take somewhere in the region of 18 months for completion.

In December 1992, the Central Tenders Board awarded a contract to the firm of KPMG Peat Marwick for that activity. The real work relating to the introduction of that new job-evaluation system began in April/May of 1993. What does that first stage of the work involve? Again, let us understand that we are beginning now to treat with an area of activity in the public service that has not been treated with since 1966, in a situation where, perhaps, normally in organizations one would review classification systems every five years or so. We have gone for almost 30 years without a full-scale review.

It became important, therefore, for the first phase of that exercise to go through the task of fully sensitizing public servants to what that job evaluation exercise was about, to training people in the public service to ensure that transfer of that technology takes place between the consultant and the public servants. Over the last nine months or so, therefore, some 24 resource persons have been trained—persons who will not only be able to work with the consultants, but who will also be able to manage the system once it is put in the public service, public servants from varying ministries and departments, who will not only be able to function in the new centralized agency, but who will function in the line ministry, recognizing what we are doing. Twenty-four of them have completed that training. Another 41 persons have been trained to serve as resource persons who, therefore, can assist in terms of questionnaire distribution and explanation to public servants as the questionnaires go out to collect data about people's jobs.

More than that, we embarked on a process of, firstly, developing a video presentation on job evaluation and showing that to public servants. Over the period September to November of this year we held some 98 sessions with public servants, in which it is estimated that some 33,000 public servants were exposed to what job evaluation is and what it meant to them; the sharing of a vision, the



participation, as core features of this reform activity; 33,000 public servants who represent over 80 per cent of those persons who would be affected by this job evaluation exercise, using technology, using a media of communication—and you know that this Government is committed to using the range of media communication as it seeks to invite people to participate. This was one approach, a video which allowed public servants to understand the job evaluation exercise and to become part of it.

**Sen. Hosein:** Could the Minister give way? Mr. Vice-President, I wonder whether the Minister could give us the cost of this video that he is talking about.

**Sen. The Hon. G. Draper:** Mr. Vice-President, that is all built into the cost of the exercise and it is in the budget estimates. But let me point out that the very structuring to manage this job evaluation exercise involves a management committee—a steering committee on which unions are represented. All of the unions which will be affected by this are part of that steering committee. It also involves job evaluation committees, again, which include union representation. So that, again, there is the involvement, the participation, for a critical piece of work which will lead to reclassification for the public service. The compensation management piece is just one other.

We also have to deal, if we are to talk about changing culture and about efficiency in the public service, with the business of skills, and in particular with the issue of management skills in the public service. I indicated in my last budget contribution that we intended to embark on a process of management development activity in the public service which would ultimately seek to ensure that all those who attain the top-most posts in the public service are trained in management.

During 1993 we conducted two programmes for middle and senior managers in the public service. The first group graduated in July, coming through a 13-module programme in management. If one looks at it, it really is akin to an MBA programme—13 modules of one week each, for persons just below the level of permanent secretary. The first group completed in July; the second group have now completed half of their 13-module programme and will complete the rest in early 1994. It is interesting to note in passing that one of the 24 persons who graduated from that first group, has, in fact, now been promoted to act as permanent secretary.

So that the building-in of issues relating to succession planning, to ensuring that we prepare people for that is there. Let us recognize that while we can talk

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about the importance of restructuring the Service Commissions, we cannot just do that without ensuring that in the line we have the skills to carry out those functions which will be delegated. So we have to do things in tandem, and what we are doing is just that—the holistic approach that Sen. Mansoor alluded to, a number of things going on at one and the same time.

**10.30 a.m.**

During 1993, as well, we launched our programme of training for principals and vice-principals. We have now completed three groups of principals and vice-principals and in 1994 our action calls for complete training for all principals and vice-principals in the secondary school system.

During 1993, as well, we began the programme of management development for persons in the protective services; persons in the first division of the police service, fire service and prison service, and senior officers in the defence force. The first group of those persons completed their training just about one month ago.

As we look back over our management activities in 1993, we see that we have been able to expose some 182 senior public servants to high level, high quality management development activity. This is the kind of preparation we need for this innovative, efficient, international bureaucracy to manage the transformation in Trinidad and Tobago, and this is the foundation that we are laying.

What have we done in these two years? We have prepared 182 of our senior public service managers to take on the mantle of that new public service task.

I am sorry that I have to go back to my friend Sen. Mansoor; I know he has some difficulty with the “yellow books”, but if one goes through the estimates, one would see some interesting things when one looks at training allocations for 1994.

One would find, for instance, that the Industrial Court has received an increase in its estimates for training from \$2,000 to \$30,000; the Ministry of National Security's allocation has moved from \$517,000 to \$1.1 million; the Ministry of Education has moved from \$30,000 to \$124,000 for its staff; the Ministry of Health, from \$650,000 to \$4 million; the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs, from \$8,500 to \$18,500—in short, a significant increase over that training Head for public servants. A tangible manifestation of the commitment we have to human resource development in the public service, translated into estimates for 1994.

We are on a holistic path, so there is more, much more. There is, for instance, work in the area of the human resource information system. Sen. Wade Mark, in another contribution, in looking at the Auditor General's Report, has alluded to issues relating to overpayment to public servants. The last Ombudsman's Report, which was laid in this House last week, again, recounts not only some overpayment, but concerns about the length of time some persons have had to wait to get their terminal benefits, gratuities, pensions and so forth.

What is the situation? While, in large measure we have put in computerized systems to deal with the payroll function in the public service, we have not done the same thing for the other human resource management functions. Therefore, to search for a person's record of service in the public service involves a search through, perhaps, hundreds of files to follow their day-to-day movement through the public service. Therefore, the human resource information system, which we are seeking to put in would treat with these issues.

In my contribution to the last budget debate, I indicated that we had begun to introduce a system developed by the National Information System Centre, called PERSIS; a system where we would capture data of all sorts in respect of persons in the public service, which included their job related data and their performance related data. While that work has been continuing, it has been somewhat slower than we would have liked.

The Central Tenders Board has now awarded a contract which would allow us to experiment with a new system in the Ministry of Finance which is an integrated human resource management and payroll system with persons' record of service in the public service to improve efficiency, service to public servants and accountability. The end result of that—and we are confident that it would work—would be that some of those issues that we see in the Auditor General's Reports and in the Ombudsman's Reports should be things of the past, because we would now have computerized data which locks in payroll data with persons' record of service in the public service to improve efficiency, service to public servants and accountability.

Again, these systems cannot just be taken and dropped; there is need for training and preparation for their introduction. During 1993, therefore, we have continued the work of collecting data and we have moved to the point where we have had the Central Tenders Board award a tender which allows us to fast track, if you will, the information system relating to human resource management.

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More than this, let me also indicate that as we prepared ourselves for the 1994 Budget it became more and more important for us to be able to have some sense of the size, structure and configuration of the public service. You may also recall that last year, in making my contribution I alluded to the fact that towards the end of 1993, utilizing a range of data from strategic plans for some of the work on job evaluation and the information system activity, we would be in a position to begin making clear judgments about what the size and structure of the public service really ought to look like.

In the last two months, we sought to fast track some of that—in fact, we have almost completed that, which now gives us age profiles of persons and profiles of occupational categories in the public service and which provides us with a basis to plan and to make some judgments about the size and structure of the public service.

To do that, required interrogation of about four different data bases in the public service. We spent time in the last couple of months, working at that so we would be in a better position to make informed judgments about what the size and structuring of the public service ought to look like from 1994 onwards. I shall make some other comments about that in a while. That, too, has happened in 1993.

Then we turn to yet another element of our caring for persons who work in the public service—a proposal we had made, and I reiterated—that we intended to introduce an Employee Assistance Programme in the Ministry of Education, a programme using that ministry as a pilot which would allow persons who needed it, access to counselling services.

I said in my contribution to the 1993 Budget debate that during 1993 a contract would have been awarded to a consultant to begin that work of putting the Employee Assistance Programme in place. In October a consultant was, in fact, hired and in December the training for supervisors in that ministry began. A steering committee has been put in place to manage that process in the Ministry of Education.

Their own action plan, which formed one of the bases for the budget, indicates that by April, 1994 the activities and procedures would have been completed so that there would be a clear Employee Assistance policy statement; that in the first quarter, crisis intervention services would be available to employees on a 24-hour basis; that there would be established central EAP offices in Port of Spain, Sangre

Grande, San Fernando and Tobago; that a system of referral would be developed; that by the end of that first quarter supervisors and union representatives would have been trained to recognize employees' need for assistance, and a working relationship would have been established with a range of agencies.

This programme would allow not only the 15,000 or so employees of the Ministry of Education to have access, but, their families as well. So if we are very conservative and we talk about three or four people to each person there, we are talking about EAP services being offered to 60,000 persons during 1994. The groundwork had to be done before we arrived at this stage. Even the change in the culture to allow public servants to understand that it is all right to seek counselling service, had to be done. But, again, you recognize that we are doing it with due reference to participation, to involvement, but providing a service to our public servants, which ultimately would have them perform in a more efficient way.

**10.40 a.m.**

**Sen. W. Mark:** Mr. Vice-President, on a point of clarification. As the Minister is on the point of caring and sharing, could he indicate to us what has happened to the long-promised pension plan for the 33,000 daily-rated employees in the government service, and whether he is taking action to ensure that these workers are in fact given a proper pension scheme?

**Sen. The Hon. G. Draper:** I trust that there is some communication taking place between Sen. Wade Mark and his union colleagues. I shall deal with that in due course, but that too, has been worked on. I shall come to that. Have no fear. This is a complete contribution.

Let me now turn to what at times seemed to have been a vexed problem in this Senate—the issue of the physical environment in which public servants operate: the issue of accommodation. That too, we took on board. In my contribution to the previous budget, I said that in fact, at the urging of the trade unions, we had placed accommodation high on our priority. We have identified a number of crisis buildings which needed repair and, generally, the need for us to treat with improved accommodation for public servants.

**Sen. W. Mark:** Does he mean Algico?

**Sen. The Hon. G. Draper:** Yes! The purchase of Algico is one of the approaches we took to ensure that public servants had better accommodation. We are proud of it. We are proud of the fact that we did it in a manner consistent with

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laws, rules and regulations in Trinidad and Tobago. We did more than that. I have already made the commitment that we would lay the relevant papers on the Table, so there is no need for side comments.

We also indicated that within the context of our financial resources we have begun the task of resuscitating some government buildings, recognizing that public servants do in fact work in some buildings which perhaps are close to 100 years old, such as many of the Inland Revenue Offices outside Port of Spain, and post offices, which are in extremely old buildings.

During 1993 my staff and I paid visits to a number of those offices. Recognize what we are saying here. We are going to public servants where they are to see them on site. It is not a question of staying somewhere and assuming. It is a question of being there and seeing first hand. We went with officials from the Ministry of Works and Transport and other people who can immediately begin to take action to treat with badly constructed buildings, or problem buildings.

In that regard, over 1993, we were able to deal with renovations of one sort or another, to buildings such as the Mayaro administration building, Rio Claro District Revenue Office, Arima District Revenue Office, Mayaro Police Station, Rio Claro Police Station and the Princes Town Police Station. In that regard, we were able to move the Princes Town Post Office to other accommodation and renovate that post office to provide some measure of relief to the police officers in Princes Town. We also dealt with the Princes Town Inland Revenue Office and the Couva Police Station. There are more that need to be addressed and we shall address them. Over 1993, this is what we have been able to do.

The 1994 estimates provide for the Office of the Prime Minister, Public Service Reform—about \$1.9 million to continue work in that regard. The Public Sector Investment Programme, identifies the Tunapuna Administrative Complex as one of the projects which would get underway in 1994, an administrative complex which would house a number of government offices including the magistrates' court, Inland Revenue and other offices. Cabinet has directed that discussions continue with NIPDEC with regard to the building of a new industrial court in Port of Spain, and an administrative complex in Chancery Lane, San Fernando.

All these things, in recognition of the fact that the physical environment is one critical element in allowing public servants to function effectively. We also

signalled that arising out of the report of the public service accommodation task force, we would have sought to treat with the portfolio of government houses.

During 1993, arising out of valuations and public advertisements, we sold a number of those houses. Based on valuations, we estimated that the houses we had put up would provide for us about six—

**Sen. Mahadeo:** I thought before the hon. Minister went on to other offices in the public service—he was under the topic of police stations and other buildings that were going to be remodelled and redesigned. The assurance that I had from the hon. Minister of National Security on Friday last, was that I should feel very happy because plans are on the drawing board for a new administration building with all the perks, for the Eastern Division Police Station, particularly the one at Sangre Grande. I heard nothing addressed by Sen. Draper on that. I am beginning to get a little worried this morning.

**Sen. The Hon. G. Draper:** Mr. Vice-President, may I assure Sen. Mahadeo that this is a team. Therefore, when one part of the team makes a commitment, it is a team commitment. I really do not need to repeat what the Minister has already said.

**Sen. Mahadeo:** Thank you very much. I am very happy that *Hansard* takes it up.

**Sen. The Hon. G. Draper:** I would repeat it for you. Yes! The commitment which the hon. Minister of National Security made with regard to Sangre Grande is there. It is a commitment.

**Sen. Huggins:** Quite obviously, you did not believe me.

**Sen. The Hon. G. Draper:** I was just about to make the point that based on the valuation for those buildings we sold, we anticipated an income of \$6 million. In fact, we have realized \$8 million.

We intend to continue putting more of that property on the market, recognizing a responsibility to the market and also a responsibility to ensure that valuations and proper procedures are followed. The whole process is being managed by the Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance Company. In 1994, we intend to continue that. That too, in the area of accommodation, when one asks: What has happened in 1993? We have begun to move on the issue of accommodation, the physical environment for public servants. We cannot do it all in one year. We can do it as our resources permit.

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Let me now turn to another area which we recognize needs to be addressed. It relates to the paper—which in fact I laid on the Table, earlier this morning—the issue of procurement. We have recognized—and in fact in an earlier debate I had indicated—that the Cabinet had received a consultant's report relating to the functioning of the Central Tenders Board.

I think at that time, in response to a question from my good friend Sen. Michael Mansoor who asked why we were only looking at the Central Tenders Board, I said to him then that the consultant's report referred to institutional strengthening at the Central Tenders Board, and that that was where our focus was. This Government listens. Cabinet subsequently established a committee which was given wide enough terms of reference which allowed them to go outside the then recommendations of the consultant to look at procurement, generally, in the public service.

The consultant himself took part in some of those deliberations. The result is the report which we have today. Cabinet has agreed in principle to this report. Essentially, the recommendations call for the decentralization of the procurement function. We already have decentralization with regard to the Ministry of National Security, where they have special procurement procedures. We are recommending that model be now used for all ministries and departments in the public service. Decentralizing procurement in our view, would lead to efficiency, but it would need to have put in place measures for accountability.

We recognize that there may be some goods and services whose nature suggest that they ought to be purchased in bulk to get some of the economies of bulk purchase. The proposal therefore, is to retain a central function for those things. We are also asking the Ministry of Works and Transport to come up with a set of proposals to deal with construction services.

Over the next month the committee has been set the task of coming up with an implementation programme to put this new procurement system in place. Again, if we are talking about an international standard, efficient and responsive public service, then we would have to deal with issues of decentralization in this way.

I would say to Sen. Dean, who raised a concern about small business last Friday, that whilst small business is not now taken up in the document in the way in which he raised it, the document does in fact envisage some preference for local companies. I see no difficulty in getting the committee to focus on the issue of small business as well. I think that is a point well taken.



**10.50 a.m.**

Mr. Vice-President, the overall thrust is a thrust towards decentralizing this function, as we are decentralizing other functions. Over 1993, we continued the task of quiet, patient examination of those systems and we have come today with new visions and new directions for procurement in our public service. It will require us to come to Parliament for certain legislative changes and that we will do in 1994.

**Mr. Vice-President:** The hon. Senator's speaking time has expired.

*Motion made,* That the hon. Senator's speaking time be extended by 30 minutes. [*Sen. J. Rahael*]

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Sen. The Hon. G. Draper:** Thank you, Mr. Vice-President and hon. Senators.

On the issue of information systems, generally, over 1993, we continued the task of providing new technology for the public service. Some weeks ago the Central Tenders Board awarded a tender for the purchase of some 70 personal computers for different parts of the public service. The first set of these computers have already begun to be put into the public service.

We have had the benefit of an information systems consultant working with us, setting standards and establishing an information technology policy for the public service. That consultant has already had agreement with us on a number of applications, including the human resource application, a finance application, an education application and electronic mail, for which we will develop project teams, for implementation in 1994.

The court system has also seen significant strides made in the area of information technology. The introduction of the Computer Aided Transcription Service, the computerization of some of the records of the Supreme Court, all progressed during 1993 and will continue during 1994.

Another of the areas that Sen. Mansoor has raised from time to time is the issue of improved auditing and accountability. I had indicated in my last budget contribution that the Auditor General's Department had taken that on board, and we agree that comprehensive auditing is an element of auditing which must become a norm in the public service. I quote from page 24 of the *Auditor*

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*General's Five-year Strategic Plan* in which they state that, for years four and five:

"The performance for value-for-money and comprehensive auditing, throughout the Public Service ..."

will be a reality in that period. They have done some. Required are training and the development of manuals.

Over the last year all of the officers in the Organization and Management Division, some staff in the Auditor General's Department, some in the Treasury function, have been trained in management auditing. A management audit manual has been developed which, therefore, can be used for management auditing in the public service. I know that, given his own professional background, Sen. Mansoor understands that we need a range of professional inputs for management auditing; we need training and we need clear manuals that people can use. These things have happened during 1993.

I have already quoted from three strategic plans, all of them to underscore that the issue of strategic planning has indeed begun to take hold in the public service and that we are, in fact, in a position now to use them as we are for planning for the budget. We use them. Cabinet, in reviewing the whole business of administrative reports, agreed recently that by March 31 each year, all ministries will submit to Cabinet, reports on their previous year's activities which, among other things, would include achievements against their strategic plans, as well as reports on the cost of outputs and activities. It may well be that this could form the basis on which we could move to improve some of the budget documents which have concerned—I think quite rightly so—Sen. Mansoor.

**Sen. Prof. Spence:** Could I ask the hon. Minister whether those reports will be made public documents? In the "bad" old colonial days, each department submitted a report and they were very valuable documents for the general public.

**Sen. The Hon. G. Draper:** While the Cabinet Note did not include that, I think that Sen Spence's comment is a valid one, that there were in fact administrative reports which were made public. This is just an improvement on those reports and I see no reason why, as we get into them, they cannot be made public. What we are doing is improving the quality of the reporting so that we truly get performance data. That is what we have been fine-tuning with our strategic plan work.

Over the last couple of weeks, we have been engaged in discussions with the NUGFW relating to a number of matters which affect that union and which have formed a basis for elements in this budget. It includes, for instance, a basis on which severance payments have been estimated, because we have an agreement, in principle, with the NUGFW, for the reduction of the retirement age of daily-paid workers from 65 to 60. We had begun our estimates, assuming that we would have gone with a VSEP for persons in the daily-paid establishment between the ages of 55 and 59. At the insistence of NUGFW, that has now been extended to age 50. Assumptions relating to those things are in the estimates.

The pension plan which has also formed an agreement in principle between the Government and NUGFW, has continued to be the subject of discussions between the CPU and that union, and it continues to be a commitment of the Government to provide a pension plan for daily-paid workers.

The estimates have also assumed some other measures to contain expenditure, which include a close look at the whole business of overtime in the public service. They include developing a more liberal policy with respect to grant of leave without pay. They also include having all ministries and departments submit to Cabinet, by the end of January, a more detailed review of all the operations within their ministries to determine where we may be able to restructure and, perhaps, save on some expenditure. The Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources has already identified some of its operations which it feels could be treated with.

I go through all of these things to make the point that there is vision, that there is work, but accepting Sen. Mansoor's point, we need to be holistic, if we are changing culture, we need to take time. So, let us ask some questions and see where we are.

We say that we want to change the culture in the public service, we agree and we have started. We have started, recognizing that changing cultures is a holistic long-term process. We say that we want to improve efficiency in the public service and we improve efficiency by bringing in new structures—Central Tenders Board, Organization and Management Division, Ministry of Health proposals; by bringing in new performance measures; by efficiency audits, by bringing in new skills—the whole management development activity—by new technology—the whole computerization thrust. That will lead to improved efficiency.

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We say we want to improve accountability, and we agree. We do that through the utilization of our strategic planning approach, through the management and comprehensive audit approach, which we have accepted. We do that as well through the introduction of activity-based costing, which we will do in 1994.

We say that we want to improve service, and during 1993 we have dedicated much of our energy to training customer relations staff in the Service Commission Department, in Treasury, in Customs, in establishing some 90 customer contact officers throughout the public service with a mandate to manage quality service in their ministries and departments. We bolstered that in 1994 by identifying four ministries or departments, where we will target specifically for improved quality service. Those are the Post Office, the Licensing Department, Inland Revenue and the Registrar General's Department. It is not that we are not looking at quality service in other places, but we felt that, in 1994, we would focus on those to provide quality service.

**11.00 a.m.**

We will continue utilizing and, in fact deepening the total quality management approach to helping the public service become more quality conscious and able to deliver better quality to its clientele. The vision for public service reform, speaks to a public service that is client oriented; it speaks to a public service that is performance oriented; it speaks to a public service that is concerned with the development of its members; it speaks to a public service that cares for its members.

In short, our vision speaks in fact to the same vision that was articulated by Sen. Mansoor a need for change in culture, a need for improved efficiency, a need for improved effectiveness, a need for accountability and a need for improved levels of productivity. All of these things we embrace as part of our vision, and we will continue in that regard.

Mr. Vice-President, I return, in fact, almost to the point on which I began. I began by referring to Sen. Mansoor, who, in addition to saying these things, pointed to the importance of leadership, and communication. As we proceeded in public service reform, we have been conscious of the importance, both of participation and of communication. So that whereas in 1992, in that first phase, we treated with over 30,000 public servants in the context of retreats, sensitizing them to public service reform, in 1993, in our job evaluation exercise, we also treated with over 30,000 public servants as they dealt with that element of

intervention. We have bolstered that communication and participation by publishing now, on a quarterly basis, Public Service Reform bulletins and have bolstered that by utilizing the electronic media—television and radio—to produce special programmes on public service reform, all to ensure that the vision is shared and there is an understanding of the level of participation that is required for success.

Sen. Mansoor, as I said, also spoke about the importance of leadership. This Government commits itself to continuing to provide the leadership that is required for reform in the public service, but the leadership, like the vision, has to be shared. The Minister of Finance in identifying one of the weaknesses in the 1994 Budget, alluded to our societal tendency to negativism and disputation. If we are to talk about carrying this country forward, then we have to be constructive in whatever we say. We cannot see ourselves always in a negative way. We cannot allow negativism to become such a part of our psyche that it turns inwards and destroys us. Leadership, Mr. Vice-President, requires us always to provide positive, even though we may have to be critical, constructive criticism as we carry our country forward.

I trust, that if they heard nothing else, the Opposition Benches heard the last minute of my contribution, because they, too, are leaders in the society. They, too, have to accept that responsibility. They, too, have to behave in a manner befitting of leaders. That, therefore, is our vision, the public service vision within the context of the broader vision as enunciated by the Minister of Finance in his budget presentation. We feel that we have contributed over these two years in the movement “down the road” to that. We will continue to do that. Whether we do as the Public Service Association did yesterday, and had an interfaith service which had an interesting theme, “Working together for a brighter tomorrow”—I sense that the message is getting through. I applaud it and look forward to continuing to work with unions and the public service in realizing this brighter vision for the public service of Trinidad and Tobago.

I thank you.

**Sen. Martin Daly:** Mr. Vice-President, it is something of an honour to follow that incisive and informative contribution of Sen. Draper. But as pretty as the Government's plans are for public service reform, there are some reality checks that will have to be introduced into this debate. May I say at the outset, that the

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pretty plans of the Minister will come to nought in the absence of a cohesive policy from this Government on unemployment.

The tendency to disputation and negativism of which the Government complains, will not be reduced unless the Government deals fairly and honestly with the population at large. One of the things I will be complaining about in this budget debate is that effectiveness and efficiency have been emphasized but nowhere have I seen honesty and fairness emphasized. Indeed, I have not seen honesty and fairness mentioned at all. If I could deal straightaway with this paper that has been laid by Minister Draper this morning on the public procurement process, I would say that it is an advance and, indeed, it is something for which I have been agitating in the Senate—that we should have sensible, open and fair procurement procedures.

Having looked at this document, and seeing that it is going to be used for ministries and departments and that other things are contemplated for the arrangements with regard to the award of construction and engineering type projects for the consideration of the Cabinet, I should like to invite the Government, through Minister Draper, to give me a firm and unequivocal commitment that while the Ministry of Works and Transport is doing its job, this Appendix A of procedures to be observed in the procurement of goods and services for the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force and protective services, would be applied to other projects where national security is a significant factor.

More than that, I should like an undertaking from the Government that these Appendix A procedures would be applied to Project Pride from day one. That is a commitment I should like to hear from this Government, if I am to take at face value, as I am inclined to do, the assurances given by the Minister this morning. We nearly had a third coup in this country a few weeks ago, when at the last minute the Government agreed with us to take back the airport, at least, as far as national security is concerned, from a bunch of bureaucrats and persons who are not accountable to anyone in this country. That Project Pride, despite all the pretty yellow advertisements that appeared in the newspaper requires the application of procedures of this kind.

If the Government is serious, I should like to see that undertaking emerge in the course of this debate. It will take some guts to give that undertaking, having regard to the fact that one of the things that are specified in this Appendix A is disclosure of interest. I should like to see the Government have the guts to apply

this Appendix A to Project Pride including all the requirements relating to disclosure of interest, and then we can take everything that has been told this morning at face value and move on.

That is a useful departure point for me to say something about what I conceive as a flaw in this budget's philosophy in the absence of any restatement of the requirements of honesty or what is now the jargon word, 'transparency' in public dealings. In many places effectiveness has been stressed, but I should like to see honesty and transparency emphasized. Fortunately, having regard to the incisive presentation of the Minister and the fact that he has given us some draft guidelines, I need not spend much more time on this aspect of my presentation, because I think that my concerns can be met easily.

**11.10 p.m.**

There is a great danger in this country—and it affects not only Project Pride, but also the entire divestment programme—because we are going to go from NIC to PIC. That is to say, we are going to move from National Investment Corporation, or whatever NIC stands for, to PIC—and you know you can have pick a pan; pick a pocket, pick a handbag; pick a purse. I am concerned that we do not move from NIC to PIC. In my situation, I am suggesting that PIC could stand for—unless the Minister puts these things in place quickly—"Powerbrokers Investment Fee". I do not want this country to move from NIC to PIC.

Many of my anxieties have been quelled by the appearance of this document this morning, and I hope the Minister will consider the undertaking which I have requested so that I need spend time no longer on my concern that we may be moving, in the course of the divestment programme and other projects, from NIC to PIC. It is a very real concern in this country as to who might be picked in the course of the divestment programme.

It is very interesting that Sen. Mansoor in effect described the budget figures as unreliable. No doubt—although whatever rank he is, the Minister of Finance is not here today—he will take that up as incisively as Minister Draper has taken up some of Sen. Mansoor's other points.

I also need not spend much time on the lack of a cohesive policy on unemployment. It is something to which I referred in the budget debate last year and I do not see that the Government has made any improvement in that position this year, other than a ritual glance in the direction of the tourism industry. I am

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very disappointed about that and hope that we can hear something more about a cohesive approach to unemployment in this country.

It is said that in the course of these debates we must offer solutions. My colleagues on these Benches have done so and I should just like to reinforce what they have said. I am quite sure that Sen. Spence, in due course, will remind us about those aspects of agriculture that are labour intensive. Sen. Rooks has pointed out already that in the energy sector it takes millions of dollars to produce one job. So that the suggestion in the budget, and the boasts about the arrival of Enron, Nucor and Unocal and so on, take us nowhere in the debate on unemployment. We have to examine prospects in agriculture, which I am sure Sen. Spence will do. My colleague, Sen. Rooks, has spoken of the free zone and I am astounded that we have not heard any recent statement from the Government on the possibilities of the free zone, even if only to reject them and tell us why. We constantly hear from Jamaica the numbers of persons who are being employed in Jamaica in the free zone. Therefore, I should like to hear something from the Government on that.

So, collectively on these Benches we have identified agriculture and the free zone as possibilities for long-term employment, matters to which the Government has paid little or no attention.

The ritual glance in the direction of tourism, is nothing more than that, because the experts will tell you that the peanuts which this Government is allocating to marketing and other budgets required for tourism, are not going to do anything to put Trinidad and Tobago on the map; even the special event tourism, which it is generally accepted we must employ if we are to expand the tourism sector. I have absolutely no faith in the Government's plans in the short term, or even in the medium term, in relation to tourism, because I do not think it has been thought out. I think its efforts would be better directed towards agriculture and the free zone.

There is something else that is very alarming. There is a well-established activity in this country which employs people and embraces the entrepreneurial skill. It is an activity called street vending and it is an activity in which we are embarked on a course of crushing. I want to question whether the Government has thought out carefully the contribution of street vending to employment and the welfare of citizens in this country. I am going to be arguing a case, that in addition to agriculture, the free zone and whatever the Government has in mind for



tourism—in which I have very little faith—we have to take another look at this question of street vending.

I want it to be quite clear that nothing I am about to say is in support of any alleged right to vend on the street; that is a matter for the court. I repeat: nothing I am about to say is in support of any alleged right to vend on the street, that is a matter for the court. But over the last two weeks I have seen horrendous and frightening pictures of what appears to me to be average citizens locked in physical and emotional confrontation with the police service, and I do not like it. It causes me, therefore, to re-examine, from what little social perspective I can bring to bear on this debate, what we are really doing about street vending.

I suggest that we have to find a place for this activity in a structured and ordered way in the course of an attack on the unemployment problem. I repeat—in a structured and ordered way. I can take care of myself if anyone is so foolish as to suggest that I am saying that street vending must be tackled other than in a structured and ordered way.

I missed Sen. Rahael's contribution, but I understand that he had charts. I do not want to trespass on Sen. Rahael's idea, but I have been doing this in the course of addresses I have been making to other venues and I would like all those who have the *Trinidad Guardian* of Saturday December 11, 1993, to examine these two photographs, where a male member of the society who says he is trying to earn an honest living rather than to 'thief', is in the grip of two policemen, one of whom appears to be clutching his ear. Then there is a woman—I am told that it is sexist now to call them "ladies"—who is equally in a physical confrontation and on whose face the distraught is totally obvious.

Then, as if that is not enough, in the *Express* of December 11, 1993, we see a physical confrontation between someone—I do not know if he is a vendor—and an armed policeman, and the policeman has his finger in the crook of the weapon, where I believe the firing mechanism is located. What would have happened in this country, if this gun that was pointed level went off in the course of the melee?

Then there is a young man half in and half out of a police van. And then there are general scenes of turbulence that look like the miners strike or other rough strikes in the United Kingdom or the United States.

### **11.20 a.m.**

Are we going to say that this is a situation of black and white and, therefore, the law must be enforced regarding it? My answer is "no". I think as part of an

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approach to unemployment we have to take a creative look at this question of street vending. Because if this gun goes off in this melee, Sen. Draper's brilliance would come to nothing, because what will be left after this will not be amenable to strategic plans and computerization of records. That is why I want to give the Government a reality check. Therefore, I think the time is ripe for this problem to be settled in this way.

I emphasize, I think it ought to be settled because it is a contribution to the solution of the unemployment problem. I say that if, either by a contract document or a licence, or ultimately, as a result of the decision of the court it is formally established that there is no legal right to vend on the streets, and it is a matter of discretion of the appropriate licensing authority, we can move forward; and we can move forward on these conditions. I repeat: it is on these conditions—express term on the part of the vendors and express acknowledgment that there is no legal right to vend in the streets, contrary to the laws of the country. An express recognition that they are being placed in appropriate places in the cities and towns in Trinidad and Tobago and require a licence. That licence cannot be obtained by anyone who does not have a regular, provable immigration status and a Board of Inland Revenue file number.

That licence must be confined to a specific season for two reasons. Firstly, the argument is that certain times of the year are the most beneficial to the vendors and, secondly, because licensing them seasonally will continue to reinforce the point that it is a matter of discretion and, therefore, in the control of the Licensing Authority. My suggestion for the season is December 1 to whenever Ash Wednesday may fall.

None of this, at the risk of repetition, am I proposing on the basis of any alleged legal right to vend. But the time is ripe for a settlement of this problem. There have been two judgments of the court so far, in my respectful view, that have "prepared the pitch" for this type of approach. I also think it is important that an appropriate licensing authority be set up and that licensing authority must include people who are experienced in social work, so that they can help the licensing authority sort out the frauds from the genuine people.

It is also important that that licensing authority sort out, or arrive at a situation, where only one allocation of vending place is made per family. That is also important and that would also have to be an express term of the licence. But in my view, we cannot credibly go on with this because we have no alternative plan for

unemployment in this country. There is no way that we have the ability now, to say to any of these people who are genuine—I have no means of knowing how many of these people are genuine—but social workers and other persons involved in community work can sort that out.

We cannot credibly continue this because we cannot say to this person whose face is distorted and who is being held by the ear, "Well come off the streets and go and get a job in X place or Y place." We cannot credibly tell him that. Therefore if they are genuinely pursuing the right to earn a living we have to find a place in the sun for them. I repeat, Mr. Vice-President, on the appropriate conditions.

Of course, I would not pursue this, if I could see in this budget statement some credible policy on unemployment, but there is none and I will say nothing about the headlines in the *Express* today about models for the world. This is not a model for the world. Maybe, it will be investigated by people from abroad, but they will not be investigating it as a model for anything.

Let us get serious about unemployment, so that when Minister Draper reorganizes the public service in the way he says, we shall have a fair and orderly country. That is my position, Mr. Vice-President, on the question of unemployment. I do not see anything in this budget that is serious about a long-term solution to unemployment.

Of course, it is not only the question of providing jobs, it is a question of family planning, what they teach people in the schools, and what they make people's expectations to be. And I do not think the Government has properly—I know they have to cling to it and they must make market surveys about it, but I do not think they understood what motivated, as I believe I do, Sen. Rooks to find out about the cost of "Down the Road."

Every time they run that advertisement, whether it is a good exhortation or a bad exhortation, they raise expectations. These people cannot have any legitimate expectation arising out of such a public relations campaign in the present conditions. That is what is wrong about it. They cannot be exhorting persons who have the ability, training or wherewithal to join together for the good of the country when they have excluded—maybe by accident, because this is a long-time problem—or marginalized large sections of a restless, urban community. I invite the Government to take notice of that.

**Sen. W. Mark:** Sen. Rahael, rights for the venders!.

**Sen. M. Daly:** I want it to be absolutely clear that I am not suggesting that these places be found on the pavement, or that these people be allowed to abuse the proprietary rights of persons who have invested millions of dollars in the City of Port of Spain. I am not suggesting that for one moment.

But since we are talking about all these pedestrian precincts and we are throwing water on grass on Independence Square, then it means that we have space in the city in pedestrian walkways where some of these genuine—and I emphasize ‘genuine’—cases can be accommodated. I repeat that it is important to do so, because we do not have a credible position on unemployment providing an alternative to these people who are prepared to take this risk.

Mr. Vice-President, it involves entrepreneurial activity, because unless you are going to be cynical and say, "they tief everyting they sell," it involves entrepreneurial activity. It involves finding a supplier, negotiating the best price with the supplier, working out your mark-up, perhaps, sometimes on a daily basis. As the food gets rotten the price has to go down; if it is a Friday, pay-day, the price has to go up. It involves the most delicate assessment of market conditions. It is entrepreneurial activity and we are taking guns to it. I object to that.

Now, that leads me to the question of another lofty statement that was made in the budget. It is "the need for relative security and stability." I compliment the Minister of National Security on his budget presentation. He gave us much useful information about his attempts to deal with the international drug trade and I know the difficulties he has. One estimate is that the international drug trade causes US \$72 million a year to be laundered. Up against those kinds of resources we have a problem.

But we have a startling admission from the Minister. It is candid and I do not criticize him for it: "It is more effective to prosecute people abroad." But that is a frightening statement and it does not lead to any confidence in the relative atmosphere of security and stability in this country. Because it is not going to be practical to prosecute abroad, rapists, murderers, drunken drivers and the ordinary thieves who invade us every day. So we need to have a plan for that; and I am not satisfied that we have heard any plan for that. Maybe, if we can find an Australia, as the British did many years ago, we can send those people there, but short of that, we have to have a plan with an effective prosecution and we do not have one.

More than that the Attorney General whom I also compliment, for the speed and efficiency with which he dealt with the Pratt and Morgan decision, also has to be involved in that plan for effective prosecution and we do not see a plan for that either, from the perspective of the Ministry of Legal Affairs. Sending up all the murder cases for a quick trial is not going to solve the problem. Because all this means is that somebody else is being pushed off the list. I believe that this budget fails on the unemployment issue; I believe it fails on the question of an atmosphere of relative security and stability. We just do not have that. Lofty statements are made here about crime and the administration of justice but the budget fails to address these matters.

**11.30 a.m.**

I should like to read into the record, as quickly as I can—since Sen. Draper mentioned that the Courts and the Registrar General's Office were involved in some of his reforms—I have been writing and circulating to everyone who would listen, these particular suggestions for upwards of 10 years. Some of them, in a disguised way, found themselves into the *Gurley Report*.

My basic position is that the situation with the backlog of cases now is so bad that it is beyond ordinary human endeavour to clear it up. If, as part of the methods to control crime, about which the Minister of National Security has spoken, we are going to have more effective prosecutions and we are going to dispose of criminal cases in a way that the judges in London will not have to criticize us and remind us how much better it was in the colonial days, then we have got to face the fact that ordinary human endeavour is not going to clear up the backlog.

It is my proposal, and it remains my proposal, that a method must be used to remove from the list, cases that are more than five years old. Again, I am suggesting a process by which this can be done so that we can more effectively and in a timely way, conduct the prosecutions which the Minister of National Security has lamented cannot proceed. It is my suggestion, subject to the exception of more serious cases like murder, rape, armed robbery and drug offences, that all files on criminal cases that are more than five years old, should be called up by the DPP. He must start the process that does these things.

I am recommending this to our systems-minded Minister Draper. He must go through this process. The first step—are the witnesses still available? Second step—are the victims of the crime still insisting that these matters be prosecuted?

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Third step—can we arrive at a modest compensation fund which will compensate some of the victims of the less serious crimes as a quid pro quo for having these cases removed from the list? That is the only way we will clear up this backlog.

There are some things that I know I would not see in my lifetime. I know that we are going to go around this problem in all different ways. Gurley has brought us some new rules about if a case is dormant more than a certain time, kick it off the list, but it is subject to an application for reinstatement. So all that will be done is to increase the number of applications which are going to the Registry. The same process can be used in civil cases. First of all, in relation to cases against the state, the Attorney General can call up all the files in the way which I suggested.

Then in the other cases, it is my suggestion that we find two of the more robust judges—and we do have some and indeed we have some men of fantastic calibre such as Mr. Justice Alcade Warner, languishing in retirement, who could be re-appointed under the amendment to the Constitution to continue this task. Two of the more robust judges could be assigned to call up the two parties that are involved in the civil litigation and attempt to see whether there is room, either for settlement, or some way of getting the case off the list, such as finding out, as has frequently happened, whether the people have emigrated, whether they care any more, whether it is the lawyer keeping the matter on the list for the fees and one would be amazed at the results that these methods could produce.

I emphasize, Mr. Vice-President, that the nuts and bolts of this system would have to be carefully considered. In no way am I suggesting that we should unilaterally or forcibly outrage the sense of justice of a litigant or a victim of a crime.

I believe that Minister Draper is called the Government's cosmetologist and someone like himself, applying his cosmetology, could very easily—in fact, if we could get him through the law school in time, he is an ideal person to conduct the exercise—trade-off the more minor cases on the list in relation to some form of compensation, or because the matter really cannot be proceeded with and it is just wasting time to have these cases on the list.

There are many other things. Time is against my reading out the whole list. I am pleased to see—and I compliment the Minister of National Security on it—that forensic science methods, including the training of local pathologists, is high on his list of priorities. I suggest to him that we have to go one step further. We not only have to train pathologists—and this would help with unemployment as

well—we have got to train persons to be medical examiners, so that they can go to the scene of a serious crime and there collect the relevant evidence that would secure the conviction of the offender. We do not have medical examiners now who go on the scene.

They do not have to be fullfledged doctors. There are forensic science courses and forensic science type of training available where a whole fleet of people could be put on this training in order to go to the scene of a crime to collect the forensic evidence. No jury in Trinidad is going to convict anybody on the basis of a confession taken in the X, Y or Z police station at 3.00 o'clock in the morning, but if, of course, a medical examiner had been to the scene, he would find things he could identify scientifically that would tie the perpetrator of the crime to the crime that he is alleged to have committed, instead of all this stupidity about an eyewitness and who saw in the dark and what was said in a police station.

I want the Minister of National Security to go one step further. I do not want him to train only pathologists, I want him to start training some people to be medical examiners, or forensic examiners, if they cannot be called medical examiners, in the absence of their being doctors. I understand that the budget debate this year, par excellence, has turned into a skilfully managed account by this Government of some of its successes. We all understand that. From the time they dropped this blue book on the Table on Friday, everybody in the media scattered. There was no budget debate, according to the media, on Friday, when they dropped this blue book. But I know that is what they do and I compliment them on it.

But I want them to understand that when the Minister of National Security dropped the blue book and spoke about training pathologists and so forth, he was only scratching the surface of the problem. I am recommending he go further and train people to be forensic examiners. It was a good strategy but we have to examine it to see whether it is a valid strategy and whether it is going to carry the country forward.

When the Attorney General comes after lunch and makes a very reasonable and civilized response to the judgment of *Pratt and Morgan*, that, too, is commendable, but we must examine his plan, forgetting the Minister of National Security. Remember, they are all part of a team. *[Laughter]* We must examine the Attorney General's plans, forgetting the Minister of National Security, for the quick and effective prosecutions that he requires, as they are all part of the same team.

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All we are doing on these Benches, is trying to give some suggestions which they might examine in the fullness of time. Let us forget about this business of trying to convict people on the basis of eyewitness testimony and confessions in a police station. If these suggestions are taken seriously and the investigation of crime is gone about in a scientific manner, the exhibit cannot be bumped off or bought off. Once the forensic examiner has the fingernail, the part of the Banlon jersey, the piece of the man's pants, the mud on the shoe, the footprint or fingerprint, as the case may be, that cannot be bumped or bought off. That is there locked away for the time when the alleged perpetrator will be brought to the trial.

Then the only persons whose security they will need to be concerned about is the fleet of pathologists and local forensic examiners. I am quite sure that the Minister of National Security and the OSS, or whatever they are called, will be able to protect the medical examiners quite easily and we will have to worry far less about what happens to potential witnesses. So do not try it on me and say, you know, the problem is the bumping off of the witnesses and the buying off of the witnesses. Attack the problem scientifically. That is our recommendation, and I am sure that I will have the support of my colleagues on matters of this kind.

**11.40 a.m.**

So, you see, while we understand that the budget debate this year has been turned into a public relations—I would not say, carnival, because that suggests bacchanal—I would say it has been turned into a public relations fairground for the Government this year, and from the first ball, or the first stall that was erected in the fairground, which was the budget speech, we were being asked to share in the vision of the fairground. But there are flaws in the vision and we have to point these out.

Hence, within the areas in which I believe I have some competence to speak, such as the administration of justice, these are some of my suggestions for, not only making the fairground pretty—it is a very pretty fairground—but it must be an effective and honest fairground in which people can play honestly and be concerned that when they take part in an activity, the bingo board, or whatever it is, is not rigged against them. That is very, very important.

That is why I am so happy to see that these procurement procedures which would help us with the rigging of the stalls in the fairground, have seen the light of day. But test it out on PRIDE. Let us be real quick and efficient and let us test it out on PRIDE on January 1, 1994. Then I am quite sure you would not hear any



more murmurs from the Opposition Benches about anything, and you would not hear any more remarks about how men of the cloth vote when they come to exercise their civic duty in the Senate. I am quite sure we would not hear anything more about that. Because in this Government, with all its best intentions, there are one or two runaway horses. I cannot use the term, "loose cannon", because that is now reserved for other forms of activity.

But we have some runaway horses and we saw that in the debate on the Airports Authority (Amdt.) Bill, and we helped the Government with that Bill. Even the full weight of the Leader of Government Business was having problems with that runaway horse, so we added our little tug, too, and we were able to control it. But there are other runaway horses, and that is why I think it is important if we are setting targets for efficiency and effectiveness, that we set targets of honesty and transparency as well in the operations of this Government, particularly when you have a divestment programme and heavy foreign investment. But as I say, Sen. Draper, no doubt, in anticipation, came along today with his procurement procedures. Because as an objective man and not a longstanding career politician, he was, no doubt, able to see that particular flaw in the budget statement of his colleague.

I should like to turn now to the lofty statements about Trinidad and Tobago being a global city and a financial and business centre of the world. The first thing you are proposing to do in making Trinidad and Tobago the global city and the financial centre of the world is to expropriate, albeit temporarily, the disputed tax of an honest taxpayer. That is the first thing you are doing with the global city and the financial centre. So when you bring your Enrons and your Unocals and you get your small business going, and someone in the Objections Division who has escaped the rod of correction from Minister Draper, does, as they normally do, file the objection for three years, 11 months and 23 hours, and then reject it in the 24th hour and then you say there is a backlog in the tax appeal board so "I am going to expropriate the disputed tax," albeit temporarily, that is not a good sign for the global city and financial centre of the world. It is not a good sign for the global city and the financial and business centre of the world to have the pitched battles in the streets, to which I have been referring.

Then I am afraid there is the merger mess on the lawn and we really have to hose it down. I am astounded that in the proposed global city and financial and business centre of the region, we have not had a statement from the Minister of Finance on this stuff that I am seeing on the lawn. And we need a statement, not

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because the Minister must interfere with the regulators, but because we need to know the following things. Two of the banks concerned in the merger were under direct Central Bank control for a certain period. If, therefore, a continuing weakness in those banks was a reason—the banks under direct control—for the merger, then we must be told and we must be given an account of the Central Bank's stewardship of their direct control of two of those banks. That is reason number one.

Secondly, in no financial centre of the world can you lose 69 cents on a share by decree. That is what it is, decree. It is not a movement in the market; it is not a judgment of a court of competent jurisdiction; it is an administrative decree, and in no financial centre of the world—and I emphasize, I am choosing the example of the loss of 69 cents on a share because that is not a matter that is before the court. So the Stock Exchange has your share at one price and then you wake up the next morning and by administrative decree you had 69 cents wiped off your share price. That requires some explanation. If it is that you have got some independent evaluation that caused you to do that, then release it. If you have to take names or occasions or places out of it, you have to summarize it in some way, release it, but let me see why it is that these events have taken place. It must be released, even if it has to be guarded in that way.

Last, but by no means least, the country must certainly be told in the context of a budget debate, what is going to be the cost to the taxpayer of these shenanigans that have taken place in relation to these banks, because the shareholders could fend for themselves. They could go to court and do all kinds of things. They can call press conferences and go on "Clubs" in the morning, all sorts of things. But somebody has to pay the bill and it is no good saying, the Government is going to issue a note or something of that sort. If you issue a note, that is a liability, and it is a liability which, if it is called upon, will ultimately be a liability of the taxpayer; and I do not see Sen. Mansoor giving me a hard look so I must be getting the accounting details right. If there is a prospective liability of the taxpayer, then that, too, requires quantification and explanation as to why the taxpayer is exposed, even contingently, to that liability.

Then I hear it said—and this again is where we come to runaway horses—"well, of course, it is all the fault of the Parliament, because the Parliament does not give us the laws we require". So it is all our fault, including those of us who have come here to do public service. It is all our fault because we will not give, either the Airports Authority or the financial regulators the teeth that they require.

But I think this is an appropriate time to remind everyone that at all material times while these banks were operating, under the old Banking Act, which commenced in 1965—

**Mr. Vice-President:** The speaking time of the Senator has expired.

*Motion made,* That the Senator's speaking time be extended by 15 minutes.  
[*Sen. M. Mansoor*]

*Question put and agreed to.*

**11.50 a.m.**

**Sen. M. Daly:** Thank you very much, Mr. Vice-President.

Under the old Banking Act, which came into existence in 1965, the Inspector of Banks is appointed by the Cabinet—so let us not pretend that this is some other person. Of course, the President, appoints the Inspector, but when one reads the appropriate sections of the Constitution, he does so on the appropriate advice. I am not making reference to the holder of any office, but I am just sick and tired of hearing people say "it is all the fault of the Parliament; if we are given all the laws we need, and the ability to rule by decree, there would be no problem".

Since 1965 the Inspector of Banks, who is appointed by the President, on the advice of the Cabinet, has had the power, among other things, to make or cause examinations and enquiries into the affairs of each bank as he considers necessary or expedient—I am leaving out some of the legalities—in satisfying himself that the provisions of this Act—the provisions of Part V of the Central Bank Act are being observed and that the bank is in a sound financial position.

I want the Minister of Finance to come and tell us what examinations were carried out by the Inspector of Banks during the period in question. Did he think it was necessary to carry out any? If he did not think so, was he blind, deaf and dumb. In which case he should have been replaced. Did he satisfy himself, not only that the provisions of the legislation were being observed—I did not make this up; I cannot be blamed, I was not in the Parliament at the time—but that the bank was in a sound financial condition?

At the conclusion of each examination and enquiry, the Inspector of Banks is supposed to report to the Minister and the Governor of the Central Bank. Did the Minister get any reports during the period in question? I think we should be told. And, of course, since 1965, where the Inspector is satisfied that the examination

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of the affairs of the bank showed that it was insolvent or unlikely to meet the demands of the depositors, he could make a report of his findings to the Minister and then the Minister could order the suspension of business.

I hope that when we are looking at this stuff on the lawn which requires hosing down, we would bear in mind that it is not the fault of the Parliament. For the purposes of my argument, it is my view that even under the old Banking Act, there are questions that require answers. The shareholders would have to take care of themselves. My main concern is what is going to be the ultimate liability to the taxpayer in all of this.

I do not think we can make any claims to being the global city or the financial and business centre of the region until we beautify the lawn. Indeed, perhaps, in the course of Minister Draper's impressive training sessions to public servants, he can draw to their attention some way they may be accountable for the powers they do have, and suggest to them that it really does not help him or his Government when they keep saying that the Parliament is stopping them and it is not giving them enough powers. That really is a diversionary tactic. But, unlike the blue book, it is not a clever diversionary tactic, it is a very stupid one.

Of course, in the context of the statements in the budget about relative calm and stability, I suppose I should consider something in the blue book. Does it not boil down to the fact that we have undisciplined and unreliable elements in the police service and we have heard no plan as to how these elements are to be rooted out? It is very interesting that the substantive Minister of Finance—not the one who is absent today, is paying no attention to any of this—neither his words nor his body language was convincing when he dealt with crime.

What he did do, specifically, in relation to crime, was to make a specific promise. What he said on page 24, after he described violence and so forth, was that the detailed measures which would be implemented to deal with crime would be articulated during—*[Interruption]* Is there a point of order, Sir? He said that the detailed measures would be articulated during the course of the debate. I heard an echo before I spoke saying "We never got that".

Then, we are told that there are two pillars the first is "the development of an efficient, disciplined, well-equipped and professionally-managed police service. (See your blue book). The second pillar is the forging of a strong partnership between the public and the police in the fight against crime". (See your blue book). Let us see what the blue book says about this. The blue book says that

cover up is the order of the day because at all costs, the bad elements in the police service believe that image must be sustained.

I emphasize that the Government's cosmetology during the course of this debate has been excellent. There is not a blemish. But, it is ironic that in the blue book the danger of public relations is adverted to. A very strong criticism, for better or for worse, from the New Scotland Yard officers, about "the idea that image must be sustained". There is a lesson in this for all of us—beware of the act of sustaining the image and beware of those who do. A very strong lesson in the blue book. So, it was not entirely wasted to lay this on the Table in the course of the debate.

So, you see, while I accept the bona fides and the good intentions of the accounts we have had of Government's successes and policies in the course of the debate, and while the debate from the opening statement was clearly meant to generate debate about Government policy generally. No doubt, with the recognition, as Sen. Mansoor said, that much of what is in the yellow book is a waste of time, there are some very serious issues that are either not addressed in this budget or we were promised would be addressed—like the statement of the detailed measures on crime which we have not got.

### **12.00 noon**

So, it is important to examine some of these things. I think that if we could make some progress on some of the matters to which some of my colleagues and I have pointed out, we would have gone a long way in reducing the tendency to disputation and negative impact. That negativism and disputation in the society did not come about by accident. I am not even sure it came about only by the practice of politics in any sense. It came about, in my view, because we have certain problems in the society that leave people with an endemic feeling that they are not being fairly treated.

If a man who cannot get the thief who robbed him prosecuted in under eight years, and under two dozen visits to the magistrates' court, becomes negative and disputative, that is perfectly understandable, and it should be remedied. If a man cannot get a tax exit certificate, but he knows of someone who has not filed a return for eight or nine years and he gets one all the time, he would become negative and disputative.

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If we go to the airport, as I am condemned to do occasionally, when members of my family travel—because I now take my pleasures in the constituency of the Attorney General—I see repeatedly, persons walking from the crowd where I am waiting, walking straight up that narrow, horrible, dark, smelly corridor and into the airport. I become negative and disputative at the thought that I am standing outside for 90 minutes and I do not know what is happening to the member of my family inside. Why should I not be able to walk in there too?

Of course my reason for not doing it is very simple. If she had the strength in her arm, and I did something like that, my mother would deal with it, and that tells you another story. I am not restrained by any law, or any fellow in a big uniform. I am restrained by what I was taught as a child. Those are the things that we have to address in the course of the introspection which Sen. Mansoor has invited us to undertake.

There are many other things to which I should like to refer. I compliment the Government on recognizing the value of the non-governmental organizations. It did listen in that regard. It has bounced back from cutting Servol's throat, to making a specific allocation to Servol and generally recognizing the work of the non-governmental organizations. It did listen to us on that score. The Government does understand that there is a link between crime and progress in the country, so it has listened to us on that score. I do not need to quote the Prime Minister's words on the question of crime when he was in Opposition.

Let us have a good image of our Government. Let us acknowledge the successes which the efficient Ministers have had, by all means, let us not be churlish about it. Let us beware, as we have been enjoined to do, that sustaining the image is a dangerous philosophy.

Thank you.

**Sen. Deodath Ojah-Maharaj:** Mr. Vice-President, I thank my Colleagues on the Lower Benches for their reception.

I commend very highly the Minister of Finance for a well organized budget outlining the financial affairs of the Government for the fiscal period 1994. Without a doubt, this budget does two things for the society: It provides for internal stability and continuity of Government's philosophy for modernizing institutions and economic affairs in Trinidad and Tobago.

I am a bit taken aback by the way this debate is going, in that some of us are using the local newspapers to take out the negatives that are happening in the society. I should like to refer to the *Financial Express* dated Thursday, December 9, 1993. There is an article there captioned, "Christmas sales up after the budget." I wonder whether Senators opposite read this financial issue of the *Express*.

The Managing Director of Courts said:

"Things at his home furnishing store had perked up nicely since the budget. Most people buy before a budget trying to anticipate increases, but this year, people seem to have waited and now they are coming out in great numbers."

I selected to quote what the Managing Director of Courts has reportedly said in the *Express* because Courts came here—and this Government's philosophy is to act as facilitator for the business community—and established seven stores, revived the furniture industry in the country, and created employment for the small man in the villages. Nobody acknowledges that.

Similarly, later this year, Pizza Hut and McDonald's will be establishing businesses in this country. Obviously, there will be some benefits to the agricultural community. But Members are giving the impression that nothing good is happening in this country.

We took office in 1991. For the period 1986—91 there was a shift in the policy of the last administration on housing, where the land was being provided and there was no construction of houses. We have decided, as we are accustomed doing as a caring government, to reduce the cost of the land and to provide a facility for more than 8,000 families, whereby persons can initially pay a small downpayment on the land. One could enjoy the facility at the Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance Company, where a loan for \$70,000 could be obtained to start to build a house.

Housing development and home construction we believe would start in the areas of Caroni Village, that is in the constituency of Chaguanas. It is not a PNM constituency. There, we have provided 300 lots and 300 beneficiaries will enjoy facilities from the Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance. We are also providing loans for beneficiaries in Couva North which is the constituency of the Leader of the Opposition. It is not that we are trying to penetrate. What we are doing is equitable distribution. I give Members opposite the assurance, that in terms—

**Sen. Hosein:** Would the Senator give way, Sir? I wonder whether he could tell us in respect of these houses they are building in Caroni and Couva, where the applicants for these houses would come from? That is the key.

**Sen. Ojah-Maharaj:** The applicants for these houses are citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. Racial considerations are not being given here. I hoped that the Member opposite would have been smarter than to ask a question like that. The applicants are citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. I hope that his party would choose to represent the people of Trinidad and Tobago and not a particular section of the community.

I am willing to answer their questions provided they are sensible questions, of course. It is clear to this Government that given the present state of the economy, there is an urgent need to revitalize the home construction industry, not only to provide homes, but also to provide employment and to generate that much needed income.

**12.10 p.m.**

As regards Sen. Daly's comments, on January 1, 1994, when Project Pride gets under way, during construction a minimum of 800 nationals will be employed, nationals who will come from Maloney, Piarco, Las Lomas, St. Helena and the surrounding areas. Of course, Sen. Merritt is not listening. Similarly, approximately 1200 persons are at this point employed at the maximum security prison. The Senator is now asking what I said.

If I attempt to reply to all the remarks made by the opposite side, I would become too political and this would create problems in the Senate this afternoon. When Sen. Muntaz Hosein chooses to interrupt someone with whom he was associated for some time in the People's National Movement—of course he moved to the National Alliance for Reconstruction and he is now in the United National Congress, one understands that he is very uneasy at the moment where he sits.

**Sen. Hosein:** On a point of order. I want to correct the Senator. At no time have I ever been a member of the PNM. I should like him to tell the Senate that when he approached me to fight the election for the PNM, I refused.

**Sen. Ojah-Maharaj:** I do not have now at my disposal the records of my party. There are about 15,000 members so he is squeezed in among them. But he would not deny that he was one of the activists and members of the NAR and when



we came into office, we met a policy in housing that was not delivering houses. The NAR was establishing sites and not revitalizing the construction industry. We had to reorganize that policy, get the National Housing Authority to work again and secure the jobs of almost 1200 employees of NHA, by putting the NHA back to work. Therefore, in 1994, we would see a revitalization of the construction industry, through the housing policy of this Government.

As a result, the selection of NHA lots now takes place at an intermediate stage between downpayment and final payment by prospective beneficiaries for their lots. These providential beneficiaries are permitted to choose lots after they have paid 50 per cent of the cost of the raw land. Compared with the situation under the last administration, where beneficiaries were required to pay up front \$7,500 to select a lot, under the new arrangement, it is now in the vicinity of \$3,500, which is an incentive to making further payments to complete the ownership of the land, become full beneficiaries and qualify to begin construction.

The initial arrangements with the IDB for beneficiaries to obtain loans for shelter construction require the beneficiaries first to complete payment for a service lot in the range of \$15,000 to \$30,000. That was the policy of the last administration. This particular requirement led to a serious problem of affordability in respect of programme applicants and to a low level of effective demand for service lots. To address this problem this Government took steps, in January 1993, to soften the payment terms. The new policy allows title to be transferred to beneficiaries on payment for the raw land cost only, rather than plus the cost of the installed services, including roads, drainage, water and sewerage.

The outstanding amount on installed services would now be consolidated with the mortgage on the house constructed by each beneficiary. As a result of this initiative, the range of payment to obtain title deeds has now been reduced from \$15,000—\$30,000 to \$5,000—\$12,000, which makes it more affordable to beneficiaries in the low income bracket. Beneficiaries will be allowed two years to complete their houses. Bridging finance charges will not be applicable to houses built within one year of the initial drawdown of loan funds. Upon completion of their houses beneficiaries will enter into a mortgage agreement with the TTMF for a term not exceeding 25 years, and at an interest rate which is comparable with prevailing market rates at the time of signing the mortgage agreement.

One of the more thorny issues affecting the viability and survival of the state agencies in the housing and settlement sector is that of arrears. The public is

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acutely aware of the high level of state subsidy in the provision of homes to beneficiaries under the Housing and Settlements Programme. The failure of these beneficiaries to meet their financial obligations whether on rental or mortgage arrangements, inhibits the ability of the Government to create self-financing programmes and thereby prevents other less fortunate and deserving members of our society from also benefiting from further expansion of our programme.  
*[Interruption]*

For the benefit of Sen. Hosein, who is being very personal—you must train him—it is a fact that, on occasion, Senators on the other side, in an attempt to gain political mileage, make certain statements which could be rather misleading to the national community and, at the same time, tend to frustrate the efforts of Senators on this side who are trying to rectify certain situations in their portfolios, in the national interest.

To illustrate this point. You will recall that not too long ago statements were made by the other side to the effect that thousands of persons were being evicted in Couva by the NHA for non-settlement of arrears. This was in fact blowing a situation out of proportion. The fact of the matter was that two tenants of the NHA who had accumulated arrears of \$8,300 in one case and \$12,000 in the other, were evicted pursuant to warrants of eviction by the courts. This must be located in the context where the NHA is faced with a very difficult financial situation, with more than \$100 million in mortgage arrears outstanding. Senators will appreciate that if we collect that amount of money, we would be able to meet the acute housing shortage in the country.

Given the situation of escalating arrears, the NHA has started to take a firmer stand on defaulters with a view to collecting as much of these arrears as possible. However, the Ministry of Housing and Settlements has adopted a policy of dealing with each case on its own merits before a final determination of the matter. I believe it is necessary to point out that eviction of defaulters will take place only after all options have been explored and exhausted, and only on the basis of a court order.

As you review our 1993 development programme in the Housing and Settlements sector, you will discern the commitment of this Government to the provision of adequate shelter for the citizens of the country, particularly those in the low income stratum. Notwithstanding the formidable financial constraints we are experiencing, the progress we have made is already evident to the national community.

**12.20 p.m.**

The Housing and Settlements Programme is currently being executed by the Project Execution Unit of the ministry and its two agencies, the National Housing Authority and the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee. For the benefit of Sen. Roi Kwabene that is the committee that services the employees and the people in the sugar industry. He may not be aware that a special programme was set up by a previous PNM administration. I want to repeat this, *[Interruption]* No, no, it was supported by a previous PNM administration which developed a special soft loans programme for employees in the sugar industry, whereby *[Interruption]* I am telling you that we are going to kick-off the construction industry next year with the building of houses.

There is a clear indication that Members on the Lower Benches—

**Mr. Vice-President:** Sen. Ojah-Maharaj, could you please direct your contribution to the Chair?

**Sen. Ojah-Maharaj:** Yes, Sir, sorry about that. The sub-programmes of these agencies contain the several components consistent with our comprehensive approach to which I alluded earlier. The major elements are:-

- (1) Sites and services, that is the provision of fully serviced building lots.
- (2) Squatter regularization involving inter alia the rehabilitation of squatter communities through a process of infrastructure upgrading and tenure regularization.
- (3) Construction of starter homes.
- (4) Construction of rental apartments.
- (5) Provision of community facilities.
- (6) Urban renewal.

The objective of the programme is the improvement of the living standards of the low income urban and rural segments of the population and ultimately the establishment of viable, self-sustaining communities in Trinidad and Tobago.

The IDB assisted sub-programme: The sub-programme being executed by the Project Execution Unit of the ministry is partially funded by the loan resources from the IDB. The Government entered into a loan contract with the Inter-American Development Bank in order to accelerate implementation of the

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National Settlements Programme. The estimated total sub-programme cost is US \$82.64 million, approximately TT \$475 million. The IDB loan amounts to US \$66.1 million, approximately TT \$380 million and the Government will provide US \$ 16.54 million, TT \$95 million in counterpart funding.

The major features of the sub-programme are as follows:

- (i) Development of approximately 5,000 fully serviced residential lots on 13 sites.
  - (ii) A facility for construction financing ranging from TT \$18,000 up to a maximum of TT \$70,000 per beneficiary, and support services in the form of standardized designs and technical assistance. Negotiations are currently taking place with a view to raising the loan ceiling to TT \$100,000.
  - (iii) Construction of five community centres on sites with more than 400 lots. These sites are Bon Air West, Arouca; Couva North—and I repeat, Couva North—Harmony Hall, Union Hall, San Fernando; and Malabar Phase 4. The community centres will provide facilities for indoor sports and recreational activities vocational educational childcare, social and cultural activities.
- (7) Squatter regularization and improvement involving approximately 2,500 squatter families on 11 sites through the provision of land titles and infrastructure upgrading.

During 1993, land development works continued at Union Hall San Fernando and Malabar Phase 4. Works have been substantially completed at La Paille, Chaguanas constituency; Debe Phase 2, Oropouche constituency, Harmony Hall, Couva North Phase 2 and Bon Air West. That is the equitable distribution that Members on the opposite side are not seeing, and regardless of what is done in those constituencies credit is not given to the Government. *[Interruption]* We are fully conscious of that, therefore we have developed a system where we will go to the people and inform them of what is taking place, be it the Caroni Regional Council or whatever we are organizing.

Scheduled completion dates for the other projects are Malabar Phase 4—December 1993 and Union hall—February 1994. The estimated yield from these sites is 1,593 serviced residential lots. Under the sub-programme a total of 3,422 lots are currently being developed. Occupation of the sites will be on a

phased basis commencing January 1994, so the beneficiaries could occupy and start construction on the sites. We shall, therefore be seeing some activities in Couva North, Chaguanas and the Oropouche constituencies. *[Interruption]* We are not doing these things in these constituencies to win; we are providing services to the nationals of Trinidad and Tobago. Each site will be served with sewerage facilities, paved roads, drains and electricity. Lot sizes vary between 3,580 and 5,700 square feet.

Additional sites to be developed commencing in 1993 are Calder Hall, Tobago and Buen Intento, Princes Town. These sites will provide an additional 469 serviced residential lots. Construction on the Buen Intento site is expected to start early in the new year and completed by the end of 1994. Also during 1993, architectural and engineering design works were initiated and tender documents are being prepared for the five community centres mentioned earlier which are to be constructed in 1994. Construction is scheduled to commence in April 1994. Again, employment will be provided there.

Squatter Regularization: Development works being undertaken at Maturita Triangle and Bamboo Settlement No. 3 were substantially completed in March 1993. Some 631 squatter households will be regularized on these two sites. Members would recall, for instance, that at Bamboo Settlement No. 3 in the St. Joseph constituency much work was done to improve the living conditions of the squatters on that site and from my recent visit to the area they are quite happy with the work that was done.

### **12.30 p.m.**

During 1993, the Project Execution Unit took steps to procure the services of consultants to undertake engineering design and prepare tender documents for project sites located at Upper Leon Street, Morvant and Sogren Trace, Laventille. A contract has been awarded by the Central Tenders Board for Upper Leon Street, Morvant and an award for a contract for Sogren Trace is imminent. These sites will cater for regularization of an additional 471 squatter households.

The site and services component of the NHA's sub-programme has to date yielded 3,000 lots at several locations throughout Trinidad and Tobago. Of these, over 60 per cent have been allocated to beneficiaries. During 1993, 53 houses were constructed on allocated lots and 103 houses are under construction.

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With specific reference to Tobago, the NHA has commenced preliminary works on three sites. Consultancy services were hired to carry out a study and design for the following project sites in Tobago:

Castara Estate—that is the area where Sen. Hosein's former leader came from;

Roxborough Estate;

Old Government Farm, Signal Hill.

Development works on the Old Government Farm, Signal Hill project will be done in three phases. Upon completion it is expected to yield 190 lots.

Between January and September, 1993, 172 199-year sub-leases were granted to beneficiaries on the different settlement sites. These were granted only after beneficiaries had paid for their lots in full. So that beneficiaries have been given their sub-leases for 199 years. The sub-leases would enable them to utilize their properties, for which they had been paying many years, as collateral to obtain loans for building their homes.

In keeping with our comprehensive approach to community development, we have allocated 64 residential lots which will be used also for commercial purposes in the NHA settlements sub-programmes as follows:

Dyette Estate, Cunupia (Chaguanas constituency)—14;

Malabar, Arima—14

Edinburgh 500, Chaguanas (Couva North constituency)—8

Charlottesville (Chaguanas constituency)—16

Plaisance, Mayaro—11

The intention in allocating commercial lots is to provide certain basic services like shops on settlement sites, at the same time providing opportunities for self-employment.

Joint venture projects at Lopinot—387 lots and Pleasantville—425 lots.

Another recent and very significant initiative by the Government under the Sites and Services component during 1993, was to provide \$4.3 million—and I hope Sen. Wade Mark listens to this—to the National Union of Government and Federated Workers Construction Company to complete its commitment on a long standing joint venture agreement with the labour movement. Under the agreement,

Government previously provided funding of \$20 million for the infrastructural development of 387 lots at Lopinot and 425 lots at Pleasantville, by the National Union of Government and Federated Workers Construction Company under agreed terms and conditions.

The major obligation of the NUGFW Construction company is the construction of 812 housing units on the developed lots. The infrastructure works at both sites are now substantially completed, and given the fact that Government has fulfilled its part of the agreement, it is expected that the labour movement will now respond as agreed and begin construction of the 812 housing units on both sites.

I must inform this honourable Senate that 1994 has been declared the Year of Construction in the Ministry of Housing and Settlement. The National Housing Authority has been working on 35 sites comprising 7,304 households, 11 of these sites with 2,530 households have been adopted as a squatter regularization component of the Inter-American Development Assisted Programme, being administered by the Project Execution Unit of the Ministry of Housing and Settlement. Currently, the Ministry of Housing and Settlement is actively engaged on the remaining 24 sites to regularize 5,000 squatter households.

Upgrading of squatter sites is being carried out at Alexis Street, Morvant; Fairfield Estate, Princes Town; Morvant Old Road and Five Rivers Estate, Arouca.

Our urban renewal programme attempts to provide balance and completeness in the spectrum of housing solutions by providing residential high density, flatted accommodation within existing urban areas. The construction of 48 new two and three bedroom apartments, Phase I, on a parcel of land vested in the National Housing Authority, is scheduled to be completed in December, 1993. The lands, referred to as Ramdial Mahabir lands, are situated at Laventille.

The following community facilities were delivered in 1993:

- (i) a library at Maloney, which was handed over to the Information Division on February 12, 1993;
- (ii) a technical vocational centre at Maloney, which was handed over to the Ministry of Finance;
- (iii) day care centre at La Horquetta, which was handed over to the Ministry of Community Development on June 14, 1993; and

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- (iv) a day care centre at Milford Court Tobago, which is to be handed over to the community before the end of the year.

The Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee sub-programme—distribution of lots. Mr. Vice-President, you will observe that Senators on the Lower Benches have not been talking at all about the sugar industry. They no longer have adopted the sugar industry, because they have acknowledged that the Government has come up with a plan to make Caroni (1975) Ltd. viable. *[Interruption]* This administration, under the leadership of the Minister. *[Interruption]* No, no, it is an initiative of this administration, under the astute leadership of the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources. Therefore, they are not saying anything. *[Interruption]* There is nothing that Sen. Capildeo could stand and say about Caroni (1975) Ltd. that the Government is not addressing.

**Sen. Capildeo:** On a point of order, Mr. Vice-President. How could the hon. Senator presume to know what I am going to say? He does not have that capacity or intellect.

**Sen. D. Ojah-Maharaj:** During 1993, the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee introduced measures to consolidate its plans for self-sustained growth and also to increase the delivery of shelter currently administered to low income sugar workers and cane farmers. In this regard, the department focussed its attention on the following:

- (i) housing loans;
- (ii) distribution of lots;
- (iii) squatter regularization; and
- (iv) arrears collection.

As at the end of September, 1993, the Committee had distributed 12 approved building lots at Orange Field Road Settlement, again in Couva North.

At the end of the third quarter of 1993, the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee had made loans to the value of \$2.4 million. As a result of the arrears drive during 1993, the Committee collected arrears to the value of \$800,000 by the end of the third quarter.

During the period under review, the Committee obtained approval from the Town and Country Planning Division to commence infrastructure works to regularize squatters at two sites at Dow Village in Couva South. When completed



in 1994, these areas will provide 20 fully serviced lots. Altogether, regularization would provide secure housing for more than 120 citizens.

**12.40 p.m.**

Projections for 1994—IDB-Assisted Sub-Programme—Sites and Services: During 1994, ongoing land development works are scheduled to be completed at Union Hall, San Fernando and Malabar Phase 4, Arima. Additional projects to be commenced in 1994 are Couva North, Phase 3 (224 lots); Glenroy, Princes Town (100 lots); Kumar Village (100 lots) and Caroni Village (150 lots). Total additional yield is 574 lots in "Opposition" constituencies—I cannot be accused of discrimination.

Under the construction financing facility, it is anticipated that shelter construction will be commenced at Bon Air West, Arouca, Harmony Hall, Gasparillo, Couva North, Phase 2; Debe, Phase 2; La Paille, Union Hall, San Fernando and possibly Calder Hall, Tobago, during 1994 on some 3,665 lots. Construction of 5 multi-purpose community centres is scheduled to commence in April 1994 at Bon Air West, Arouca, Harmony Hall, Gasparillo, Couva North, Phase 2, Union Hall, San Fernando and Malabar, Phase 4.

Squatter regularization: Squatter settlements scheduled for land development in 1994 are Warden Road, Pt. Fortin; Malick Phase 1, Blitz Village, Pleasantville, Bagatelle, Diego Martin, Upper Leon Street, Morvant. These sites will yield some 1,892 lots.

I mentioned earlier the squatting problem in recent years. Given the variety of programmes being implemented at the present time, I should like to take this opportunity to let the national community know that from 1994 the Ministry of Housing and Settlement intends to adopt a very firm posture and will be dealing very aggressively with incremental squatting on state lands.

Urban Renewal. There are a few projects under the sub programme of urban renewal either to be completed or initiated in 1994. The 48 two and three bedroom apartments of a high rise building (Ramdial Mahabir Flats Phase I) at Laventille, are to be completed early in 1994. The commencement and completion of sewer trunk mains for a proposed high density project for Ramdial Mahabir Lands, Phase 2, will be undertaken in 1994. The proposed high density project is similar to Phase I.

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This will be followed by the construction of a high density project with 48 apartments in 1994 at Almond Drive. This project is estimated to cost \$7 million. The National Housing Authority also proposes to award a contract in 1994 for the construction of another high rise building yielding 26 apartments at Crook Street, John John, at an estimated cost of \$4 million.

We have designated 1994 as the Year of Home Construction. As I have alluded to earlier, we were able to bring several of our projects to the home construction stage in 1993. These are as follows:

- (i) Under the IDB-Assisted Sub-Programme, 1,829 lots
- (ii) Under the NHA Sub-Programme, 1,700 lots on the Sites and Services component, a 48 apartment building under the urban renewal programme;
- (iii) lots under the NUGFW Agreement, 812
- (iv) SILWC, 20 lots.

Our focus in 1994 will be in the area of home construction and the employment and income generation which will result.

Construction of houses on lots at \$30 million Construction Programme.

In addition, the Government recently approved for immediate implementation, a \$30 million housing construction programme to be managed by the National Housing Authority. Under this segment a total of approximately 271 dwelling units, consisting mainly of affordable core housing, will be provided on sites already vested in the National Housing Authority, sites which are either developed or adjacent to developed land with available trunk infrastructure. These sites include River Estate, Diego Martin; Bon Air and La Horquette (Glencoe), Strikers Village, Bien Venue, Charlieville, Medine and Ciperio Streets, San Fernando.

Designs for the units were completed in 1993 and units will start coming on stream towards the middle of 1994. This programme has been designed in such a manner as to ensure that sale of the mortgages is effected on completion of the units. This will allow for short-term recouping of development funds by the National Housing Authority, and thus facilitate the implementation of similar "roll-on" programmes.

Projections for 1994—IDB-Assisted Sub-Programmes—Sites and Services: During 1994, ongoing land development works are scheduled to be completed at

Union Hall, San Fernando and Malabar, Phase 4, Arima. Additional projects to be commenced in 1994 are Couva North, Phase 3, Glenroy, Princes Town, Kumar Village and Caroni Village.

Therefore, Mr. Vice-President, the Senate will understand that one is really talking in terms of the creation of jobs, and that the budget makes provision through the different ministries for certain programmes to start early in 1994, whereby we are going to see more jobs being created and more downstream industries enjoying the benefits of the programmes outlined in the Budget. I therefore urge Senators on the opposite side to support the Budget and let us go into 1994 working together to modernize Trinidad and Tobago.

**Mr. Vice-President:** The sitting of the Senate is suspended until 2.00 p.m.

**12.47 p.m.:** *Sitting suspended.*

**2.00 p.m.:** *Sitting resumed.*

**The Minister of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Joan Yuille-Williams):** Thank you, Mr. Vice-President, for the opportunity to make my contribution to this budget debate.

This evening, I should like to do a few things. Firstly, I wish to point this Senate to some of the concepts and perspectives that underpinned much of what was said by the Minister of Finance in his address of the House when he presented the 1994 Budget, attempting in the process, to present such concepts as a macro-contextual framework for the work of the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs.

Secondly, I should like to highlight the ongoing work of my ministry, with some projections about our 1994 work programme and, thirdly, I shall draw on a few broad problematic statements that were made in the budget speech, in order to give this Senate some degree of detail in respect of specific future programmes of my ministry that go directly out of the policy concerns of the Government, as reflected in the 1994 Budget.

I hope I would be permitted to draw heavily on statements that I have made in the past in the other House and elsewhere in respect of matters pertaining to Government policy in general and the functioning of my ministry in particular. Specifically, I wish to refer to my statement in respect of this very budget which I made in the other House just one week ago. I am of the view that such statements need repeating for they serve to highlight and underscore the critical importance

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that will be attached to some of the categories of governmental action during the coming year.

I recall that it was just over two weeks ago, in making a contribution on the 1994 Budget, I attempted to locate an appropriate developmental context for the work prescribed by my ministry as a result of the thrust in the 1994 budget statement.

“Over the years, professionals involved in social sector planning in the Caribbean have often complained about what is perceived to be a lack of concern for people in most development models applied to the various countries in the region. They argue that generally development is seen purely in economic terms with no clearly articulated priority concerns for the quality of life of the individual. They insist that as a minimum requirement, any development programme should have built into it, as part of its core modalities, arrangements for the establishing of adequate mechanisms for accurately assessing the programme's impact on individual lifestyles and the overall well-being of the communities. Indeed, over the years, they have constantly suggested that people must be a priority concern of development and, therefore, must be placed at the centre of all developmental initiatives.”

My reason for repeating that statement is that I wish this evening to point this honourable Senate in the direction in which this Government is going. We are determined to place people at the central focus of our development plans and, therefore, our concern for people has informed decisions taken by this Government in respect of the 1994 Budget. I continue:

"a perspective that recognizes that initiatives geared towards the achievement of sustained material growth must be equally matched by interventions in the social sector, carefully calculated to educate, motivate and, in general, increase the capacities of the population at large to perform, while at the same time minimizing possibilities for social disruption and discord."

Mr. Vice-President, one cannot underscore the importance of such a focus given the socio-economic circumstances of Trinidad and Tobago and, indeed, the entire Caribbean. I said then and I will say it again, structural adjustment is indeed a fact of life. As a responsible Government, we cannot ignore the fact that although we are engaged in very stringent belt-tightening measures, we must put in place measures that will provide some relief to those communities which are at risk. This Government is determined to move beyond the preoccupation with

stabilization and structural adjustments to the improvement in the quality of life of the citizens of this country and the reduction of unemployment and poverty. Our determination has manifested itself in this year's Appropriation Bill now being debated.

In the Budget Speech delivered by the hon. Minister of Finance:

"This Government has determined that our human resources are indeed our most precious asset and, consequently, we are allocating \$1.1 billion to social programmes in 1994. This represents a 48 per cent increase over last year's levels and is 14 per cent of total budgeted expenditure 1994."

Underscoring this, the Government considers our human resources to be our most precious asset. The Minister of Finance went on to indicate that Government is of the view that:

"...our society will not prosper without the participation of all its people."

He outlined a broad range of measures geared towards alleviating major social problems that militate against such participation on the part of all our nation's people, even as we continue on our path to full economic growth.

This Senate will recall that the areas identified by the Government as priorities for action and implementation for 1994 are:

"Institutional reform and encouragement of enterprise. Investments in energy and tourism. Innovation and efficiency in Government and a tight and comprehensive social safety net."

The ministry for which I am responsible has become a part of the implementation of a tight social safety net.

### **2.10 p.m.**

The Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs is a broad-based people-focussed agency of Government that delivers a wide range of programmes on a national level through the following implementation arms that work in close collaboration with on another: The Ministry itself, the National Carnival Commission, Naparima Bowl, Queen's Hall, the National Archives, the National Museum and the National Self-Help Commission.

The work of the Ministry in general touches three broad areas: cultural enrichment, including development and promotion of the arts; community

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enhancement and gender concerns with emphasis on women in development issues. Although our work is national in scope, the actual programme delivery is located at the local community level. Our focus therefore is on communities, the mobilization and strengthening of community groups as a means of empowering people at the individual and organizational levels, thereby increasing their capacity to constructively address social and other problems in their respective communities.

I was glad to hear during this debate so far, the number of speakers who supported Government's thrust to support the community groups and the non-governmental organizations as they decide to join this Government in furthering its plans.

We are looking at a holistic approach to the implementation of what I call our community action plans. Such an approach focuses, not only on the social, economic and cultural issues, but also on the care, preservation and enhancement of the physical environment. In this regard, the Ministry draws on a full range of capabilities and expertise in a co-ordinated approach to community mobilization. Such an approach makes it possible for programmes to have impact and have positive effect on all aspects of community life.

I should like to just throw our minds back to 1993 to see some of the things which were done and how they will dictate what will be done in 1994. In 1993 we hosted the Standing Committee of Caricom Ministers responsible for Women's Affairs; the division involved in launching training courses, especially geared for the leaders of village councils and other NGOs, a number of skills training programmes had were taken care of, designed to create self-employment opportunities, encouraging domestic economic support and savings, and promoting community fraternity and integration; assisting in personal growth through the development of self-confidence, self-empowerment and independence. We have just done in December here, the implementation of a community enhancing programme on a pilot basis, designed to train a number of people, to which I would refer later.

We also hosted the Caribbean Archives Association and did some refurbishing of our National Archives, as most people had been wondering what had happened to the archives and the condition of the archives building. Of course, this honourable House knows the work of the Self-Help Commission in helping the community with the infrastructural projects. We did our coming-of-age steelband;

we had looked into mounting some of the Caribbean art exhibition and we hosted that second gathering of indigenous peoples, something we are very proud of, again, on a community basis, where we were able to relate to the indigenous peoples of Venezuela, Belize and St. Vincent.

We moved into our second year of the Prime Minister's Best Village Trophy Competition, and we tried to re-establish all component parts of that exhibition. Of course, carnival—the national festival—we felt we had succeeded in certain major areas of crowd management, handling of ticket sales, marketing and the sale of media rights and live satellite broadcast of carnival to other parts of the world.

In implementing the work programme for 1994, my ministry will build on the gains of 1993 and introduce specially designed programmes tailored in a manner as to specifically address the needs of communities that are at risk. These programmes are in keeping with the objectives of the 1994 Budget. The year 1994 will be a challenging one for the Government and for my ministry, in particular. Let me remind this honourable Senate of the need to respond to the social problems and of the designs of the social safety net. I do so by quoting from the presentation of the hon. Minister of Finance.

"The Government is painfully cognizant of unemployment, homelessness and inadequate help, institutional and educational services among certain sections of the population, the despair and hopelessness that breed in desperate conditions and which have resulted in wanton criminal activities."

The work programme, by my ministry, for 1994 therefore will be carried out under the various headings to keep in line with our thrust:

1. The cushioning of the effects of structural adjustment;
2. Community enhancement;
3. National self-help;
4. Culture and the arts;
5. Women's affairs.

In the other place, I sought to explain in detail the new programme which forms part of our revised social sector thrust. The Prime Minister, in winding up the debate there, also referred to some of these new projects. For the benefit of this honourable Senate, I will reiterate some of these projects since I feel it my

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duty to keep informing the national community of measures designed by this Government to assist them in alleviating hardships or measures which clearly show the commitment of this Government to care for all its people.

My ministry was called upon to initiate projects under the community enterprise programme. Let me introduce this honourable Senate to some of these programmes again. One of the programmes we have entitled GAP, (Geriatric Adolescent Partnership), is designed to do just what it says, to build a GAP between two special groups in the society, and I wish to call them today's children and yesterday's children, the youth and the elderly.

This programme has two modules. The first is a training programme in gerontology designed for young people between the ages of 17 and 25. The module also forms part of a national service programme. It is designed to instil in the young people respect for our elderly, as well as to give them some facilities for home caring for the aged. These young people, at the end of the training, will be of service to the elderly in their community. We look at the elderly as a group that is increasing in number in our communities, and who, in many instances, need assistance to adjust to the changing environment, to define their rights and privileges and to create links with the rest of the community.

I am happy to announce that the training of our young people began last Monday 6, in the North at the St. Ann's Community Workshop, in Central, at the California Civic Centre and in South at the Corinth Teachers' College. The response from our young people to this pilot project was tremendous. On Thursday last we initiated a fourth centre at the Tunapuna Industrial Cottage. The total number being trained is 500. The programme includes courses in health care, nutrition, occupational and physical therapy and psycho-social for the elderly and we have included a module for self-development for our youth.

Let me publicly thank at this time the National Village Council Association for their support for the programme, especially in the recruitment of the trainers. We are using retired professionals to conduct this programme. That is the first part of the programme. We started this programme at this time of the year so that the second part of the programme will begin early next year. The second part of the programme is what we will call the visitor's support programme. Home for many an aging person is the most important factor in maintaining dignity, self-assurance and contentment.



Many of our aged citizens are reluctant to accept institutional care. They prefer to remain in their homes. This project, GAP, is designed to assist the elderly in satisfying their wishes by having these young people visit the homes of the elderly and provide them with the service they deserve. This service can include home care, shopping, banking, preparing a meal or simply, by being good company. The programme, therefore, as I said before, seeks to encourage and empower the youth, and hence, serve the country.

**2.20 p.m.**

Our community centres which we see as the heart of the community will provide recreational and support programmes for the elderly on special days which would be administered by these young people. My ministry warmly welcomes the opportunity to implement such a programme which brings two special groups into partnership. This is national service with a particular purpose. This is a holistic approach for the development of both the youth and the aged.

In co-ordinating this project, we did so on a community basis. I wish to note that there is another arm of the ministry, the Self-Help Commission, which has already been given special funds from that community enterprise project and the Self-Help Commission has already set aside funds to provide assistance including materials to assist in minor repairs of the homes of the elderly.

I am happy to say that the trainees under our community enhancement programme, which I should talk about a little later, are young people who are acquiring skills at this time—plus those beneficiaries of the self-help for the payment of fees and purchase of small tools who we are hoping would be able to use the office of the Self-Help Commission materials and assist the elderly in the repair of their homes or small equipment.

Again, let me say thanks to the village councils for their support for the programme and to those people who have offered their services. The pilot programme has begun with 500 eager young people in training. These young people will remain and serve the people of their particular communities.

The second programme which I should like to highlight includes using the required skills of our citizens—some of them who have taken early retirement or have reached the age of retirement but are quite strong and would like to be of service to the country in some way—is our Senior Experts Programme—The

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Generation II. This programme seeks to utilize the skills, expertise and experience of retired persons in the community in which they live and function.

As we have said, the skills of the retirers will be used to assist students, especially junior secondary students, who can benefit from these skills after their morning or afternoon class sessions. As Senators know, we have over 200 community centres in Trinidad and Tobago and for most of the day those centres are closed. We intend to open them and to keep them functioning. At these centres we would have senior experts, as I said, who would be able to assist these young people with remedial counselling, preparation for examination classes, or in any way they would wish to have their skills deployed. Again, the programmes will be funded by the Government with the retirers receiving a stipend.

Mr. Vice-President, as you are aware, the National Self-Help Commission is one which has come in for high praise from several quarters in this country. In addition to the normal work which the Commission is doing—which it has done before and which it intends to continue in 1994—is being part of the social safety net, and as I said before, some of the funds would be to address the social problems of the senior citizens by providing the materials or by providing direct assistance to registered co-operatives, community organizations, post training graduates of institutions such as the Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme, National Training Board, National Youth Development Apprenticeship Centres, in the form of mini-grants for part funding of their physical infrastructure projects and the purchase of small items of equipment. This is provided working capital needs are met and the products to be produced are marketable.

The Commission also intends to resume, on the basis of need based assessments, the award of grants to meet the training related expenses of students from Servol, the Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality Training Institute, the National Youth Development Apprenticeship Centres, John S. Donaldson Technical Institute, San Fernando Technical Institute and the St. Bede Vocational School.

As hon. Senators look into the figures allocated for this year, they would notice that part of this funding, is in that block under Community Enterprise, and not really under the self-help basis, but this is also part of the social safety net. We started some of our pilot programmes at the end of 1993 so that in 1994 we would be in a better position to get going with most of the things that we want to do instead of having to give ourselves two or three months out of 1994 to do the pilot.

We have a Community Enhancement Programme going on now which operates on two levels. On one hand it seeks to mobilize young persons in communities, apprenticing them to skilled craftsmen over a period of roughly five weeks or longer, according to the length of the activity, during which time they would gain hands-on experience in a trade within the construction industry. Community-based Construction works around the apprenticeship programme and its function would be the renovation and refurbishing of our community centres.

The materials that will be used will be sourced through funds from the social safety net and skilled personnel will be provided by the Master Craftsman from the Ministry of Works and Transport. Watchmen, community liaison officers and other support staff will be paid by the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs, and they will be sourced through the appropriate village councils.

This project must be seen to be owned by the community. It is expected that each community, though being called upon to manage its own project under the direct supervision of the ministry and with private sector support, would develop management capability, over time, that would prove useful in future projects. It is also intended that each community would manage its own finances which would be provided for the project in the form of a grant.

Ideally, a broad-based management team involving persons at all levels in the community would be established in overseeing managerial responsibilities for the entire project, including the management of financial and material resources. It is anticipated that the team would include among its membership, representatives of the village councils, service organizations, church groups, business organizations, the banking sector and regional corporations.

This is another one of the programmes where we are relying heavily on the NGO facilities to assist. We feel this is a good way to go and it would help to get the centres rehabilitated even faster than under the normal procedure. So, for each centre there would be a special community team.

As I said before, we have started with 15 centres so far out of the possible 200 odd centres, and for the pilot service we did not use a team like this. We had used the ministry's personnel to assist. We have realized the need for involving the NGOs and the people in the community to assist in putting this facility together. Therefore, for the programme that starts in January, we are getting a community-based organization made up of sectors in the community who would be given the

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finances to manage the particular project instead of the ministry trying to do this. We want to get all 200 odd community centres in place. There 15 centres being renovated at the moment, those would continue as the pilot, and we change in January.

**2.30 p.m.**

The ongoing programmes of the ministry in this new area of community development, in which we would have these young people apprenticed, would form part of the community enhancement thrust. The young people who would be working on these centres would also be doing basic training in leadership and management as provided by the councils in the ministry, as well as skill training geared to self-employment provided by the Ministry of Works and Transport.

We had also, as an integral part of this enhancement thrust, and supported by funding from the European Economic Community the construction of about 18 new community centres at locations throughout Trinidad and Tobago. These new centres would be used as facilities for providing training at the community level; promoting the development of viable community-based economic projects; providing centrally located community meeting places and adequate facilities for the staging of performing arts events and the mounting of visual exhibitions.

The 18 new community centres which will be funded by the EEC will begin in December, 1993. The ministry had to enlist the services of a special consultant to go through this particular programme. I am quite sure that Members would be happy to know that these centres will be all over Trinidad and Tobago, specially designed to fit into the area where they are placed. For example, if the community centre is at Toco, we expect that part of the training facility that would be established within that centre would be something to deal with the fishing industry. Wherever the community centres are placed, the local environment would be taken note of. I wish to say that we are very happy that the EEC funding has been granted to us. The money is now available and the project began this month.

As part of structural adjustment, we are looking also on a community basis at trying to satisfy the immediate nutritional needs of some of our people. I want to be careful about this. Some of us are very fortunate that we are able to find a meal every day, but some of our citizens are sometimes not so fortunate. These are not people that we are saying are on a programme where each day they move to a particular place to have this meal.

We are saying that we should like to know that in our areas, especially in our communities at risk, those people who do not have a meal should be able to find some place where they could go and get it. This programme seems to be new to Trinidad and Tobago, although there are non-governmental organizations that have in some way already undertaken programmes like this.

Our research shows that in the United States of America, Canada, Jamaica and Guyana there are already programmes like this. In fact, we saw some interesting names of some, such as Community Kitchen, Cooking Pot and Community Dining Room. This particular community-based programme, again, will be managed by the non-governmental organizations with Government funding. Through the programme, it is expected that a hot nutritious meal would be available on a daily basis to persons in need.

In our case, as we said before, this facility will be set up in special communities. Let me assure this honourable Senate that Government do not expect to run the programme indefinitely, nor do we wish to encourage people to remain permanently on the programme. In the initial stages Government will provide seed funding for the programmes and will also be responsible for giving technical assistance to the non-governmental organizations identified as having the capacity to manage them.

**Sen. Mahabir-Wyatt:** Would the Minister be so kind as to let us know in which communities the Government is planning to have the "community kitchens"?

**Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams:** I said communities at risk, without naming the special communities, but as many as we need. I would tell her probably a little later.

In my research in the setting up of this facility, I spoke to the local IDB representatives about what we were doing. The IDB thought the idea was a good one and saw the need for it. Without our asking they have signalled their intention to make some grant funds again, available to Trinidad and Tobago to ensure the success of the programme. In addition, the IDB has already made an offer to send four persons from Trinidad and Tobago on a fact-finding mission early in 1994 to look at programmes in other countries. They have also promised to assist the programme even beyond the seed-fund stage.

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There is money, not only from the social safety net which we are putting into it, but also, from a grant from the IDB for a programme which we did not at the very beginning approach them to assist us with. We wish to thank them for it.

One recognizes that cultural differences certainly influence the workings of such programmes when implemented from country to country. Therefore, the programme will be structured so as not to offend any cultural group. Government will assist in the refurbishing of non-governmental organization facilities and in the provision of new equipment.

In some cases our community centres will be upgraded and will also be involved in this project, through the village council where necessary. Of course, the success of such a programme depends on the co-operative efforts of all the church groups, service clubs and youth groups, as I said before, the communities at risk which we are identifying where we find the need exists. This is one of the reasons why we are paying so much attention to the rehabilitation of our community centres because some of them will be brought into this programme.

We are hoping that in the long run the private sector would also become involved in such a programme, but the Government is committed to the seed fund for the start up of this programme and to continue it as the need arises. We feel that the foodstuffs which should come used in such programmes would be from our local farmers within the community where this particular facility is set up. At the end of it, I am saying that our hope is that each day our citizens would be able to have, at least, one hot meal.

I should also like to reintroduce this House to another programme which the ministry has carried out for the last two years.

**Sen. Daly:** Perhaps we can get an answer to this question, through you, Mr. Vice-President. Who is going to determine who requires these hot meals?

**Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams:** Those who need the meals. The facility is set up and the individuals who are in need in the communities at risk, would go to the facility.

As I said before, this would be started in the first quarter of 1994, after we have had the fact finding mission going, and we have identified the non-governmental organizations which will be assisting with the programme. The fact remains that the need is there, and the people who would benefit from the programme would be those in need.

I would now move on to the CARE Programme which we started in the last two years, and which we have again re-emphasized as part of this year's social safety net. *[Interruption]*

**Mr. Vice-President:** Would you allow the Senator to make her contribution, please.

**Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams:** I need to re-emphasize these programmes because many of us need to know that, for nearly everything whenever the need arises, the Government has provided some sort of answer to our needs. If we listen very carefully we would see that in almost every sphere of want there is some kind of assistance; it does not matter how small it may be.

Community Action Revival Empowerment (CARE) is an ongoing programme of the ministry which mobilizes the energies and resources of communities around specialized projects geared towards enhancing the quality of life in the community.

I remember Sen. Dean talking about setting up a co-operative. I should like to let him know that there are several co-operatives that would use this CARE funding to assist them. Several of the community co-operatives came to the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs with their proposals for setting up the co-operatives and we have used the CARE Fund to assist them. This fund was there before, and we have reintroduced it for all these community projects.

The projects must be community driven; community groups are expected to be proactive agents, taking the lead role in defining their needs, and developing appropriate responses to these needs. This year we intend to put in a special CARE team to look at the projects which have been submitted.

As I said, we have had co-operatives enhancing libraries, where there was need for that sort of project. The pre-school at La Horquetta which Sen. Ojah-Maharaj spoke about is one that comes under CARE and there are several others—whatever the nature of the project, as long as it is community based and it assists someone. Sometimes we might have bent over a bit to help individuals who need that kind of support in setting themselves up and who applied to this CARE Fund for some kind of assistance. As I said before, nearly all the needs can be satisfied in some way by finances from one of the projects that we have.

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**2.40 p.m.**

This morning we heard, Sen. Daly talk about crime, which has been spoken about quite a lot in the Senate. We know what the police are doing but we also recognize that there is need for people participation in any programme with the police. Therefore, at all levels where we are emphasizing community-based programmes, we are also looking at a community-based approach to the whole business of crime as one small way in which the communities can help.

I am quite sure that you are familiar with what is called the "Neighbourhood Watch Programme". I should like to talk a little bit about this again. This programme seeks to find an appropriate community based approach to deal with the problems of crime that have been engaging the attention of citizens at large for some time now. Permit me, however, to quote the hon. Minister when he said:

"Our best efforts are the amelioration of social conditions. During this transition to growth, employment will be frustrated unless the problem of crime is aggressively controlled."

Government in recognizing its responsibility in the face of an increasingly persistent crime wave, feels that there is need for gentle intervention, one that has a definite impact on the overall situation as it exists today.

This year we have decided to assist in the setting up of these neighbourhood watch groups. We know that there is no simple solution to the problem of crime, but we recognize that groups coming together can address the issue of protection and enhancement of the environment. We are happy when citizens demonstrate an awareness of their responsibility towards assisting to manage the environment. Indeed, we feel certain that such a communal approach to dealing with deep-rooted societal problems can have long-lasting, positive effects on the whole nation. However, the approach to community protection and establishment of community watch groups must be carefully and delicately handled.

My ministry has been meeting with the police service, for the last few months in an effort to forge a partnership with the police in our attempts at alleviating crime. Those discussions confirm our belief that community groups can be used effectively in crime prevention. Our aim is to facilitate the setting up of such groups throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

The basic concept in facilitating these groups is geared towards servicing the needs of their community life and their local environment as a whole. This is



premised upon the understanding that it is the function of the police to implement the law. We also know that community groups must not believe that they are little police stations: the police are ultimately responsible. We also know that the community knows the environment better than anyone else and is in the best position to recognize the would-be perpetrators of crime. The police cannot be everywhere at the same time. As I have said before, these neighbourhood groups are the eyes and the ears of the police.

In seeking to implement this programme, our approach in the initial stages will be to convince citizens of the benefits a community group can derive from a mechanism like the neighbourhood watch group, and from unity so that they would be in a better position to enhance their local environment. Funding for this programme will be provided by the Government.

While this is being done, the officers of my ministry will meet with the police in their respective divisions—this has already been arranged—to apprise them of the developments with the programme and for the benefit of whatever advice they may have to offer.

The next phase will involve discussions with community leadership, the police and the ministry in order to arrive at appropriate mechanisms for the smooth and effective functioning of the community group. I reiterate that the groups must not do the work of the police. The police have the authority to act in certain ways. The civilian population does not have similar authority, but they can assist the work of the police by listening for them, by being keenly observant and providing them with prompt communication. The partnership between the police and the community begins with trust.

We are now in the process of developing a public education programme that will build community awareness of the exciting possibilities for such a programme and foster a partnership of trust. The full programme is expected to begin in early March, 1994. The Public Education Programme will be carried on jointly between the police service and the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs.

**Mr. Vice-President:** The hon. Senator's speaking time has expired.

*Motion made,* That the hon. Senator's speaking time be extended by 15 minutes. [*Hon. L. Saith*]

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams:** Let me, at this time, congratulate the Police Affairs Division for the work that they have been doing with the police youth clubs, something that we had drawn our inspiration from, and the ministry has already offered some assistance to the Police Affairs Division in supporting those clubs.

We are looking at the much talked about industrial cottages and malls that have been there for some time. The ministry has worked with the Small Business Development Company and is in the process of beginning a community based export promotion programme, (T&T Plus), with those malls and cottages and any other location. The people who will be working there will be the heads of households, together with master craftsmen. The full programme has been submitted by the Small Business Development Company. At the moment we have some of the master craftsmen in training, with small business, and we intend to launch the programme on February 28. The facilities are now being restored and we have interim management teams put into place.

Can I look at another division of our Ministry—Culture. I wish to look broadly at some of the areas on which we will focus specifically in 1994. As you know, our main focus will be the development and promotion of the arts; the preservation and protection of our cultural heritage, and the organization and presentation of large-scale festivals.

This year, 1993, we did most things on a community basis and we have found that to be a most successful way to go. As I have told this honourable Senate before, we have used the community basis for our major festival of Ramleela, Phagwa and the indigenous festivals, Emancipation. We intend to use the same approach in 1994.

In 1994, we are looking at the first stage of our events tourism, which will take in Carnival, which we have already prepared, a steelpan festival, Tobago Heritage, and a cultural festival in November. These festivals we intend to package—and I am quite sure that Sen. Merritt who talked about packaging of our culture will be happy to hear that—to transmit these by satellite or videos.

The Senator talked about the marketing of the various festivals. Today we began with, a meeting at my office the theme is, "A Vision for the Future". This is the first stage of the Carifesta VI programming. We have with us the members of the regional secretariat. I have said that we are starting this today, although it is in 1995, simply because we are thinking in terms of proper marketing of the festival,

plus the fact that we feel that with such a festival we should be able to do something with our tourist industry. But we need to do it well ahead of time, so that there will be a greater impact than it ever had before on the wider population, outside Trinidad and Tobago, even outside the Caribbean region. So, plans have started today and at the end of January invitations will go out to the various Heads of Government.

**2.50 p.m**

We also intend to further expand the Best Village Programme. As you know, for some time that programme had been dormant. We have gone through two phases of it and we should have recognized that there was need for greater community involvement, so whatever is produced comes out of the people. When a village comes on stage we should have an idea of a cross-section of that particular community. We therefore, intend to work to ensure that that happens within the next year. We intend to ensure that any training facilities we put in place will benefit all the members of the particular village.

We are happy to note that after our last Carifesta we had several community committees and those committees have stayed in place and have assisted us in mounting several other festivals. One of the things that we are proud about, is bringing to the forefront that kind of community spirit as we try to have each one share in this multi-cultural committee.

Out of Carifesta we had the National Dance Company formed. Those of you who note the impact of the Jamaican Dance Company will note how important a national dance theatre company is, and this year we intend to do something more with this company, providing it with a home, more specialized training and enhancing the company. In fact, we have looked at our best village programmes and we saw a number of people who could be drawn into this National Dance Company. With our tourism thrust we shall have a lot more to show to those who would join us.

Also, in 1994, in the field of culture, we shall be hosting the Seventh Meeting of Culture Ministers and Officials responsible for cultural policies in Latin America. We feel that we need to forge closer links with Latin America and the Caribbean and therefore this particular meeting which will take place in November 1994, is very welcome by us in Trinidad and Tobago. Cultural exchange, the sharing of cultural goods and services can be said to be a natural starting point for the forging of other links among peoples. The last meeting was

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held in Chile about two weeks ago and Trinidad and Tobago was chosen for the 1994 meeting.

I need to say a little about the National Carnival Commission as this is the Commission which organizes one of our largest national festivals. The mission statement of the NCC is the "Industry of enjoyment and the enjoyment of industry". The Commission is clear in its mind about its managing of the 1994 carnival, plans are already in place for that. Last year, for the first time, we went into the business of exclusive media rights and I wish to let the national population know that in 1994 there will be no exclusive media rights. We are hoping to have our carnival package on a pay-per-view basis. We have already sent a team abroad headed by Minister Draper, and the Chairman of the NCC and the Chairman of CCN and they have already looked at the possibilities for marketing Carnival 1994.

We had already set up a market in St. Lawrence market in Toronto just before the Caribana festival.

**Sen. W. Mark:** On a point of clarification. Is the Minister referring to CCN or CNN? I am not too clear of what she said. She rushed it.

**Sen. The Hon. J Yuille-Williams:** I was watching my time. Yes, it is Mr. Ken Gordon who has an interest in it. Last year they had the contract for it and the contract goes differently as the case may be. *[Interruption]* We are not having that type again next year; we are looking at a different package and the plans are already in place for it.

We also have an opportunity to participate in the year of drama in the City of Manchester as well as we have an invitation to do the closing ceremony of the Commonwealth games in Victoria, British Columbia in 1994 where they would like to have a Trinidad and Tobago style of costumes, carnival, calypso and pan. That is another big first for us and the NCC is now given the mandate to look at the possibility of Trinidad and Tobago doing the closing ceremony of the 1994 Games. We are excited about it.

As usual, we are trying to look at our Dimanche Gras show again. This year we moved the Dimanche Gras to the National Stadium. There were certain things the people were saying. We have listened, and we are again working on having a very professional show for 1994.

Our calypso tent. I need to announce this again. For 1994 we have already selected eight of our very good young singers who would line up among some of

our senior singers; we have started a training programme for both sets. In fact, one of the programmes we are doing for our veteran calypsonian is managing their finances, because the NCC feels that it is an important aspect of the development of our calypsonians.

Finally, in terms of our culture, in 1994 we shall see the King and Queen of the World Carnival Competition in September. We are trying to tie all these things into the cultural festival which comes at the end of the year. This in itself is going to be a very big, well-marketed festival as we are now providing facilities for the NBA to assist them in marketing. If this show is well marketed, we expect to see a number of visitors coming in for the King and Queen of the World competition in 1994.

Very briefly, on the steelband. Many people have been asking about the sum of \$7.5 million which was given to steelband development. As you know, our stated position is that the release of the money will come when we are presented with projects which we feel were carefully thought out. May I announce to this honourable Senate that Pan Trinbago has given us two projects; one on the development of the steelpan and the other on Pan Trinbago Investment Company Limited, both of which seems very feasible, and we are working with them, making some minor changes to the board and, the first disbursement will be made in April.

Finally, in terms of our women's affairs, as you know our Division is quite small, just about four non-technical members. We have received US \$400,000 on the IDB grant to strengthen that Division. In order to strengthen it, we had to do something first. We had to put in a director, assistant director, technical people as well as four project officers. The Cabinet has already approved those positions and they will be advertised shortly. As soon as that is in, the advertisement for the consultants will go out and within two years' time we should have a strong Women's Affairs Division.

In the meantime, part of the funding from the IDB will be used to support some of the NGOs. One of the things that I can very quickly go to is that we notice that as a result of some of the laws passed there were not enough support services put into it—counsellors, advisory services and so forth. We decided that part of our funding would go—not only to develop our capabilities within our ministry—but also to those specialized NGOs that can assist in that way. Often people have problems and they do not know where they should go or what they can do, they

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can go there. Therefore we intend to strengthen some of those NGOs that are already in the business of doing some of the things that need to be done, while the Government is trying to strengthen its own Division.

We are also working very quickly on getting our house in order for the United Nations Fourth World Conference in Beijing. Our country's research has started, we are to present a national report which will in turn go to the regional and the Latin American body. It is a long haul for us, but we have received some funding from several agencies, including Caricom, the OAS and the Belize Development Bank, and we are hoping to use that to put this country in a good position for the United Nations Fourth World Conference in Beijing. In fact, some time later I will make another statement so that I would reach out to the NGOs and everybody else about our plans on our way to Beijing—what would be happening within the ministry, what would be happening with our NGOs.

Mr. Vice-President, I am sorry for the pace at which I have had to move, but I do hope that I have been able to give some insight into the work of my ministry for the 1994 programme.

Thank you very much for the opportunity.

**3.00 p.m.**

**Sen. Roi Kwabene:** Mr. Vice-President, the first thing I should like to do is to make an observation which is very significant, despite the fact that I am not a woman.

Recently, the Government received a large grant of over US\$400,000 to deal with this whole issue of women in this country. I think it is very unfortunate that the Minister did not see it necessary to start off on that juncture, taking into consideration the fact that women in this country have always been on the receiving end of discrimination. In this country to date, there is no bureau where any woman could go to receive any form of support or assistance, as far as discrimination is concerned.

I am really unhappy about this document in particular—

**Sen. Yuille-Williams:** Mr. Vice-President, I thank Sen. Kwabene for the opportunity to let this honourable Senate know that on December 3, 1993 at the Rudranath Capildeo Resource Centre we signed the document to receive the US \$400,000. Because it is that important, as I said before, I need to find a particular forum to address how it will be spent. This is a very important aspect of the grant and we need—

**Hon. Senator:** This is the forum.

**Sen. Yuille-Williams:** —the time that is necessary to do so. It has nothing to do with contempt for women. In fact, I am extremely happy to have that US \$400,000.

**Sen. R. Kwabene:** Mr. Vice-President, we are witnessing a situation in Trinidad and Tobago where every two minutes the Government is speaking about NGOs. I sincerely hope that at no time the PNM Government would strive to utilize political patronage to control what are known as NGOs.

The 1994 Budget represents another manifestation of the inability of the PNM regime to effectively manage the affairs of our beloved Republic. The fiscal measures proposed for consideration are odious, and for the most part impractical and unorthodox. However, as we seriously examine our present predicament as a nation, we are challenged by the existing reality of untoward global conditions. The Minister himself referred to this truth on page 6 of his Budget:

"I make these points, Madam Speaker, to underline the fact that global economic and political relations are undergoing major changes as we approach the dawn of the 21st century."

He was referring to the fact that in today's world there is a new global economic order. However, it is also interesting to note that the Government also acknowledges the value of the human resource, and human resource management, at that. The Government even goes so far as to list the crucial necessity of forging formidable links with the labour movement in this effort to activate or achieve the goal of development. It is unfortunate, however, that the Government has neglected the most important principle of consultation. This would have afforded our people a unique opportunity of true participation.

The Minister referred to a particular partnership—the Geriatric/Adolescent Partnership—to my surprise. I remember distinctly in my maiden contribution in this Senate, a statement I made in regard to harnessing our young people and our elderly. I am pleased to see that most of the issues that were brought up on this side of the Senate have been accepted, finally, by the Government. However, there is only one little problem—they never acknowledge where they get their points or their ideas.

We are confronting a situation today where the People's National Movement neglects to afford our population an opportunity to truly participate in the running

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of the affairs of their own country. The PNM could never be serious when it proclaims as its theme: "Our shared vision: An invitation to participate". In 1992, during the 1993 Budget debate, when it was suggested that the responsibility of the Government was to educate the masses on the implications of our debt crisis, it was never envisioned that such an exercise would actually be exploited by the PNM to instead hoodwink the population by the use of public relations gimmicks. I make specific reference to the fact that previous to the budget there was an anticlimax, with the Minister of Finance appearing on television and telling us "Do not worry, be happy".

True participation would indeed herald the end of alienation of the young man at Laventille, the single mother in St. Ann's; the chairman of the largest conglomerate; the doubles vendor at Curepe, who will soon be taxed; the agricultural worker in Debe; and the fisherman in Charlotteville. So if we are to think, imagine or project where we, as a nation, need to go let us face the facts of life. It is important.

What does this 1994 Budget mean to us here in Trinidad and Tobago? The Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Hon. K. Valley) proposes that we seek to become the Caribbean's global city. He claims that our particular circumstances and collective wisdom and experiences over the past 35 years will assist. Life in Trinidad and Tobago today is difficult. All our citizens are at risk. So when I hear Members on the other side making reference to communities at risk—the entire republic is at risk; all the citizens are at risk. For example, it is our elderly who are on the receiving end of burglaries and stick-ups, and at the end of the day the police are very slow to respond. Why? Because they have not been provided with the facilities with which to tackle the problem.

### **3.10 p.m.**

The Aids epidemic, crime, uncertainty, despair, poverty, homelessness and disaffection colour our daily lives. Our social systems are, in fact, unable to cope with the current state of impairment. Our children, our elders, our youth are victims every day in a never-ending controversy. How can we sit here and be comfortable with the present, with images of our citizens violently resisting any attempt by local authorities through their legal arm to displace them as they seek to empower themselves gainfully as social partners? I speak here of our vendors who are the descendants of the immigrants who came here as indentured



labourers, as well as those of the Africans who came here as chattel slaves and, today, they are not afforded an opportunity to earn their livelihood in the city.

The so-called beautification will become a reality, but at the expense of our people. We do not want to see aliens controlling Port of Spain. We want to see our people plying their trade legally, gainfully, with compassion. If we are not careful, Port of Spain would soon become a source of much discontentment, if not social mayhem. I am sure you will remember that there was a committee which sat here and discussed the whole issue of beautifying the city. Despite the fact that there are certain arrangements in this Senate where only one Member of the Opposition could be present—and I was that Member—I was unable to stem the tide and, today, they claim to have beautified a certain part of the city. However, we are not secure, because the city is about people, not about buildings or concrete, chairs and tables.

**Sen. W. Mark:** Concrete draughtboards.

**Sen. R. Kwabene:** No, it is not about that. Why in Trinidad and Tobago where our watchwords are "Discipline, Production and Tolerance" can we not invoke them when considering the plight of the vendors? Vending is not an isolated phenomenon. All over the world research of developed countries will reveal that this issue can be successfully resolved; and it will serve, equally, the interests of all concerned; in the United Kingdom, Holland, and Germany. We can even look at our neighbours in the Caribbean—Barbados, Antigua. We can even go as far as Sudan, Ethiopia, Egypt and India. These people have that phenomenon and they have been able to deal with it, this issue of vending, which can be resolved.

**Mr. Valley:** Mr. Vice-President, I want to inform the hon. Senator that as he speaks there is a committee sitting right out there looking at resolving that issue for Port of Spain.

**Sen. Daly:** Wait a minute, before the hon. Minister leaves us again, when was that committee convened and at whose instigation?

**Sen. Merritt:** Who is on the committee?

**Mr. Valley:** Mr. Vice-President, on Friday in the House I had a conversation with my brother Minister, Minister Draper, asking him at the request of the Mayor to use part of the Richmond Street car park as a market for the vendors. If you would notice, the President of DOMA is not here because he is at that meeting, as

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he believes we ought to look for another spot. That discussion is continuing right now. We know that we have to try to find some meeting ground with the vendors.

The fact is that at previous Christmases the Government allowed the vendors to use the streets, but given that the vendors, on the advice of some of their people, went to court; and given that there is now a court decision, obviously, we cannot allow vendors to use the streets, but we are trying to find some alternative accommodation for them.

**Sen. Daly:** Before the Minister takes his seat, would he indicate who is representing the vendors in that meeting?

**Mr. Valley:** Mr. Vice-President, this is a matter, first of all, for the Government to come up with a possible solution before getting involved with other parties.

**Sen. Daly:** So they have no representation?

**Sen. R. Kwabene:** Mr. Vice-President, I sincerely hope that I did not lose much of my time. It is very important, because I have many other issues to cover, and I should like to add my "10 cents worth" with regard to this vendors' issue. I entered this Parliament in 1992. Why did it take so many years, even previous to my presence here, to deal with that issue? It is nothing new in Port of Spain, nor throughout this country.

**Hon. Senator:** Nor any other part of the world.

**Sen. R. Kwabene:** Mr. Vice-President, as I was saying, why can we not firmly decide on providing these people with suitable infrastructure like tents, tables, so that they can ply their trade on selected streets at regulated intervals in all our major towns and cities, as opposed to a recurring problem every year in December? It is a simple matter.

I think it is unfortunate, to a certain extent, for us to showcase the global city and not have sympathy for the social partners. Let us do something about it now, before it is too late. This system which governs our beloved Republic is in need of urgent reform. This telling tale is further exposed as we take cognizance of the plunge of our sacred institutions. We need to reform and if we do not, soon we would pay a dear penalty.

Evidence such as the endangered financial sector based on extravagances and questionable activities in that sphere invokes mistrust and anger that could well

bubble over. When are we going to address fundamental issues like accountability and justice?

Our Constitution is in dire need of reform. Laws governing this nation need to be re-examined with a view to changing them to suit the needs of the people. Parliament and the Judiciary leave a bitter taste in the mouths of many. People have lost respect for the so-called exemplars. Are we going to address these issues? I heard nothing about them in the budget. The Parliament is fast becoming a farce. National redemption can become a reality in Trinidad and Tobago only when we consider full participation of our citizens. But they must have adequate representation at all levels. One may even need to question the "*moderus operandi*" of this Government as regards our sovereignty and our patrimony.

**Sen. Capildeo:** "Murderous"—excellent pun. [*Interruption*]

**Sen. R. Kwabene:** Yes, Sir, our priorities need to be put in order. Thirty-seven years of mismanagement has placed us in an unfortunate situation as regards this debt crisis. Perhaps the Westminster style of Government needs to be changed to suit our needs. But the policies of the PNM seem to lead us further into debt. We no longer dictate our own pace. We are constrained by conditionalities of foreign agencies and governments, also referred to as mega trading blocs.

It is slavery again, Mr. Vice-President. We currently owe close to TT \$16,218.6 million and that is TT \$12,900 per individual—man, woman, and child. We are conscious of our recent past, be it chattel slavery, indentureship, colonialism, independence, neo-colonialism and now we are a republic. I even heard the former party being called a Republican Party. But these things should serve as a lesson to us on this journey "down the road".

**3.20 p.m.**

But, Mr. Vice-President, we do not seem to have learnt anything from the past. We seem quite prepared to blindly continue borrowing and accepting grants. Meanwhile, the Government remains committed to servicing its foreign debt at all costs. These people do not seem intelligent enough to recognize that we need to feed ourselves. Imagine, an import food bill of \$900 million. That is a lot of money.

**Sen. W. Mark:** \$1.4 billion.

**Sen. R. Kwabene:** Tell me this thing. That is a lot of money to foot. Yet, agriculture remains a prominent issue in developmental theory; however,

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practically, we are lacking the will and the wherewithal to accept the need to propel this sector to contribute to our foreign exchange, our earning capacity, as import substitution and even to provide employment.

Flooding remains unabated. It appears that those on the opposite side are not concerned with flooding, so we have failed to accept the responsibility of constructing catchment areas in the Northern Range to enable us to have water during the dry season.

It seems that WASA is also in chaos—I saw the signs last night—and we are still seeking loans to be repaid. Yes! And workers have to be retrenched as well. At a cost of over \$400,000, we have to go down that road. No way! We have to give serious consideration to the future of our people.

Why do we not stop to consider our population growth? Why have we not educated our population on the difference between family planning and contraception? Why have we not established a policy on AIDS? This is a very important issue because when we speak about AIDS, we speak about the future.

During the 10-year period, 1983 to 1992, it is estimated that we lost 784 HIV positive AIDS victims. This is frightening when one takes into consideration that not even one facility has been established in this country to assist the victims of AIDS. Mr. Vice-President, do you know what is going to happen to us? I will tell this Senate what the future holds for us.

We are speaking here about a situation that is going to occur in our country within the next three to five years. As a result of our neglect, we shall end up with elderly people, 50 years of age and over, because it seems that in Trinidad and Tobago when one reaches 50 years of age, one is safe.

**Sen. W. Mark:** Not again.

**Sen. R. Kwabene:** Not again. But the point remains that we are going to witness the demise, because of lifestyle diseases, of many of our citizens between the ages of 11 and 49. What is going to happen is that we shall be left with the healthy young and the healthy elderly and, in-between, there will be few survivors. How would we be able to establish any form of development in this country if we do not have the sort of support for that?

We have failed to address the burning issues of our people at risk. The gender issues remain untouched and, of course, there is the need for us to protect our elderly. But what is this talk about safety net? That is a myth. Since I was a little

boy, I have been listening to the Dr. The Right Hon. Eric Williams, the first Prime Minister of this country. He has presented budgets in the other House. It is obvious that most of the expenditure coming under the heading of what is referred to as the safety net was originally provided under "Heads of Expenditure". I mean, here and there they may have put in a million, or half a million, or \$250,000, but at the end of the day, it is still a myth.

These allocations are necessary. Let us look at them.

"\$211.3 million for old age pensions"

Is that not necessary? That should not be included in any safety net. It is the Government's responsibility to provide today for those people who provided for us in the past.

"\$130 million for unemployment relief programme"

Ridiculous! The Prime Minister had the gall to speak to people in our beloved country and he is claiming if I may quote from the *Daily Express*, "URP A MODEL FOR THE WORLD". This is a disgrace and a shame. URP represents chaos, corruption, misappropriation of funds and sexual abuse. This programme started as a Best Village project, a crash programme, even to assist people who were coming out of the prison system to provide them with something to do. I sincerely hope it was not to control the bad Johns of that era; but that is a strong charge.

Anyway, the safety net is a myth. We have to face that. It is a myth that needs to be dealt with because many elderly people are of the opinion that it is quite possible that they will be getting a raise in their pensions.

"\$89.5 million for food subsidy

\$79 million for School Feeding Programme

\$54.3 million for social assistance"

Social assistance was already part and parcel of previous regimes. What is this new thing about social safety net?

"\$43 million for free medicine"

Mr. Vice-President, many people visit health centres throughout this country and do not receive prescribed drugs because they are not available.

"\$24.5 million for grants to assist schools and colleges"

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Were they not always doing this for selected schools?

"\$22 million for apprenticeship schemes

\$11.5 million for orphanages

\$10 million for Civilian Conservation Corps"

I am frightened about that one. I am scared about that one, because I sincerely hope they are not trying to establish in this country a people's militia amongst our young people. I sincerely hope that is not the plan. Because they can empower those young people to make them feel that they are so powerful over their peers where they live, and that would be a problem. However, I know there are other problems there, but I shall not go into them just yet. I have to get substantiated evidence.

"\$5.5 million for SERVOL"

This is a mamaguy.

"\$3.5 million for feeding programme for the needy"

This was just spoken of.

However, this whole thing about NGOs. Are we not tired of hearing NGO, NGO, NGO—over and over? Nobody speaks about Goodwill Life Industries down the road and what they need. Nobody speaks about the children who are disadvantaged, the children who are disabled in this society. No facilities provided and no support provided by the Government up to now. But they are speaking about social safety net. Something has to be done, because at the end of the day—the same old lady in South who was spoken of, who takes in children, took in another baby and I sincerely hope she would be the recipient of some form of support from the Government.

NGOs are in danger of being manipulated and controlled by this Government because they are boasting about the grants and the assistance they are receiving from the IDB. I am scared and worried about that, because I am concerned that it would be used as political patronage for those whom they can control. And the conditionalities, of course!

The role of the media in education. Every time I come to this Senate, I have to speak about that. Where is the *Express*? Look at the cover of this newspaper. Is this what we are teaching our young people? "Queen of the Pack". This is what we are promoting in this country.

**Sen. Merritt:** And NBS radio supporting.

**3.30 p.m.**

**Sen. R. Kwabene:** Of course. Manipulation of the state media to set our youth astray.

You are not even playing local music. You are playing 98.9 per cent what? Dub! But listen to the problems. There is this whole issue of our young people, illiteracy, the music and the role of the media. It seems that nobody on that side has found it necessary to echo the point that I have made here, that some attempt should be utilized in the new merger between TTT and NBS to have, at least, one station providing the public with educational material. We are speaking about an opportunity here that should be grasped. This is up the street of the Minister of Planning and Development. This is up the street of open university.

We want to ensure that even if the University is seen as an institution outside the community, as an alien institution, that somehow—I do not want to use the words “safety net”, that is a bad term—it should encourage people who did not finish school to complete their education via the media. Illiteracy has its price, and it is a dear price we shall have to pay. Illiterates are not easy to deal with. Sometimes they are a danger to their own selves.

I should like to quote from the McIntyre Draft:

"The economic downturn and severe cuts in social spending of the past years are taking their toll in terms of reduced quality, unresponsiveness and the performance of the entire educational system. There is also a problem of inefficient management and allocation of resources. Increasingly, an inequitable system seems to be developing in terms of geographical and gender related access to the secondary school system."

How soon are we going to address this whole issue of education in our beloved land? Because as I indicated earlier, there are also children with special needs and we need to address that as well. Many of our young people are disadvantaged even at home, based on the fact that Sesame Street was not designed for normal children, but children with special needs, and we continually broadcast it to our people, not recognizing its role. These are issues which need to be looked at. It may seem a laughing matter, but it is extremely serious.

I wonder if the Scarborough Junior Secondary School in Tobago would ever be repaired? It is falling down due to the seepage of water. Tobago is separated by

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water and I sincerely hope that at no time at all it is on the agenda of this Government to discriminate against these people. I have lived in Tobago. I am not a born Tobagonian, but I have lived there, and I think that we have a few things to learn from the people in Tobago as well. At the end of the day, Tobago still remains neglected.

There are issues in Tobago that we need to look at. One of them is the same US \$400,000 allocated to the ministry. None was allocated for the women of Tobago. I did not hear anything said about that. With regard to the training and support for employment, these things need to be clearly identified. If Tobago has a serious fire the building would burn down, because there are not have enough fire tenders. Tobago still needs a performing arts theatre. Trinidad does not have a national theatre as yet. There were only promises, promises, promises. The Nobel Laureate may have a little problem also. Tobago is also in need of a public health laboratory, so that you can take your specimens for testing and not have them spoil in transit to Trinidad.

When we are speaking about young people in Trinidad and Tobago, I think it is very significant for us to quote the hon. Minister of National Security who claimed that 80 per cent of the crime committed in this country is committed by young persons between the ages of 18 and 24. In 1990 alone, 273 persons were apprehended for such offences. In 1991, it was 290, in 1992, 417 young people. For the period January 1, 1993 to October 31, there were 1,627 offenders between the ages of 14 and 25, charged with offences ranging from murder to robberies, break-ins, embezzlement and larceny. Would we ever be able to stem that tide with the type of safety net that they have?

When you want to address a problem, you should look at the root causes. You do not put plaster on it. Deal with the root of the problem. As I indicated in this Senate, do not blame the children. Parenting is a serious problem in this country, and you cannot even put the full blame on the parents, even though they do make irresponsible decisions, like putting that Government in power.

We are talking about young people, the human resource. When you take into consideration that if you were to leave the Senate at this moment and go on the street corners of Trinidad and Tobago, you would see only young people hanging out there. They have nothing to do. Do you know what they told me? They said, "One of these days, Roi, you are with them, so we might give you a senatorial licking." Younger people than I speaking like that. When I was their age, I would



not even attempt to tell an elder person something so. But respect has broken down in this country, totally. Since it has broken down and we are reinforcing it with 98.9, we can expect only chaos at the end of the day.

If we believe that the Rastafari in this country at a particular time was a threat to stability, mind you, when the time comes and these very young people whom we see wearing Malcolm X jerseys, and going about the place brandishing guns and knives, even constructing their own guns—would we ever be able to stem that tide? I do not think so. However, I have a little contribution to make.

Apart from the fact that the Government has finally decided to spend a little money in the area of libraries—we appreciate that—but at the same time, how are you going to get the people to go into the library? You need to have some sort of programme to encourage them, to entice them, to enter the library. You have to use *avant-garde* means. You cannot expect to just tell people, "come and read a book". You have to use audio visual and social partners, like writers and artists, to encourage literacy.

Recently established in Trinidad and Tobago is an Association for the Advancement of School Athletics. I would implore this Government that it provide all the support it can to that association, so that we can have another—I want to say Wendell Mottley, but I am afraid. But we would hope if he or she does reconsider entering the arena of politics, he or she would adopt a stance that would be beneficial to the upliftment of our people at home and abroad.

### **3.40 p.m.**

Somehow when we speak of Trinidad and Tobago we seem to forget that we have citizens abroad who care much about us and would like to establish stronger links. But as you are well aware, during my stay, in the United Kingdom, I discovered that Trinidad and Tobago is largely invisible to the outside world. They know nothing about us, and that is unfortunate. I am hearing strains of Shadow's latest calypso, "Pay the Devil", and I am wondering if we would have to pay the devil at the end of the day. At present, despite all concerns raised in this Senate, we all know the "Ayes" have it.

Unless we have some sort of reform in the parliamentary system, no change in the Constitution would come. Sometimes I feel so helpless here—six of us—and when the "Ayes" have it, the "Noes" have to be quiet. It is unfortunate. *[Interruption]* I am going to deal with that issue. The Ministry of Information would get a little touching as well.

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The Ministry of Information (or misinformation), is guilty of being used as a propaganda machine for this Government. I have evidence; I am not making any wild allegations. I had an opportunity to attend a conference of international delegates, representing the CPA at the Trinidad Hilton. While at that conference a particular document called *The Info News*, or whatever, was formerly presented. In this document, they had pictures of all Members of the Lower House and pictures of the Upper House were, perhaps, being kept for a special fire.

The Upper House, was nowhere represented. In fact, I do not even think they brought out another issue; they could have asked me; I would have given them assistance in terms of putting out an issue of any document. But in Trinidad and Tobago we have a way of disregarding our talents, and this is unfortunate.

This whole issue of equity as far as coverage is concerned is something that needs to be looked at. For instance, I have also noticed that in the media—and this is no attack on the media; I am talking about all media—for some strange reason, it appears that since this blue book was laid, all fall down. This blue book is an indictment against the PNM, when one takes into consideration that since 1956 they have there. This is not a pleasing document. I would not cast any aspersions on the police service because they have their job to do. When one releases a document like this, one interferes with the confidence of the police service, to a certain extent.

In addition to this, it could be used as a tool to divide and rule, and one wonders whether there is a secret agenda with regard to the tabling of this document at this time. I do not even want to quote from it, because it would bring tears to my eyes, when I take into consideration that we are supposed to support the police service; they are there to protect and serve.

If this document could say that the police service is like a fire brigade station—those are the words—responding only to emergencies, neglecting to detect and prevent crime, then what are we doing? We are spinning top in mud. As I have always indicated in this forum, we are either part of the problem or part of the solution.

One wonders what are the strategies the PNM have planned for employment in our beloved land, taking into consideration that they held this big conference where they tabled 20 such proposals. With your permission, Sir, I should like to list them:

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- (i) Stimulation of the coconut industry and the establishment of a wet processing plant with necessary feasibility studies;
- (ii) Introduction of satellite garment manufacturing factories;
- (iii) Organization of the handicraft industry;
- (iv) Furthering of ornamental glass industry;
- (v) A soft loan window at banks;

I am yet to see that—

- (vi) Training of women to undertake fruit and vegetable processing;

I think they did that—

- (vii) Adoption of the ADB land proposals;

They did not do that—

**Mr. Vice-President:** The speaking time of the Senator has expired.

*Motion made,* That the Senator's speaking time be extended by 15 minutes  
[*Sen. W. Mark*]

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Sen. R. Kwabene:** Thank you very much, Mr. Vice-President.

- (viii) Environment enhancement;

I guess that has something to do with the fact that they have their new Civilian Corps. I am concerned about the way those new jeeps are driven on the road, nevertheless.

- (ix) The utility of 30 acres of state land for horticulture;
- (x) Endorsement of use of pension funds for domestic housing;

They did that—

- (xi) Rationalization of the food crop industry;

they did not do that—

- (xii) Rationalization of the skills training through the National Training Agency;

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they did not do that—

- (xiii) Implementation of given manufacturing products;

they have not done that as yet—

- (xiv) Refurbishment of community centres under LIDP;

I heard some promises of some refurbishment of community centres, is this part of this? Okay, they are planning to do that.

**Sen. Yuille-Williams:** We have started the process of refurbishing community centres.

**Sen. R. Kwabene:** Thank you, hon. Minister.

- (xv) Encouragement of lease out of oil wells;

I think they did that—

- (xvi) Establishment of a shoe polish production facility;

they did not even do that—

- (xvii) Establishment of a textile fabric designing and manufacturing facility;

they did not do that—

- (xviii) The manufacture of pottery objects for religious purposes;

they did not do that—

- (xix) A shrimp project;

they did not do that—

- (xx) Opening of construction co-operatives;

They may promise to do that at the winding up of this debate.

The fact remains that when they were in Opposition, they said that the PNM would be able to provide jobs. They had their blueprint to provide any employment, but to this day they have been unable to provide any employment.

**Mr. Valley:** Mr. Vice-President, again, let me point out that the statistics in the *Review of the Economy* suggest that between 1991 and 1992, 5,000 jobs were created in this economy.

**Sen. R. Kwabene:** I am not prepared to enter into any discussions on that matter because my time is being wasted and I am unlucky with that. The Minister would have his say in 1995 when the time arises.

Mr. Vice-President, as I indicated to you earlier, we are sitting on a time bomb.

**Hon. Senator:** The public gallery?

**Sen. R. Kwabene:** I would address my people, do not get tied up with that. The Senator had his opportunity and he fouled it up.

We are living in very serious times. I have heard repeated statements, threats etc, concerning this Senate and the other place. Our parliamentary system is endangered. There are many people out there with some wild ambitions. One has to be ever so careful in this time of the despot. It is only a matter of time before the balisier withers because the sun is getting hotter and hotter.

**3.50 p.m.**

**Sen. Carol Mahadeo:** Mr. Vice-President, I see that the theme of our budget is: Our Shared Vision: An Invitation To Participate. It is a very commendable title, I must say. I can see it is also the aim of this budget that Trinidad and Tobago should be the Caribbean's global city. I am stressing it over and over again, because every other Member who has already spoken since last week has used both these themes and sub-themes to very good advantage.

What has worried me greatly is what I read in the fifth paragraph of the first page of the budget speech:

"However, as we near the plateau in such efforts and sacrifice we must reexamine several profound questions:"

He went on to recite four of them. Before we go on to the various things he has recited here, I must say that many moons ago when I was in teacher training, I learnt somewhere in my educational psychological classes, that there are plateaux in learning. I was told by my lecturer that when one reaches such a plateau—I understood it to be a flat place—one just marks time. One cannot progress or absorb anything further because one has reached saturation point.

The same is true in Geography. A plateau is elevated flat land. When one gets up there, one can see far afield, but is unable to do much, because one has reached at that self-same point. Vision, one may have, but my very good friend the

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Minister of Energy and Energy-based Industries very early in my days here in the Senate, said that he did not believe in visions. But I see he is part of a team.

Earlier this morning Minister Draper said that they are all part of the same big team. And the Minister of National Security said last Friday, that I would get back the Woodbrook Police Station, and the Sangre Grande Eastern Division Police Station, with all the perks. I hold them to their word.

**Sen. Barnes:** Except, that the teaching is, that "your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."

**Sen. C. Mahadeo:** Mr. Vice-President, I would not attempt to reply. I take it in good stride that what the hon. Minister has said, he is entitled to saying it. So he may dream and dream away at the things he wants.

Let us examine the prerequisites stated at the same page 2 of the budget.on that budget we had from the Minister of Finance. Page 2 states:

"...For any country seeking a role in the world of international commerce, regardless of how small, there must exist in that country:

(i) Excellent Infrastructure:

Road, sea and air transport

Ample and reliable electricity

Adequate good quality water and waste water treatment

World class telecommunications

Strong educational and health systems."

These are all very good ideas stated in the budget.

"(ii) A bureaucracy that is international in outlook, efficient and responsive."

(iii) A people living in harmony and welcoming to visitors."

I smile at this because coming straight through Piarco Airport into our country, it is a different kettle of fish.

"(iv) A workforce that is skilled, productive, flexible and willing to accept and embrace new technologies and practices."

This is very good on paper. This I shudder at, from my personal experience of just over a month ago.

"(v) An atmosphere of security and stability."

Stability is all right. We would work towards that. As for security, I do not know much about that. Even when we leave the Senate after 8.00 p.m. there are very little security arrangements for us as we strut out to our cars. The place is dimly lit and there is nothing to encourage us to get to our vehicles. Maybe, we would break our legs trying to get into them as fast as we can, and to get out of the precincts of the Parliament building.

"(vi) A sensitivity to the protection of the environment."

How can we unlock the potential inside each and every one of us, as citizens to be productive, creative and innovative to modernize our state—These are the things that have been set out as our main objectives in the budget report—if we do not first put in place the various infrastructure and incentives? Participation is a very good aim, but how are we to allow others to participate with us if we do not put the particular infrastructure and incentive to encourage that sort of participation?

Only then can we give generously, not only to ourselves, but also to the less fortunate among us. When we beat our drums at Christmas time, we may go to the members of the Salvation Army on the pavements with their little pots and put our donations, and say that we are helping those less fortunate, in the spirit of Christmas, but what happens after the Yuletide season is over? What are we doing for our less fortunate? Is it just word of mouth?

If the proposed anticipated revenue does not materialize, then according to our hon. Minister of Finance addressing a press conference, as I remember, after the presentation of the said 1994 Budget, there would be earlier, rather than later, increased taxes; change in exchange rates and a reduction of expenditure as an imperative. This means less accessible consumer income; higher cost of living and increased unemployment.

This has been the one big bad wolf word that has been echoed through this Chamber since last week. The very high rate of unemployment is one of the factors that could well breed—I do not want to raise a hornet's nest, because, Sen. Wade Mark, the Senate Minority Leader did allude to it last week—disturbance in the population. This could have disastrous effects. I have seen the makings of it

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outside there, not only here in the city and in the little townships, but also out in the country. We are having these little rumblings all around us.

**4.00 p.m.**

Our chief source of revenue at the moment is petroleum. Again, I look to our Minister of Energy and Energy-based Industries, who has control of petrotrin and other similar undertakings. The decline in world markets, the prices and our local production should motivate us now to diversify this economy quickly and much more than at present. As I see it, the areas to be developed are those of agriculture and tourism. Agriculture I shall leave to the more senior Senator on the Independent Bench, Prof. John Spence, who is the expert on that.

Our food import bill is over \$800 million per year [*Interruption*] I said I am leaving it to him, but in passing I must say something about it. Our food import bill, according to the hon. Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources, is \$800 million per year, while thousands of acres of arable lands lie fallow and under-utilized. [*Interruption*] No, I have no estate, but I do belong to the county of St. Andrew/St. David. Perhaps Minister Draper, who is in charge of reform, will put his eyes and ears into that aspect of it to see that some 75 per cent of the allocation of \$122 million to URP is put into productive labour for food grown locally.

This will assist to reduce the unemployment of 100,000 persons and generate a work ethic different from the 10-day syndrome that we have become used to, where three dozen people just stand along the highway, in any of these little projects, with a hoe, a rake and a fork, shaking their shoulders and you would think that they are digging and hoeing until you stand and look. Two men are at work while the others stand idly by just shaking themselves so that you the passer-by would believe that they are busy at work.

Our land distribution for agriculture. We should plant food crops. I know the Senator who is an expert on that will speak in greater detail. We must plan to grow them in large quantities for local consumption and possibly for export. There must be, at all times, a vigorous policy in agricultural reform. We must keep an eye on the agricultural market, if Government is so minded to allocate much more to agriculture and give it the place it deserves in our economy at this time. In relation to that, there must also be put in place better extension services, research, storage, packaging, labelling, credit facilities and subsidies, if we are to compete effectively and successfully.



I remember Sen. Dean and one other Senator referring in their contributions to the revival of the cocoa and coffee industries. I support that all the way because I, too, from my childhood have known the cocoa, coffee and banana industries to have been the mainstay of our lives, and of our having been sent to school and to get further education through those same cocoa and coffee and banana estates. Citrus has only now begun to rear its head.

Our cocoa and coffee lapsed only because we did not get the type of help from Government over the last several years. Our preparation of beans, the fermentation process, all that was discarded altogether. Country people who know these things will know that the fermentation process in cocoa is the most important aspect after having culled the beans. Our cocoa was known to be the most flavourful worldwide, so that the Cadbury people in the United Kingdom rushed to purchase our cocoa and coffee. Only now are we trying to get back, because I think cocoa and coffee are again making headway.

I am so sorry that the hon. Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources is not here, but his Parliamentary Secretary is here, and I know that he will pass the word on that we do want to see something happening in the area of higher subsidies. Give them more cess so that the cocoa and coffee industries can be revived. In this regard, we are threatened by places like Grenada. Little Grenada has taken over from us, and some of the Central American countries too because they have gone on to modern technology.

In addition to agriculture, we have the agro-industries, our fruits, our ponds for fish—the tilapia and cascadura—and shrimp. I remember driving along the East-West Corridor, where at the southern side of the Valsayn area, there used to be three or four ponds breeding tilapia some years ago. What has happened to that? *[Interruption]* They are still there, but we hear nothing about them. On the Butler Highway we do see a few strings of those tilapia hanging on a little stick and people calling on you from the sidewalks to buy. Why can we not farm them on a large scale? I know that Prof. Spence will do justice to that later.

We ought to give more incentives to private sector involvement in cottage industries. It is being done on a very small scale, but they should be assisted. I see no money being put aside for them in the budget. We do need to revive these so that these people become self-sufficient and we do not have to look at this high rate of unemployment. We can also have sheep and goat rearing. Encourage the small peasant farmers, and so save on our imports of meat and a loss of foreign

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exchange. Our junior Minister of Finance is here and he could, perhaps, listen to this and know that we can.

What has happened to the Anti-Dumping and Countervailing Duties Bill that we were asking about and getting hoarse over more than a year ago when another budget debate was in progress? I now remember that. Whatever became of that Bill? As I understand from the newspapers, much sub-standard poultry, to wit, ducklings and turkeys, in particular, that were salmonella infested in the United States and could not be used for Thanksgiving are being shuttled out to us. I hope that the American Ambassador will not call me to task for that. I understand that many of them are infested with salmonella and have been dumped. They will be dumped on us, if they are not already here.

As we are on the subject of agriculture, I go back to my pet subject, the Nonpareil Estate, in respect of on which the junior Finance Minister replied to me in another budget debate. I am still wondering what is happening to that 1800 acres of land. Could that not be farmed out to peasant farmers? It is not now a question of stealing, the workers were stealing and will continue to steal. If a person is given a portion to work and deal with as a peasant farmer, he would control his industry and there would be no more reason for him to steal.

#### **4.10 p.m**

That Nonpareil Estate which is lying fallow there from the last time I spoke—a year hence—it is in very much the same condition. Since we are paying a big security firm to oversee it and whatever bit of machinery that is left there—if that, too, has not been stolen by now. I am going into that security firm to find out who are the people manning the estate, its security proposals and provisions. I see the junior Minister is not even looking up to give me a glance at that.

**Mr. Valley:** Mr. Vice-President, would the Senator give way? I should like to assure her that I am listening to her and I thought that she would prefer that I would respond in my winding-up rather than deal with it at this time.

**Sen. C. Mahadeo:** Thank you very much—very gracious of you. Let us encourage the farmers to come in and get their part of the work. The same with Caroni (1975) Limited. You have grandiose plans for Caroni, I saw a little book being waved at me where there is a great big plan put aside for Caroni (1975) Limited. Why can the workers themselves not be given blocks of that Caroni Estate and let them work them, actually overseeing the work. Tell them what kind of crops ought to be grown there that can be exported, so at all times you have a hand in the business as well.

Invite trade union and co-operatives involvement and, if you do so, we would all go down the road together, but all must put their hands together. As I said, Mr. Vice-President, Trinidad and Tobago sits strategically at the gateway to the Americas North, South and Central—as well as to the European and the Far Eastern countries. Sitting in that vantage position, we must make use of what nature has bestowed upon us.

We spoke of our petroleum industry. I do not want to say that with the present situation in the budget the hon. Minister of Finance spoke of US \$19.00 per barrel and then it went down to US \$13.5 per barrel. What that would mean is that, perhaps, by March of next year we would have to come back and ask for a supplementary appropriation bill to be passed: I do not know.

Government has to put emphasis on expanding the revenue capacity of our country. We must encourage enterprise—it may sound like a bad word at this time—efforts at savings and investment; and in all these our policies must be like Caesar's wife, above reproach and consistent in whatever endeavours we are undertaking here, for we are all living in a competitive world economy, and human resources as well as financial resources will always respond to favourable incentives. What incentives have we put in place?

A growing economy will always attract investment, but if it does not grow there will be nothing for us to distribute. What is crucial to the process of growth is a higher level of savings and investment. How are we going to encourage both of these aspects?

Many of the problems affecting our Central Government's spending and the operations of the public utilities and state enterprises have very little to do with higher rates and taxes. The core of the matter running through them is—and I am repeating what several other speakers here have said before—inefficiency and the resultant lack of productivity, through waste. What we need to rebuild is a higher level of confidence in our political and socio-economic management.

I am sorry Minister Draper has just moved out, but I told him as I came here this morning: “Minister Draper, you will turn yourself inside out and get a heart attack in the process and pass away like Nappy Mayers, but you will never get a public service to respond in the manner in which you want, regardless of all the seminars and retreats and what have you. The attitude from inside each individual must change.”

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While it seems that Government has recognized critical issues such as poverty and the unemployment problem, some of us have been highly critical of the social safety net. But it is good. I thought it would have gone a little further by giving some more money to do what is needed to be done for all the social grievances that we have at the moment.

I turn now to the URP and the \$122 million given to that programme. Let us not lose sight of a headline that I saw in the *Trinidad Guardian* of November 12, 1993:

"IMF: People bring prosperity not Governments".

I read further:

"An IMF report arguing that Government interference hampered prosperity in Asia rather than helping is being put forward on the eve of an Asian Pacific Cooperation summit meeting of President Clinton and leaders from 14 other governments next week..."

That IMF survey stated, Mr. Vice-President,

"...that higher living standards in Asia came largely from:"

and please let us note—

"—The tendency of the people in Asia to save much of their income instead of spending it.

— Emphasis on schools and job training.

— Readiness to change jobs and use foreign know-how."

It goes on:

"Looking at the experience of other countries, the evidence suggests that less intervention in the economic arena is strongly correlated with growth."

Less intervention in the economic arena is strongly correlated with growth.

"...The Asian model attests to the value of openness and minimal policy-induced distortions."

**4.20 p.m.**

The World Bank, the IMF sister organization, prepared a survey for giving New Zealand some guidance for its own policy. It was prepared before the election defeat of the Conservative National Party, which was the government in power at the time. Prime Minister Jim Bolger blamed its poor showing—and listen

to this—on voters' discontent with the selling of public assets to private interest and cuts in government spending on health, on education, and on welfare. Do we sense a similarity with our own country?

As I said, I will put aside petroleum, but I will look at an area called La Brea with the asphalt, which is the seventh wonder of the world. What is happening there? Are we doing all that we can to get the maximum benefit from our asphalt? I have heard people saying, when someone asks for a little change in the household, the father or mother would say, "What do you think, I am the Pitch Lake, as fast as you dig more is coming up?" Which shows that it is a never-ending thing. The European autobahns, that some of us have been fortunate to drive on are smooth and a pleasure to look at. They are all asphalted with our own asphalt, and our roads remain the most neglected in the world.

Sen. Daly spoke about Project Pride earlier this morning. I just refer to it in passing now that it is going to be started in January, 1994. I hear rumblings again, little bits and pieces here and there with BA coming, and Liat and Air Jamaica. What are we looking for and where do we look? To Caricom? To the CBI? Or to NAFTA? Our regional carrier? Will the coming into being of our Project Pride strengthen our national airline to have links with Caricom, CBI and NAFTA countries, and to the East and Far East? Will we maintain our BWIA insignia or will it be relegated to a lower position with some other airline, such as BA or Air Jamaica, or Caledonia Airways, or—I am frightened to say the name—American Airlines, taking over the deal?

It may seem that I am rambling, but with respect to the marketing of manufactured goods, our canned and frozen fruits and vegetable, again, as I said, while we speak of Caricom, NAFTA and the Eastern countries, we could have those items for export. We have the Matouks Food Processing Plant. But that alone is not going to help us, we need many more factories of that type to manufacture products using all of these fruits and vegetables and the nectars, so that we can have them exported and thereby create more jobs—our manufacturers would be able to get more markets outside and our labour force would be heightened; unemployment lightened.

I come now to housing and settlement; I cannot help but talk about this one. There are some people who might be a little peeved by my saying this, but I passed through what used to be a lovely five-mile stretch to drive through previously, but over the last three or four decades it has become what one could

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call a "hell hole". Over those three or four decades it was designated by the Government of the day a forest reserve. Then over the last two decades or so, the interior portions on both north and south, but especially the northern side, were cut and put into farms and given out in plots of five and ten acres.

Dairy farming as well as other types of farming was done there. But a *bordage* of about 100 feet was left on both, to prevent the noise from passing vehicles affecting the animals inside. But, over the last decade—and I am coining a word—"squatterization" has taken place. Squatters have cut down bits and pieces of those lands and actually taken over. And soon we shall see Government seeking to regularize the status of those squatters, as the Minister of Housing and Settlement has been trying to do with others.

Why does the Government have to wait until a wrong has been done, condone it for a number of years—from what I have seen done before—then try to regularize it and come up against confrontation? Just as my friend Sen. Daly spoke about this morning with the very vivid pictures of the exercise of the street vending and trying, too late, to curb something that should have been curbed decades ago. Government puts itself in positions of compromise, I am sorry to say, on several issues, when it could have avoided these things initially by handling them at the first instance firmly, fairly and justly.

In the health sector, I understand there is to be decentralization—a good thing perhaps—but where these health offices are, especially in the rural districts, if one went through most of them one would observe that they are nearly like pig pens. If only they could be refurbished and provided with specialist medical officers nurses and proper personnel on a permanent basis.

Consider the case of a patient, let us say, coming from Matelot out on the north-eastern coast, the Toco/Manzanilla constituency, a PNM constituency, by the way, travelling by maxi-taxi and paying \$30.00 return fare—maxi-taxi not conventional taxi—leaving at 4.00 in the morning to get down to Sangre Grande to get assistance at the health centre at Sangre Grande; having to wait half a day, the doctor has not come in as yet, the nurse cannot attend to whatever has to be done; and then being told, "We do not have the medicine to give you. Here is a prescription, you have to get that outside." This poor patient, who can hardly manage the fare to get back to Matelot, now has to go back with a prescription in hand.

These are the situations we want to see attended to under the social safety net. Also, let us have some modern equipment in the hospitals. Apart from the insufficiency in supply of bed linen and beds—I have been told that several patients have had to sit in the Port of Spain General Hospital on chairs all night. Someone with a heart attack sat on a chair all night, next morning he was still sitting on that chair, there was no bed to put him on.

Sir, I do not know, it is 4.30 p.m. and I am wondering if I would get my cue from you.

**Mr. Vice-President:** You will get your cue at the appropriate time, Senator.

**4.30 p.m.**

**Sen. C. Mahadeo:** Thank you, Sir. Under the Head, Education, which is also to be decentralized, I think the hon. Minister of Education is on the right track, because it is a very good idea. Our Minister in the Ministry of Planning and Development is here this afternoon, and she did refer to Library Services which are to be located in various districts. I would go a little further to suggest that they bring back the mobile library services. As a child I remember having to run into the Ministry of Works and Transport yard and looked forward to the fortnightly library van coming with, at that time, it used to be Miss Alma Warner, now Alma Jordan, who was the librarian.

**Sen. Robinson-Regis:** Mr. Vice-President, we do have a mobile service in operation. It is not as expansive as the one that existed before, but we are in the process of expanding.

**Sen. C. Mahadeo:** Thank you. I do wish it could be expanded, so that all districts, especially the school areas, will be enlightened, as we were in our day.

While we are on that subject, Sir, I want to talk about our primary school education system. For long has that system been deemed the "dustbin" of our whole education system, when it should, rather, have been the cornerstone, because this is the cradle of our system.

Two or three decades ago, Sir, a seventh standard student could enter a secondary school fully equipped to start secondary education with a full, all-round knowledge of reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, English language and grammar—yes, "grammar" that unknown word in these days—health science, or hygiene and agricultural science, together with physical education and spelling. The Common Entrance Examination stripped our young children of all these and

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have turned them into "forced ripe" young men and women, who can only "block off" answers on examination papers.

There ought to be spread throughout the country, Sir, in addition, technical and vocational colleges and schools. We do have the John Donaldson Technical Institute in Port of Spain, there is one in San Fernando, and I should like Government to put one in place to serve the Central districts. I heard Sen. Jean Elder talk about the diagnostic testing of all children to be done at the Standard I level in our primary schools, which idea originated with the Minister of Education.

**Mr. Vice-President:** The speaking time of the hon. Senator has expired, and this may be a convenient time to suspend the sitting. The sitting of the Senate is suspended until 5.05 p.m.

**4.33 p.m.:** *Sitting suspended.*

**5.05 p.m.:** *Sitting resumed.*

**Mr. Vice-President:** Before Sen. Mahadeo proceeds, will someone move that her speaking time be extended.

*Motion made, That the Senator's speaking time be extended by 15 minutes.*  
[Sen. M. Mansoor]

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Sen. C. Mahadeo:** Thank you very much, Mr. Vice-President.

Before the tea break, I was speaking on the topic of education and of the diagnostic plans by the Ministry of Education for children beginning at Standard I at the primary school level. What I was suggesting is that there ought also to be kept what can be called, cumulative records, of each child upon admission to primary school and throughout the child's primary school life. There can be people like education extension officers, social workers, health visitors and others to assess the child's work, not only intellectually, but also physically, emotionally and environmentally.

Sen. Elder would be able to say since she was a teacher, so was our Minister of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs and so was I—we know that a troubled child in a classroom who would be fidgeting all morning, or



day, sometimes has had to come to school without a meal in the morning or has had to leave a big row between parents before leaving the home to get to school, and that child would be unable to absorb, retain or concentrate. That child ought to have special relief at school, at that level, so that counselling could perhaps be given to that him or her, or maybe, the hot meal that Sen. Yuille-Williams suggested. These are the people at the school level, or the social welfare workers, who would be able to assess who are the needy ones in our society to get the hot meal.

Our Minister of Education did speak of numeracy and literacy. Yes, I agree with that. He is on the right line if he is given a good hand to go on with the plans he has for education. As I said, not only must the nutritional, emotional and other needs of the child be met, but also a very important feature of the building back process of our teaching service at the primary, secondary and even the tertiary level, is the respectability attached to the classroom and to the teacher—‘Sir’ or ‘Miss’—that we need to bring back which we no longer have. We have to look at the general demeanour and the deportment of our teachers today.

The male teachers wear their shirts hanging out of their trousers, push-toe or Jesus slippers, open necked shirts in the classroom, maybe with blue denim long pants. We are lucky if he is wearing the blue denim long pants.

What I should suggest, Sir, is that there is a code for our teachers because they are the exemplars for the tiny tots who enter the school system. They look up to ‘Sir’ or ‘Miss’ and these teachers must have certain rules to guide them or to base their lives upon. I am not saying that this is what the dress code ought to be, but at least, put on a nice long-sleeved shirt with a tie—be it a balisier or other insignia on it—long trousers, shoes with laces or the moccasin type and socks. Females should dress with their dresses below the knees and a little shirt sleeve—not as though they just came out of a party and into the classroom—hair beautifully done, so that children in those very formative years, are able to copy the ones who stand before them in the classroom.

In closing on education, I should like to ask the Minister of Education, please, bring back the basics into our primary school system—Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Geography, Hygiene, English Language and Grammar. Grammar, yes, not our dialect and vernacular that we break out into and think that that is what is called our spoken English by which we are graded at CXC or Cambridge University level. Bring back those basics for us.

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We talked about our public sector workers, Sir. I did read where our Prime Minister said that those public sector workers who are occupying NHA houses mortgaged to them and also those living in Government quarters, would have part of their pension or gratuity remunerations worked out. What about the 40,000 odd people who are not occupying NHA houses and who are not living in Government quarters? What is being put in place for those public sector workers who are leaving before retirement at optional time, or at proper retirement time? What have we considered putting in place for those public sector workers? This is the big question which I should like to have answered. What is Government's plan on that?

Then we come to the question of construction. At teatime, I heard about construction; I had my note on it before teatime, but I know the Minister of Planning and Development is concerned with construction because I heard him say that 1994 is the year of construction and some other Government Senator—who I believe is the Secretary of the PNM—said earlier today that 1994, is the year of construction.

We are hoping that development in 1994 in that regard will certainly take place. I am told that I am taking Sen. Prof. Spence's portfolio with regard to agriculture, but I am going into construction and I am talking about Wallerfield because I pass through that area almost every day. It worries me when I look at that land which is idle. What are we doing about having one or two pig pens or poultry pens there? What else have we got? Just the area where people go off the main road and into the Cumuto or other airfield strip and some are raped, gagged and murdered.

We have the full infrastructure in place, Mr. Vice-President. There are roads and facilities, water and electricity and proper drainage. I think it was the Member for St. Augustine who is a civil engineer, I think.

**Sen. Merritt:** An architect.

**Sen. C. Mahadeo:** Oh, an architect. He gave the full rundown. I am not echoing his words. I am as independent as independent can be, but I saw good in what he said there, and I found certain aspects of it that I can repeat.

**5.15 p.m.**

All those infrastructural things are in place. We need only to build upon them. The year 1994 is the year of construction. There are those who have been

devastated by hillside floods and impoverished thereby, losing their homes, their properties, and some of them their lives, let us build housing developments there, so that you can house those poor vagrants and those who have lost all that they had in these disasters. It will, again, generate a lot of work, ease the unemployment situation and also assist in getting materials brought in cheaply and sold for the purposes that we need.

I want to go back to the Ministry of Works and Transport. I spoke, in passing, about the \$122 million and the URP. I do not want it to be considered a dole. I want to speak of this from personal experience of what I have seen. There is a certain Inland Revenue office in a regional corporation district, where the roof is being repaired, and the outside walls painted for the past year. Over three dozen men and women are on that job for the past year.

Sometimes it is a humbug, to use the words of Sen. Mansoor, when you want to pass to go into the magistrates' court and there is a big police barrier, barring you off from getting there. You have to pass under the very Revenue Office with all the mud and water underneath, to get to the court. That is going on for the year. Two men up there with two gallon tins of paint on a piece of scaffolding, and the other 14 men sitting down below shaking their legs on the police barrier, and they are very vocal about the current events of the day and molesting passersby. They are collecting their money at the end of the day, you better believe that! That is the model to the world that we are hoping to project, a global city!

Again, it is mismanagement, inefficiency, lack of productivity, waste of productive manpower. At that very Inland Revenue Office, on the eastern side, there is a plot of land about 10 ft. by 12 ft. and for one week there were eight men and two women weeding it. But only two men were able to have access to the land to hoe and weed, because the plot is so small, and two women handing the water at intervals. The other six men were sitting aside just having a good time. These are two instances in one little district, of waste, unproductivity, inefficiency and mismanagement. This is what is at the root and the core of all.

We cannot blame Government. We have got to blame those to whom they delegate authority in the ministries. We have had too many heads and sub-heads and sub-sub-heads; too many managers, sub-managers, and sub-sub-managers, leaving very few workers. So it all comes back to the lack of accountability—and I cannot stress it too much—of inefficiency and unproductivity.

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I come back to my pet friend who says he did not miss anything before teatime, the Minister of National Security. I am sorry he did not hear me earlier when I started, but as I said, I want to reinforce my grateful thanks to him for the assurance he gave that we are going to get back the Woodbrook Police Station, and that at least, on the drawing board—he did not say for 1994—is full Eastern Divisional Headquarters, with all the perks for the Sangre Grande Police Station. I am indeed grateful to him for that assurance. As I said, he did not mention if it was going to start in 1994, but I am hoping that it will be.

**Mr. Vice-President:** The Member's speaking time has expired.

**Sen. C. Mahadeo:** I thank you very much, Sir. So that my last cryptic words will remain within my soul.

**The Minister of Energy and Energy-based Industries (Sen. The Hon. Barry Barnes):** Mr. Vice-President, the 1994 Budget, and of course, the debate immediately before this one was on the Petrotrin Vesting Bill, a debate which, as I think, we all remember, wandered far and wide around the actual subject of the Petrotrin Vesting Bill, and let me say that I plead as guilty as anybody else of wandering in that debate. But at least, that debate gave the Senate the opportunity of discussing many of the wider issues involving the energy sector, and perhaps it is that the budget debate has come much too quickly afterwards, because there was, in fact, very little further discussion on the energy sector by Senators, except, of course for my dear friend Sen. Carol Mahadeo. I know that she is wise enough to know that neither the energy sector nor, indeed, its Minister, is really a dead horse. She has come from the country and she will remember the old saying, "You playing dead to—" Never mind!

**Sen. Mahadeo:** Mr. Vice-President, my dear friend knows that I corrected myself right away. Certainly not my dear friend the Energy Minister, of all the Ministers we have here.

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** Mr. Vice-President, we are dealing with a budget, and after all, a budget is the balancing of revenues and expenditures, and, indeed, the allocation of expenditure within the framework of the revenues available to you and, therefore, a question, to some extent, of choice. The last page of the document I have circulated shows what has happened to Government's tax take over the years from the energy sector, and it is shown in US dollars for a particular purpose. The changes in exchange rate that have occurred over that period are nullified. That is, in fact, the reality.

**5.25 p.m.**

Our production volumes have declined by one half and our price by one half since 1980, giving gross oil revenues of one quarter Government's tax take is a little less than one quarter of 1980 taxes. That is the reality. That is what this country has been obliged to adjust to. What is even more alarming to me is that even at this stage, we are being told that the energy sector is, in fact, providing 80 per cent of the foreign exchange revenues and 26 per cent of Government's tax revenues; even at the 'dead horse' state, as it were, as alluded to by Sen. Carol Mahadeo.

If we go to the first page of the document—and the technocrats in the Ministry of Energy and Energy-based Industries, much more modern than I, prefer to use bar charts to show volumes; I learnt it differently. And they used a line to show the price—the price they have shown is the actual export price of Galeota mix, the Amoco crude, as it has moved over the years; and you can see the total decline. If we go to the second table we would see the performance by the individual companies—Amoco, PCOL, Trinmar, Trintomar—and for the purposes of this exercise they have combined Trintopec with Trintoc and made them Petrotrin.

Again, they have showed a record of the prices, and one can see the decline in production volume occurring across all the companies, with the exception of PCOL and Trintomar which came in very much at the end and is hardly discernible in the table.

If we go to figure three, we would see the individual situation in respect of crude petroleum production month by month over 1993. We would see that in February we were at about 128,000 barrels per day and we dropped to a level of 119,000 barrels per day in August before starting to show a slight increase again.

In his budget presentation, the Minister of Finance talked about the decline in the energy sector of 6.3 per cent over 1993. There was a decline in price, as shown, but I think it is fair to explain to this Senate that arising from the Trintomar failure, which we sought to balance in 1992 by authorizing three additional wells; nine, 10, jack—and I say jack because the last one was dry. When we authorized those wells in 1992, within 15 days of taking office, because of the commitment of Trintomar at the end of December, 1991, to have 125 million cubic feet per day—that was the commitment made to the bankers—and a contract with National Gas Company to have 150 million cubic feet per day available for sale and distribution to Point Lisas, take effect from January 1,

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1992—on January 1, 1992, Trintomar's gas production was 17 million cubic feet per day.

Sen. Wade Mark, in fact, raised the question of a gas shortfall in 1993 and I think, if I remember rightly, I had to tell him that if there is a gas shortfall in 1993, you do not get up and ask the Minister of Energy and Energy-based Industries, what he is doing today; ask him what he was doing two years ago.

If you find that kind of a shortfall, you do not turn a tap and get 133 million cubic feet of gas. You have to take your courage in your hands with full awareness, and knowing at that time what you are up against, but knowing as well, that your gas commitments to a number of plants at Point Lisas are such that they are going to shut down if the gas is not there.

We felt that the quickest way to relieve that situation was to spend US \$7 million on each of three additional wells hoping that your TRINTOMAR could get up to 75 million cubic feet per day. Well No. 9 came in—I think Sen. Rooks knows that—well No. 10 came in, we got to 49 million cubic feet per day, and the final well was dry. But they were small reservoirs and they started to die. At that point, we asked the three state companies that owned the SECC fields to go find a farm-out that would get us additional gas as early as possible.

Sen. Wade Mark raised the question. The field was awarded on lease to the SECC; the Government's position—the royalty rates and the tax rates were not set by this administration; they were set by the previous one. I think I have said this before: the companies went to Pecten, because Trintoc was in joint venture with Pecten; they went to Mobil because Trintopex was in a joint venture with Mobil; they went to Conoco which was in a joint venture with the National Gas Company; they went to Enron because Enron was talking to us at that time about methanol.

I said this before and I would say it openly, this Minister did say, not Amoco, because Amoco was already involved in gas development with Flamboyant and with Immortelle fields and fully loaded, and not British Gas, because British Gas was in negotiations with the Ministry of Energy and Energy-based Industries on developing the Dolphin field, and we did not wish to confuse those issues.

Farm-outs are an international practice and we have said before that whether we like it or not, we are in an international business. Enron came in on a farm-out arrangement which was signed in November 1992. I think the Senate knows that their first well was brought into production at the end of October, 1993. Their

commitment was, and I would repeat it for the benefit of Sen. Wade Mark, to undertake 3D surveys of the entire SECC field, including Pelican; to spend US \$50 million in developing a minimum of seven wells on the Kiskadee field; two wells to be completed and in production by the end of 1993; five additional wells to come up. Then to spend US \$250 million on the development of the other fields in the SECC area. It was signed and sealed, not with the ministry, not directly with the Government, but with the SECC companies, on what is a standard straightforward farm-out arrangement.

The gas shortage, first of all, was abated because we had 49 million cubic feet as at July 1992, but, as we expected, because of the small reservoirs, the wells began to die. Amoco, out of their commitment, went into Flamboyant—simply because that was the quickest way and it was the undertaking they made to the National Gas Company in 1991—with a two-slot platform, and we have talked about that here. In order to meet the deadline they decided they were going to try something that had not been tried in Trinidad before—again, Sen. Rooks would be aware—that is to get back into a well that had been drilled in 1975 without having to drill a replacement well.

### **5.35 p.m.**

Amoco brought in the Gorilla rig and an automatic pipe-laying vessel. We talked about that. Sen. W. Mark was very upset because he said that the Government granted the pipe-laying vessel permission to come in for 17 days and it did not put a local crew on board. I think we all need to remember that it was a situation where the country was urgently in need of the gas; we were bringing in such a vessel to try to relieve a gas shortfall. And the local crew would have had to spend six weeks training just to operate the vessel, on a job that would take 17 days.

They brought in CAN-DIVE, a specialist deep diving group from Canada that have dived in Alaska and in the Far East. They came in and made a connection in 250 feet of water; got into the well and brought it in at 80 million cubic feet per day, held it at that for four months, then took it gradually up. It is now at 100 million cubic feet per day and; 2,500 barrels per day of condensate—by any account, a world class well. The equivalent in terms of its production, if it had been an oil well would have been 18,000 barrels per day. So we still have world class hydrocarbon structures in Trinidad and Tobago. So far, what we found are class structures.

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Let me just make this point. As a country, we were in fact a little fortunate, for Amoco was able to tie back into the well. It took them 15 days. The Gorilla rig is presently drilling the second Flamboyant well. I read in the newspapers where someone asked what has happened to the Gorilla rig; it has been drilling long enough. It has been on the job for three months and the second well is not completed yet. If Amoco had not been able to get back into that first Flamboyant well, we would have waited for three months before we started to get some relief from the gas problem. Yet even that was not enough!

We had to call on Amoco to make up the gas shortfall—to divert gas that was being used for gas lift for oil production, to divert rig time from working over oil well to bring gas wells into production. Do you see what it did to the oil production over the period? You would see that it is only when the gas shortage was relieved and Amoco went back to work on oil that we started to see an increase in oil production.

In the Petrotrin Vesting Bill debate, the question of the \$2.1 billion owed by Petrotrin and Trintomar US \$190 million expenditure came up. As we drilled the additional make-up gas wells in 1992, the cash flows were such that Trintoc, Trintopec and Trinmar had to stop drilling on land.

I have gone into a little detail on that because Sen. Mansoor, an accountant, started with the figures, then moved from being critical to—possibly moved by frustration, he has been saying the same thing for eight years—being lyrical. Then he asked one very important question: Have we learnt anything? Have we learnt anything from Iscott? In all that I have heard and all the words that I have read about Iscott, over a decade, I would say to Sen. Mansoor, that with ammonia plants and methanol steel plants gas is the feedstock. Sponge iron from Brazil is the feedstock at Iscott. One can have all the gas, electricity and plants in the world, but if there is no sponge iron, there is nothing.

Sen. Wade Mark raised the question of Nucor. It is very much the same. Gas at 15 million cubic feet per day. That is not much, the Trinidad Cement Company takes more.

**Sen. W. Mark:** At what price?

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** Let me come to that. Nucor have not even started. They are still building. It is 15 million cubic feet per day. The feedstock to the plant is iron ore from Brazil and Venezuela. The fundamental difference with



Iscott is that the investment and the risk are Nucor's. Sen. Wade Mark made me feel young again. Because you have a share of the profits, but we would never know what the profits are because they are selling to their sister company.

In 1963, we were saying that about Texaco. I do not even think Sen. Wade Mark was born.

**Sen. W. Mark:** Yes. Long time.

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** Amoco has been selling to its Texas City refinery since 1972. You know what the price is. When you go to the marketing manager of Petrotrin and ask what is the price of Brent, he would say, "hold on." He does not even look. He plays with his computer and the New York market comes flashing across the screen; National Flour Mills is also doing it. The methanol company both in Europe and the USA are also doing it to trace methanol prices. You just buy into the service and the methanol prices come floating across the screen. Amoco the same for metal prices

We cannot go back 30 years and say we do not know. When the world comes to Sen. Wade Mark and says, "Brother, join the world,"—

**Sen. W. Mark:** What world?

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** It is only one world. He wants terms and conditions, but has he thought about what the alternative is? Peace! I am sorry. That was a digression.

Yes, we have had a decline in our production. We go on to the activities that are now taking place. Enron's first well 1,100 barrels per day of condensate to add to the pool. On the second well—let me say they are at the target depth—hopefully, they would come into production as they have said they would by the end of December, 1993.

Amoco is drilling a deep well on the field and Flamboyant developing Immortelle in accordance with the agreement. The first immortal well is being drilled now. The Gorilla rig completed its first well and has been retained for two additional wells. That activity is picking up. Certainly, even in the gas fields we are seeing as each well comes on, there is an increasing flow of condensate that is helping to improve the volume of oil production. That does not alter the fact that our land fields are mature. That does not alter the fact that the land fields are, in fact, in decline.

**5.45 p.m.**

**Sen. W. Mark:** Would the Minister be able to develop later in his presentation the rationale for the Government's choosing \$19 per barrel in the face of all the scenarios that we have before us, and what could be the outcome if that price does not hold? If the Minister could give us some feedback on that, we would indeed be grateful.

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** Perhaps I would indulge Sen. W. Mark at some later stage by talking generally about the oil price. Certainly it is not for me, in the event of some change in the price, to prejudge what the Minister of Finance is likely to do.

Let us turn for a minute to Table I, on the fourth page, Trinmar Production statistics. We have done this to illustrate what happens with a field as it becomes mature. The Trinmar field peaked in 1969. Its production, as shown, was just over 69,000 barrels per day. Its wells were producing at 322 barrels per well per day. The total number of wells at that time was 300. The actual number of wells producing was 215.

In 1993, the field has become older, more drilling has taken place, the production has fallen. The figures are very clear. The total number of wells in the field is now 737 and the number of producing wells is 361. If one is taking care of 300 wells—there are crews and ships—that is one level of operation. But if you have to service 737 wells, then, of necessity, your operations must expand, your costs must increase at the same time that one's production is in substantial decline. You are in a vortex.

Even here Trinmar has completed the water-flood project, installations and equipment. Trinmar has started to activate the field by pumping fresh water down into the formation flooding it to bring the oil to the surface. They are adding the gas lift to that. The reaction has started. I must admit that it is a little slow—250 barrels per day at this time—but it will eventually reach 9,000 barrels per day under the stimulation. Here again we are anticipating an effective effort to maintain and, indeed, slightly increase the Trinmar production.

A very important consideration in what faces us is that we are, however, in a world in which technology has improved and is improving by leaps and bounds. Finding technology has improved; seismic technology has improved. Sen. Spence will understand when I say that the Ministry of Energy and Energy-based

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Industries' reading mechanism has produced again. They have produced an article in the *Oilgram News* dated Friday, November 19, 1993, "Hot Play in the Gulf: Below the Sub-salt". The article states:

"Going back seven years or longer the quality of the seismic data that you are acquiring out there was not as good as it was now and certainly the processing capabilities were not sufficient to allow us to see anything beneath the salt. That, as well as drilling technology is improving. We drill better wells now. We certainly have some geological ideas that have matured as we picked up data."

All that has come together. They have found a way to get under salt beds to find oil. What is particularly significant is that right here in the Gulf of Paria, in 1970, the first well was 500 barrels per day. As they followed the line, they ran into salt beds. Not Trintoc, not Trintopec, but Texaco tried twice to get through it, broke the bits and gave up. The technology at that time did not allow them to make that kind of penetration. Seven years ago it was not possible, it is possible now.

What I am saying to this Senate, and particularly to Sen. Wade Mark, is that in the energy situation in which we are as to whether we will accept, in terms of finding technology and satellite imaging, that there are companies and capabilities that are beyond Petrotrin.

Last week we had LAGOVEN reporting on the progress of a joint study with Petrotrin in the Gulf of Paria. They paid a courtesy call. They introduced themselves and said that their 1993 oil production was averaging just over 1 million barrels per day. Like ourselves, they have gone into reactivating their old fields. In 1994 their production from the reactivated fields is going to be 40,000 barrels per day. The production from LAGOVEN's reactivated fields, in 1994, is going to be more than Petrotrin's total production. It is a matter of degree. They showed us the maps from satellites, the geological maps over Venezuela and over Trinidad. If we have a company of 1 million barrels per day capability and the revenues therefrom, we can just afford to spend on equipment and so forth, rather more than if we are a 33,000 barrels per day operation. That is the reality. We as a country have to decide whether this is worthwhile. If it is worthwhile and we cannot do it ourselves, and there are people who are willing to do it spending their own money, what do you say? Luck of the draw. We stop there. This is really on the crude oil side. This is the reality.

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We have a decline in our crude oil production of 100,000 barrels per day, at a time when the country needs the revenue. Given what crude and natural gas prices are, the basic arithmetic is very simple. In terms of gross revenues, to make up for 100,000 barrels of oil production decline, we need a natural gas production level of 1.5 billion cubic feet per day. That is the mathematics. I am not even talking about Government revenue, I am talking about gross revenues. That is what the equation is.

**5.55 p.m**

We have the gas reserves, and we have awarded leases on the Dolphin Field. For instance, in 1976 when they did their discovery wells, they did their drilling and their exploration and the field was declared commercial in 1981, and that entitled them to hold the field for 35 years. We are not going to have that field returned until 2016.

In a situation where we needed the gas production, we talked with British Gas and said; "You have that field out there, it has been there since 1976, it has been declared commercial since 1981, what can we do together to bring that field on production?" The end result of it is that we have signed an agreement with them, no problem, it is a lease. It had to be signed by the Sub-Intendant of Crown Lands, it had to be registered with the Registrar there. No hiding; that is the law and the Ministry of Energy and Energy-based Industries complies with the law.

In their undertaking, they are going to spend US \$300 million in developing the Dolphin Field. The sea-bottom survey has been done, and they are doing the 3D seismic survey now. They will start the delineation drilling in 1994 and they will be ashore in full by 1996. Enron, as I have said, is also in production. We have brought in Unocal, again, another exploration lease, no secrets, they have completed their 3D seismic survey. They will be commencing their exploratory drilling in 1994.

That is not the end, let us come back to another point that is very dear to Sen. Wade Mark; he keeps asking questions about it. In 1977/1978, the National Energy Corporation had the planning people look at the chemistry of natural gas and laid out a list of 29 chemicals that could be derived from it. They kept researching, doing library research and following the market and so forth. I became Minister of Energy and Energy-based Industries in 1992. They came to make a presentation, and I saw the same chemical listings, they have been

updating the information year after year and Sen. Wade Mark is throwing that at me today.

During that period, Union Carbide came and had a look, ICI came and had a look; Dow Chemicals came and had a look; Mosanto have come. When Sen. Hosein raised the matter, he said since 1977—I intervened and said: "Yes, that was 1977, we are in 1993, what has happened?" It was very straightforward. We have enough gas to make methanol but we do not have enough gas to make butane as well to blend with the methanol to make MTBE. We have enough gas to make urea but we do not have enough gas to make ethane to make ethylene, the fundamental building block.

What everybody who came and looked said, was that our market is small, and that essentially one per cent of the make of this plant is going to go into your local market; 99 per cent has to be exported and you cannot bring in chemicals from outside to take them back out, so let us take what you have and put it with other chemicals that are already in the market-place. However you look at the logic that is how it cuts, but it tells you something else. It tells you that in terms of going further downstream, what this country has to do is to get its natural gas production up to a certain critical mass that allows it to make the necessary components. You get to that stage and then you move on from there. It cannot be done otherwise.

For sixteen years you have been trying to do it otherwise, so you look at that equation and you say, ammonia plants, how many do we have, two, three? One per cent of the world's production; beautiful figures. One per cent of the world's production but 14 per cent of the world's export trade, it seems to me that you are over exposed. Methanol is heading in exactly the same direction, by the time you put the third plant in. These are chemicals that do not travel well, and you have to find nearby markets.

**Sen. W. Mark:** Is it not a fact that both Urea and Fertrin have now been sold to Arcadian, partners of the United States? What control do we have over these two plants that the Minister is talking about? Those things have been sold out by him and his Government.

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** We shall talk about that later. The fundamental point I am making is that unless your gas production level reaches a certain critical mass that allows the necessary chemical components to be produced here so that they could be blended to go into the downstream industry, we really are not going to get anywhere very fast.

**Sen. Mahabir-Wyatt:** Could the hon. Minister give us non-technical people a small idea of how far we are from this critical mass?

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** Without wishing in any way to confuse the Senator, I alluded earlier to the fact that the mathematics on a different equation suggests that we need to have our gas production up to 1.5 billion cubic feet per day. We are currently at about 650 million cubic feet per day. The point that I was following on is this: You have three methanol plants and you have two ammonia plants and so forth and you get Nucor, which is 15 million cubic feet per day. This is why we have encouraged some move to consider the development of an LNG plant. It is a small LNG plant, which will use 350 million cubic feet per day. We are satisfied that the reserves and availability are there off the East Coast.

The new methanol plant, the CMC which is 50 million cubic feet per day took three years to get there. At that kind of rate if you are going for 350 million cubic feet in methanol plants, it is going to require seven plants, which will take you 21 years. If it is Nucor, 15 million cubic feet per day, then you are looking at 20 odd Nucor plants. An LNG plant, in theory, with an off take of 300 million cubic feet per day starts getting you there, and fairly rapidly. It is really the liquids that come in with the gas that you strip out before you go into the liquefaction process.

Again, directionally, what I am saying is that these are not really political matters. This is, honestly, the situation of Trinidad and Tobago, given the age of our fields—

**Mr. Vice-President:** The speaking time of the hon. Senator has expired.

*Motion made,* That the hon. Senator's speaking time be extended by 15 minutes. [*Hon. L. Saith*]

**6.05 p.m.**

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** Thank you, Mr. Vice-President. That is the exercise that is being looked at. Let me just remind this honourable Senate, because it has been touched on, that we are talking about the energy sector and as several Senators have said, it is capital intensive and does not produce too many jobs. It will produce revenue. And I am merely saying that what has been done over the past two years and what is being done, is being done at a time when demonstrably, from the budget itself, the Government has no money.

From the Petrotrin Vesting Bill, Senators have seen the figures, Petrotrin does not have any money, and yet we are getting substantial movements and necessary

investments in the energy sector, that is capital intensive. I was saying jestingly that, like Servol, the Ministry of Energy does not really need very much to perform its miracles; Servol got the five fishes and if you look at the budget you will see that the Ministry of Energy got the seven loaves. But do not worry, we will carry on.

**Sen. Spence:** Mr. Vice-President, before the Minister winds up, could he look into his crystal ball and say what he thinks would happen in the next century if the success of fusion energy really fulfils the promise that was expressed on the television a few nights ago?

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** We are going from dreams to crystal balls, Sir. One of the things that have emerged very clearly is that nuclear plants that were supposed to have been the—be all and end all here, have nearly become the be all and the end all here. But, in fact, they are now finding that their generating costs are considerably higher than the cost of fossil fuels, gases etc. They found another thing—and this is one of the difficulties, even in Trinidad and Tobago—the human condition. It was captured very succinctly by a US commentator who said: "The most eager advocates of nuclear plants do not want to live next to one". That is the reality [*Interruption*] I know, fusion is a little bit different, but what I am saying is that the promise of fusion, to me, is equal to the promise of the original nuclear thing at that time. It has not been tried so nobody see what the difficulties are until it is put into operation. This other thing has been tried and tested, and remain the mainstream.

There are just two other areas that I want to touch on. With respect to CNG, the country has 217 gasoline stations, with an average of four gasoline pumps, per station, with underground tanks in each of the stations, all purchased over the time—foreign exchange, capital expenditure; supported by a host of road tank wagons, trucks and equipment, also purchased with foreign exchange. One hears this sweeping statement to convert everything to CNG. Each CNG station costs just over TT \$1 million, also through foreign exchange, 217 of them; each conversion kit—\$8,000/\$9,000 imported, foreign exchange, for 200,000 vehicles. Therefore, we are looking at an equation in which we are going to wipe away the foreign exchange that has been spent already and put in place CNG to spend additional foreign exchange. Then they tell you that it will free up the gasoline for the export market, forgetting that until the refineries are upgraded, the gasoline being marketed is leaded 42 grammes and really cannot go too many places in the world.

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When the United States moved to unleaded gas, there was a phase-out programme. In fact, it was a five-year phase-out programme which was then extended for a further three years. Sorry to say, circumstances oblige us to take the same kind of approach—a phase-out period. So we are reducing the lead in gasoline progressively, we shall be at 0.15 grammes instead of one third of today's level by the end of 1995. We would need to be learning and teaching—there are people who have already acquired the skill of repairing and maintaining gasoline pumps but who do not have the same familiarity with the CNG equipment, which is new; not only new in Trinidad and Tobago, but relatively very new in the world. So again—

**Sen. Capildeo:** Before the Minister winds up, I have one layman's question to ask that affects me as a consumer. The question of T&TEC and the price of gas now, US 55 cents, which price, I understand, is going to change after December 31, 1993. What will be the position next year, will it be more than US 55 cents, and is the cost going to be passed on to us?

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** Let me correct one thing. The contract, such as it is, ends at 700 hours on January 1, 1995. Let me add as well, that one of the oddities of that argument is simply this—and let me make it clear to the Senate. The National Gas Company is the monopoly purchaser of natural gas in Trinidad and Tobago and the monopoly seller of natural gas in Trinidad and Tobago. The National Gas Company buys from Amoco, and Enron—and used to buy from Trinmar—and sells to its various customers.

**6.15 p.m.**

While we are talking about all of this, what is going to happen to the price of electricity when this contract ends, and so on? T&TEC owes the National Gas Company more than \$280 million for fuel that the company has supplied. It seems to me that if you are not going to pay for the gas, it does not really matter whether the price is 55¢ or 110¢. I am very serious. If they cannot pay for the gas at the present price—

**Sen. Capildeo:** The contract is going to end on January 1, 1995. With the Minister's vast experience in energy, does he think that price is going to increase after January 1, 1995? If it does so increase, how will T&TEC pay for it, if it cannot pay now?



**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** It is precisely out of the analysis of that equation that the Government said: "It does not compute". Therefore the Government has said we will look at a number of alternative arrangements, which is precisely what has been done. It is perfectly clear what has been done. T&TEC has come up with one proposal, the OWTU has submitted another and a task force was appointed which looked at the proposals—

**Sen. Capildeo:** I am asking about the price, Sir. In your vast experience in the energy ministry, what will be the price?

**Sen. W. Mark:** We are talking about the price of natural gas. The Minister is talking about privatization.

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** Mr. Vice-President, let me deal with the serious part of the question first.

**Mr. Vice-President:** You have about three minutes.

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** Obviously, the new contract price is going to be a subject of negotiation and, obviously, if it is going to be a subject of negotiation we have over a year to do it. Obviously, I am not about to speculate publicly on the prices.

**Sen. Capildeo:** Thank you for that.

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** Indeed, Sen. Wade Mark, as I understand it, is not without considerable experience in negotiations.

**Sen. W. Mark:** Does the Minister want to bring me on board?

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** I would bring him on board if he would only pull his weight. Sorry, Mr. Vice-President—

**Sen. Capildeo:** You see, Sir, after all of this, the question is really what is the price, and what is going to be the price of electricity after January 1, 1995.

**Sen. The Hon. B. Barnes:** Let me respond to that. We have two minutes. The Government has awarded a development contract for Dolphin Field to British Gas on a production sharing arrangement, which says that the Government will get 50 per cent of that gas at a particular production volume, and it will increase to 60 per cent Government share and 70 per cent Government share as the volume increases. I do not know what the Government is going to do with that gas

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Mr. Vice-President, I regret it, but I think I have used up my time and I therefore wish to sit down.

Thank you.

**SITTING OF THE SENATE**

**The Minister of Planning and Development (Sen. Dr. The Hon. Lenny Saith):** Mr. Vice-President, I beg to move that the sitting of the Senate continue until the end of the next Senator's contribution.

*Question put and agreed to.*

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**Sen. Hydar Ali:** Mr. Vice-President, I am not as fortunate as Senators opposite to have a portfolio of policies and successes that I can expound upon; but I do have an area that is dear to me and I will start with that—the University of the West Indies.

During the recent debate on the Guarantee of Loans (University of the West Indies) Bill, 1993, all those who contributed emphasized the important role that the University plays in the development of the society. The Government was encouraged to give to this regional institution its fullest support. I, myself, have made similar pleas in two previous budget debates. While it is not my intention to make a detailed case for the University, it must be mentioned that the Government does recognize its importance in the *Medium Term Policy Framework, 1994—1996*. Under the energy and energy-based sector, we see the following statement—

"The Faculty of Engineering of the University of the West Indies will also be required to play a more active role in the sector through its teaching and continuing education programmes, research projects, consulting activities, and extension services."

This is not the only faculty that can play a role at this particular time. The University has always been playing a role. With the emphasis on crime, I think the Government should take steps to strengthen the discipline of criminology at the University and also, with the need for so many social workers as emphasized today by Sen. Yuille-Williams in the programme relating to the social safety net, I think the social work programme ought to be strengthened. We saw the need for

the graduates of this programme when we discussed the amendment to the Children Act recently.

This confidence is not reflected in the funding for the University in the Draft Estimates. The campus Grants Committee, under the chairmanship of the Minister of Planning and Development, agreed to the reduction of the estimates for 1993/1994 from \$97 million to \$80 million to ensure full funding for the University. The University undertook several measures to prune the estimates down to \$80 million. However, under Direct University Services, Current, which is an item in the Draft Estimates, the provision was only for \$77,782,415, which is still \$2,217,585 short of the agreed amount.

Hon. Senators may recall the Minister of Planning and Development's statement last year that the Government will agree only to what it is able to provide. So this shortfall is quite unexpected. The situation is aggravated by the fact that the figures I have given were never meant to include the In-Service Diploma in Education, which has always been funded separately. Perhaps this involves a change of policy towards that 20-year old programme.

At this juncture I think, perhaps, one of the Ministers should make a statement with respect to this 20-year old programme, the In-Service Diploma in Education, which has been funded separately. Just as you see one of the newer programmes, the Centre for Ethnic Studies has been funded, separately. This In-Service Diploma in Education Programme used to be funded separately for the last 20 years; now it is lumped with the rest of the University funding. So perhaps this signifies a change of policy and it is a good opportunity for the other Minister, or one of the Ministers to mention whether, in fact, there is such a change in policy.

### **6.25 p.m.**

While we are on this, I do not know how well known it is here, that many people tend to pursue this In-Service Diploma in Education programme just to go abroad. This year the programme has the highest number of people, because most of the people have just a first degree, and they cannot get a job to teach abroad with the first degree, so they pick up this Diploma in Education Programme to go abroad. That is one of the reasons. The other is that in spite of what was promised years ago, they were never given any increment for doing this programme. I think an announcement at this time might be opportune.

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Since it was expected that an amount of \$2.1 million was to be provided for the In-Service Diploma in Education, the Government has effected a further reduction in the University's provision by a corresponding amount. It would appear from the Draft Estimates that there is an increase under "Direct University Services" of \$30 million over last year's, but this is not so. This is the Government's approach to reducing the increasing arrears being accumulated from the 1980s. These arrears now total approximately \$230 million for which a paltry \$4 million has been provided. If one looks just above the Centre for Ethnic Studies allocation, the \$4 million is seen there.

This is in accordance with agreement made with the University of the West Indies that the 1991 arrears of \$150 million would be paid over seven years starting 1992. To this date, only \$2.9 million has been paid and with this \$4 million, the balance of \$143 million is to be paid over the next five years. In the meantime the arrears have increased by \$80 million up to July 1993. The Government, therefore, has to address the sum of \$223 million over the next five years. A major problem arising from these arrears is the payment of interest. That is against all my religious teachings so I will say no more about that lest I have to do acts of expiation.

The Governments of Jamaica and Barbados pay the University Campus interest on outstanding debts and there is no reason why the Government of Trinidad and Tobago should not do the same. The Government should give the University some paper instrument whereby it could transact with the commercial banks or other financial institutions on the large arrears of \$230 million. Again, this facility has been made available to the Mona and Cave Hill campuses by their respective governments.

This is not the only instance where there is disparity with the other two campuses in terms of the way they relate to their staff. The big problem is whether the University of the West Indies will receive the cash that is allotted to it in the estimates. At present, the University of the West Indies is short paid on its monthly advances. Because of shortfalls early in the year, UWI requested two months' advance of \$5.8 million—that is \$11.6 million—thereby reducing the monthly contributions for the months of September, October, November and December to \$2.9 million. In October it received \$1.3 million, and in November, \$1.3 million, and it is probably the same for December. The University of the West Indies has to scramble for funds to close the year 1993.

Before I end this section, there are one or two other areas that I should like to bring to the attention of the Senate. One is that the Government has reneged on its payment of \$3.4 million for the take over of River Estate. This sum should have been paid since 1992. There are a few industrial matters which I shall mention very briefly.

One is that the non-academic staff has had no salary increases since 1983, and, secondly, WIGUT, which represents the non-academic, the academic and senior administrative staff at UWI has been negotiating for some time to have salaries on par with those at Mona and Cave Hill. Senators may have seen the WIGUT advertisement last week in which it was clear from the charts that several anomalies exist. A lot of these comparisons can be seen from the chart. I am just going to mention two.

For example, an assistant lecturer at the bottom of the scale at Mona and Cave Hill gets more than a senior lecturer at the top a position that is attained after 12 years at St. Augustine. A similar statement could be made for an assistant lecturer at the top and a St. Augustine professor at the bottom rung. They get almost the same salary. Mr. Vice-President, these are some of the issues relating to UWI that the Government must address.

In dealing in the same vein with some matters in education, judging from what has been reported in the newspapers, there have been sweeping changes in the education system—some of them mentioned by Sen. Elder and my colleague here, Sen. Carol Mahadeo—where a third batch of principals graduated and are becoming managers. Apparently they have been given powers similar to those given to principals of private secondary schools, presumably for the better running of these schools and a certain amount of decentralization is taking place. One would notice throughout this debate that decentralization is a common theme, whether it is in social services or in education and other areas.

I have noticed that if one were to go south of the Caroni River as far down as San Fernando, there are only three five to seven-year schools. It does not matter whether they are five or seven, the fact is, they are not three or two year schools. In other words, not junior or senior secondary. In fact, there are several junior secondary and senior secondary schools.

There are large numbers of students, people of Common Entrance age in this area, all the way from the Caroni River right down to San Fernando. I think the first five-year school beyond Central is the one by the library corner in San

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Fernando. There are very large numbers of students there and there are so few places the chances of getting into these five and seven-year schools are small. It is a fairly reasonable aim for parents to try to get their children into five-year schools.

Because there are so many people and so few of this type of school, the cut-off mark at these three schools is very high, higher than the other schools. I think this situation ought to be addressed. There is nothing in the PSIP to indicate that any new schools are being built. There are several primary schools to be built and many schools have been renovated, but to the best of my knowledge there are no five-year schools earmarked for this area, or, for that matter, any other area, that I notice in any of the yellow books that we have here. I would recommend that we build more of these five and seven year schools and perhaps, another suggestion is that we could convert some of these senior comprehensive schools into five and seven year schools.

I know one, for example, at Union/Claxton Bay has been earmarked a long time for conversion into a five-year school and they were to take students in the first year, but there is no immediate plan for that. Certainly, all that we are seeing in the Minister of Education's and other Ministers' pronouncements indicates that that is not going to take place shortly.

My other area of concern has been referred to by nearly every speaker, certainly in this Senate, and that concern is the social safety net. I am tempted to congratulate the Minister of Finance on his recognizing the need for a social safety net. I cannot see how he could have done otherwise under these structural adjustment programmes and in fact, I take objection to the fact that structural adjustment is a statement of life. I mean, bread and roti are facts of life, but I do not think that structural adjustment is a fact of life. This is something that has really been imposed on us and it is certainly not a fact of life.

Now it is called modernization. All of these things we have been told, read and heard, have had an effect on the population and, have resulted in dislocation, especially among the most vulnerable groups in the society. But recognizing the need for a social safety net and providing for those people who would benefit most from it, is another matter.

It seems, judging from the *Medium Term Policy Framework* and from the budget that the recommendations of the McIntyre Report are supposed to have influenced many of the provisions of the budget, so I wonder why the report is not

available. One can ask, for example, without being unduly suspicious, whether there are any disparities in the McIntyre Report and the provisions in the—

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** I thank the hon. Senator for giving way. It is only last week that we got the final report which is now with the Ministry of Planning and Development. A cursory glance through shows that there are no major changes.

**6.35 p.m.**

**Sen. H. Ali:** I thank the Minister for that intervention. I am reassured. These reports have a way of flushing down, and so on. I was wondering whether that would have been the case with this report. I again thank the Minister for his wisdom there in not laying it at a time when it would cause any diversion.

One of the recommendations made in the *Medium Term Policy Framework* is the establishment of the CDEF, which is the Community Development and Enterprises Fund, which is mentioned on page 32. Reference was made to this already by Sen. Mahabir-Wyatt and I really support this. It was also referred to by Sen. Joan Yuille-Williams. I think for too long communities have had projects and not benefited from them.

One of the complaints you hear all the time about the URP is that whenever a project like a drain is being put here, a curb being put there, the workers come from elsewhere. This thrust here, where not only will projects be funded on a community basis, but will also have a slant towards income-earning capabilities for the participants is a pleasant change. So I do support this measure, but I ask the same question that Sen. Mahabir-Wyatt asked: How is this thing going to be run? Because it is not spelt out clearly in any of the documents here.

Another point that has been mentioned about this social safety net is the action plan that is mentioned on page 31 of the *Medium Term Policy Framework, 1994—1996*, and this calls for the restructuring of the social service delivery system and a gradual transfer of the delivery of specific service to non-governmental organizations. This move has been lauded by everybody here and I repeat those sentiments. Not being closely involved in many of these and as an outsider, I should just like to make the following comments.

I do not think that all these NGOs are as well developed as the ones that the Senators on my right and left are so closely involved with. Some of them may need to put their houses in order and we may need to strengthen the management capabilities of some of these NGOs. There is nothing to indicate that there is going

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to be any kind of wild transfer of funds to all NGOs, but I just mention these words of caution. Just as we are asking for accountability and transparency in other organizations, we ask the same of these NGOs, because they are going to function in a similar manner at a different level.

Most people are asking for a contingency plan—plan B—if the social safety net is not realized. I do not hold that view. I do not feel there should be any contingency plan. We should work towards this thing so there will be no need for an alternative plan. Just as we make certain provisions for certain things and come what may, they are going to go through, I think we should adopt the same attitude towards this. It is not a matter that if the price of oil goes down, this net is going to be narrowed down. I do not think it should be that.

We have committed ourselves to this amount and we should stick to that. This is not a departure from our attitude in the way we operate. We have had the Minister of Energy and Energy-based Industries speak to us just now and we know that so many concessions have been made to these foreign companies, and I am not criticizing these moves. These have been done for a specific purpose. He mentions this to us all the time, that we have oil down there but if we do not pay to drill for the oil, it is of no use to us. He said almost the same thing today in relation to gas. So that we see the need for that and we are going to make concessions. Fifty cents, or whatever, for gas, we will sell them that so they will come down here and expand our oil industry and revive it, and so forth.

So I am saying, why do we not adopt with the same zeal, the attitude towards the social safety net? Do not speak about any contingency plan. I do not want to hear anything about the price of oil going down. I see provisions there and they have to be provided.

Whom are we catering for in the social safety net? It is the youth. Among the unemployed, 70 per cent are less than 30 years old. These are people in their prime, less than 30 years; people who graduate from schools; from universities; they may be thinking of getting married; building homes and so forth, at that time. These people's dreams are being shattered. We cannot disappoint them. We have heard about the aged and the sick. According to the documents we have here, there were 70,147 people over the age of 65. Their only fault is that they are over 65, and some of them are still strong, as the Minister mentioned. We could retrain them and things like that. Some of them are old and sick; others are homeless. All



of them will not be provided for by the plans of Sen. Ojar-Maharaj. There is need to provide homes, and so forth.

We cannot afford to disappoint these people. The social safety net, as I see it, is not simply providing something tangible like that, it is a feeling of expectation. We cannot disappoint these people. How could we disappoint these people? That is why I say I do not want to hear anything about a contingency plan. The plan is there. Carry it out.

There is little difficulty in determining how this \$1.1 billion is obtained. If you look at the budget speech, at page 20—I shall refer to the preciseness of the Minister of Finance's language later on—the Minister mentions here in the preceding list:

"Permit me to outline some of the programmes where this significant increase in social service funding will be used."

He said, "some of the programmes". So where are the remaining ones? He said, "some". When you add these figures you get \$684.1 million which leaves \$416 million. Where is that \$416 million going to be used?

There are odds and ends here about the Civilian Conservation Corps, but I do not think those numbers add up to the \$416 million. Also, the way the figures are distributed, it is very hard. I think Sen. Mahabir-Wyatt went through all the parts in these yellow books that mentioned "Servol" and it seems she was satisfied with \$5.5 million, but I do not know whether others have taken the time to do a similar exercise—Social Assistance, for example, is that listed under one head or several heads?

So apart from the shortfall of the \$1.1 billion, it is going to be a little difficult to keep a tab on this net, whether the allocation, in fact, is actually expended under these heads mentioned. I notice that the amount mentioned for this social safety net is \$1.1 billion. Would somebody make a statement in this House as to what is a billion in Trinidad and Tobago? Is it one million million, or one thousand million? This, as far as I know, is the only statement in the budget that talks about \$1 billion. Elsewhere, when you talk about revenues and expenditure, and so forth, everything is listed in terms of thousands of million. I wonder why this particular terminology. If you look at page 25: "Personnel Expenditure, \$2,635 million; Transfers and Subsidies, \$2,146.3 million; Interest Payments, \$1,667.1 million. But in the social security net, a small figure like one million is not used; one billion is used. It creates in your mind, money, billions. I am sure

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that is not the intent; I not imputing anything like that, but I would go back to my original question and ask that when we read the figure \$1 billion in Trinidad and Tobago, is it one million of millions or one thousand of millions.

**6.45 p.m.**

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** One thousand millions.

**Sen. H. Ali:** Thank you.

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** Which sounds more.

**Sen. H. Ali:** I should like to move on to the Road Improvement Tax. Again, coming so late in the day, these things are beaten topics, but I support the tax.

The Minister of Finance is a good salesman; he said "Look, do you not want fewer lives to be lost on the road? Do you not want to pay less for your vehicles' repair and so forth?" I agree with that so I pay five per cent. Sen. Rahael, who is not here told us it is not really five per cent, it is four per cent plus VAT or something like that. I look at it as something like a toll. Sen. Mahadeo mentioned that when one goes on the autobahn—I do not know about autobahns, but I know about these highways and bridges in the United States of America—one pays a toll to use them.

There is a certain satisfaction when you pay your money and get your money's worth immediately. It is not so with this tax. You may not see the benefit. This money would be paid and you may—I am trying to be as precise as the Minister of Finance—not see the benefits, so you may not get the satisfaction like the fellow who pays his toll in the United States of America for crossing the bridge or using the highway. I am reminded of the cartoon I saw in the *Trinidad Guardian* where a fellow in a boat was buying gas and the one selling the gas tells him "That money you are paying is going to fix Wrightson Road.

The Minister of Works and Transport has mentioned elsewhere that when the roads are fixed and things come back to normal, the Government would withdraw this tax. The history of withdrawing taxes like these tells us that we should discard that. There is one circumstance under which I feel this tax should be withdrawn. If the roads are not fixed, the Government has a moral responsibility to withdraw this tax.

The projects ought to be distributed evenly throughout the country. I do not think that it is just fixing some roads in an area; think of this as giving a certain

amount of satisfaction to the people; let them see their money being spent. I consider this part of the safety net. The Minister should make sure that the initial set of roads that are about to be repaired are distributed fairly evenly throughout the country. In fact, according to one of these yellow books, the Minister is supposed to identify some of these roads; another Minister—he is not here—can do that task for him.

If one looks at Part X of the *Provisional Collection of Taxes Order* on page 567, section 45(1) says:

"The purpose of the fund is to finance the repair, maintenance and improvement of roads in Trinidad and Tobago which the Minister responsible for highways and mainroads might identify."

I do not know whether the Minister needs any help in identifying roads, but I should like to make a suggestion. There is a road which connects the Solomon Hochoy Highway to the Point Lisas estate—everyone ought to know this road; most of our money has gone there. When Sen. Barnes talked about needing thousands of gallons of gas per day and so forth, he talked about Port of Spain; maybe a little for T&TEC but most of it goes to Point Lisas.

That road does not have a name. It used to be called the Connector Road in the early days, but I think it is now referred to as the Link Road; I do not know what it is. It is a pity that when Arcadian was buying Urea and Fertrin it did not ask that this road be fixed as part of the conditionalities. I am sure that road would have been fixed by now. It is in a continuous state of disrepair.

The other thing about this road tax is that there is such an elaborate structure to spend this \$50 million; and the Government is not going to get that sum of money at one time; it is a tax. One hopes that over a year one would get \$50 million, but if one looks at the elaborate structure there are a board; three ministries involved—the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning and Development and the Ministry of Works and Transport—plus somebody from the private sector. Just to fix some roads? The Ministry of Works and Transport has been fixing roads all the time. Why now, for this particular project, do you need this elaborate structure? I think that is just going to delay the whole process. The whole point about this is that some roads can be fixed very quickly. I think one should just identify somebody in the ministry and let him look after that project.

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I am heartened by the fact that it is promised that the Minister is going to report on the progress of this fund on a six-month basis, that is, how many roads have been fixed and at what cost. Also, that these statements ought to be audited by the Auditor General. I think that is a weak link in the process.

Sen. Wade Mark mentioned that those people who are on the Public Accounts Committee would know that it takes such a long time to get an audited report there. I should like to know and I pay my tax, when this report is submitted by April 30, the Auditor General should be given three months. They should be told that this is not one of the normal reports to be audited; this is a special thing which has to be laid in Parliament every six months, people are looking forward to it, so get this done in three months' time. Otherwise it is going to remain there just like the other reports and come out audited six or seven years afterwards, and the whole thing would be defeated. We would not be able to check this thing and never get the withdrawal of this tax.

One minor point on this matter. I draw attention to the fact that there is some strangeness in language here. There are really two references to the fixing of roads. On page 20 of the *Public Sector Investment Programme 1994*, paragraph 67, we see:

"An additional initiative which will be taken in 1994 is the reactivation of the Roads Fund with an allocation of \$50.0 million."

The point of departure is that this is a reactivation of the fund, when it is very clear from what the Minister said in his budget speech, that "Government therefore proposes to establish a road improvement fund". One is establishing a fund which implies that it is something new but in the PSIP, if it is the same thing, it is implied that it is a reactivation of some fund. Perhaps somebody could tell us whether it is \$50 million or \$100 million we are dealing with.

**6.55 p.m.**

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** While it is still fresh in my memory, there used to be a road fund and a number of funds during the time of the oil boom, but that did not come from a specific tax. Therefore, when they were writing the PSIP they thought that what they were going to do was start that fund again. In the light of the fact that there is a specific tax, the Minister of Finance then sought to put a mechanism in place which was specific and definitive for this fund, because the last one did not have to come to Parliament. It is \$50 million into a road fund where you are

taking the specific tax to put into that. It does not mean that other allocations for roads would not be made.

**Sen. H. Ali:** That clears up the matter. I am sure if it was \$100 million, the Government would have made much fuss.

There are one or two other matters. The transfer tax that was talked about—I do not know whether one should comment on that. Since the publication of the motor vehicle transfer tax in the Provisional Collection of Taxes Order, there have been two revisions. I assume that there would be further revisions. I think we can adopt one of two policies; take it out completely or add a simple amount such as \$100 across the board. Do not worry about checking that car or motorbike. It would be too time consuming as Sen. Mansoor mentioned.

I am really appalled at the transaction tax on financial services. I have gone through this and checked page after page of the items on which a tax would be charged. I have checked 160 items on which one would be charged a tax. I went to the trouble, because of my religious background, to avoid all kinds of bank charges. I do not have certain accounts, and even to keep an account and not pay charges, I have to keep a certain amount. Going to the bank is really a big task for me.

Now, through no fault of my own, I may have to pay for other things. I have to pay for my bank card because all the merchants want the bank card. Suddenly, your face and where you work do not mean anything. A bank card suddenly means something. A bank card is a guarantee that tells you certain things. What has happened to guarantees that were applicable before? Now, these services have to be paid for. I think this should be thrown out.

In spite of what Sen. Rahael said about this button pressing, do you know what that button is to press out? That is to determine how much tax to pay the Government. I am not interested in that. They are taking it from me. That button one is going to press is to work out the 15 per cent. I am not interested in the situation where there should not be any button to press.

I congratulate Sen. Maloney on his maiden speech. He has mentioned the role of youth and how we should we cater for them. That is also mentioned in the Medium Term Plan—the role of sports. Many of these sentiments were expressed by other Members when we discussed the Sport and Culture Fund (Amdt.) Bill. It says:

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"Physical, recreational and youth development are viewed as essential elements in the promotion of human progress and natural development."

It is a means of improving the quality of life of the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. It also mentions some other things about revenue generation, but we would not go into that.

The Government is catering for sports. This morning we heard from several Senators that if one drives around one would see many youths liming on the streets. They have nowhere to go. I think if we have more sporting facilities, perhaps we can solve that problem. I would like some information on some of the provisions that are made in the Public Sector Investment Programme.

For example, page 27, in paragraph 99, particular mention was made about the elements of the programme "for aided self-help projects—construction of facilities at the St. Michael's School for Boys; construction of multi-purpose indoor sports hall and a secretariat for national sporting organizations". At the back of the Appendix, one would see four of these multi-purpose indoor sports halls are mentioned. I do not know who is going to speak on behalf of the Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs but I should like some information relating to that.

I live fairly near to Chaguanas and my family and I may want to make use of this. What are the facilities provided in the multi purpose indoor sports hall? I think these things ought to be mentioned here because leisure activities are important. Why do you think so much money was spent on the "down the road" advertisement? It is so people can enjoy themselves when the crime situation is reversed. I should like some information on these multi-purpose indoor sports halls.

More importantly, the secretariat for national sporting organization—I think something should be said about what is involved. We are a sports loving public and often we hear so much bickering among sporting organizations. I wonder if the secretariat that is spoken about here would help to alleviate the problems that arise among these organizations, and perhaps, much more than this.

**Sen. Yuille-Williams:** Although I am not the Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs, one of the problems is that they found difficulty in locating places where they can be housed, and this would provide that kind of home for all the sporting organizations. When you say a secretariat, it would not just be the equipment or

the personnel, but each sporting organization would have office space of its own within this whole national secretariat. You would be sure when you want to go to an organization, where that would be. We find that they need support because these are national bodies. The Minister really wanted to accede to a request which has been there for several years to provide office space for all national sporting organizations.

**Sen. H. Ali:** I thank the Minister for that intervention. It makes it clearer because if there is a debate and I want to know about football or cricket I would know where to call.

Some of these things are mentioned in the *Draft Estimates of the Development Programme for the year 1994*. There is provision for the construction of a swimming pool. There is only \$100,000 there. I do not know how many pools one can build with that and where they would be located. Perhaps someone can tell us how many pools there would be; what size and where they would be located.

While we are on sports, I would like to refer to the *Trinidad Guardian* dated, December 13, 1993, where it was suggested that the inquiry into Football Massive be terminated. Mr. Camps stated:

"I wish to publicly ask the powers that be to formally bring to an end the Commission of Inquiry in football with immediate effect and allow the work which we have done to continue and bear fruit, free from any external adversity."

I do not know what is the wisdom in that. When many of us discussed sports on the Sport and Culture Fund (Amdt.) Bill recently, we asked that the commission be reactivated. We thought that reactivation of that enquiry would have been for the improvement of the game, but it seems that the game has improved to such an extent that there is no need for that. Maybe a response should be given to that. There is now an opportunity for somebody who does not want the enquiry to continue—Mr. Camps is saying so, TTFA is saying so—let us stop it.

The Minister of Energy and Energy-based Industries has already gone, but I wanted to ask him a question relating to natural gas. It is mentioned in the *Medium Term Policy Framework* on page 26. Under "Sectoral Policies, Energy and Energy-based Sector", one of the ventures is to promote the use of natural gas for transportation and household use. Someone has already mentioned that this does not seem to be actively pursued because there are no concessions for people who would like to convert to using compressed natural gas in their vehicles.

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I am more interested in the second part about promoting the use of natural gas for household use. This is a fairly novel idea. I heard it before and I should like to get some update on that venture.

**7.05 p.m.**

**Mr. Vice-President:** The Senator's speaking time has expired.

*Motion made,* That the Senator's speaking time be extended by 15 minutes.  
[Sen. J. Spence]

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Sen. H. Ali:** Mr. Vice-President, I do apologize for speaking so long when everyone is probably tired. I have my last item here; it deals with some of the statements made by the Minister of National Security.

First of all, I should like to congratulate him on his forthright contribution. At least it is something that we can respond to. We can argue with him and I am very pleased with the way he made his contribution. That does not mean that one cannot ask a few questions.

In trying to cut down the expenses of the Forensic Science Centre, he mentioned that stolen vehicles would no longer be looked at there and, instead, two forensic science officers would be appointed in the police service. He also made the comment that to the best of his knowledge that is not such a technical job. I had not realized that. I should have thought, from reading the newspapers, that car thieves are so clever that they are able to change the chassis and engine numbers and it was not easy to detect; now I am hearing that it is not very difficult to catch these people. There is some discrepancy in what I read and what was said by the Minister. Does this mean that there will be a reduction in the number of cars that are traced back to their original owners?

The Minister of Energy has also mentioned the fact that two scholarships will be offered in forensic pathology. I think it was the same Minister who, earlier, said that no one wants to become a forensic pathologist. I am now wondering if anyone will take up these posts.

In the light of what took place recently in the court where a person was freed because the forensic pathologist was not here, I wonder if any steps will be taken to make sure that instances like these do not recur, because there is a distinction between renewing the contract of an individual and asking him to come back to



give evidence. The judge, to me, made the difference between the two very clear. We may still have to deal with some of these foreign skilled people, because it takes time to find people who are interested in forensic pathology and then to train them, so I think this a long-term procedure.

**Sen. Draper:** Just for the information of my friend opposite, we have already had individuals come forward. We have advertised and are, in fact, on the way to sending people off on those scholarships.

**Sen. H. Ali:** I am so glad to hear that. I probably quoted the Minister too early.

Sen. Daly spoke the embarrassing situation where we allow drug "busts" to take place outside Trinidad and Tobago because we are unable to prosecute them here. I think we should set a little example. Catch one or two fellows and prosecute them. Will we send everyone to be caught abroad and be prosecuted? Not only that, when the arrests in Savannah, Georgia, were reported, we received conflicting reports.

We talk about the public affairs unit of the police service. Why was the unit created, if it cannot tell us whether the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service was involved in this? Why does it take so long? Why does it have to be some anonymous source? Why do we have to wait here in Parliament to get a definitive statement from the Minister of National Security informing us that they are responsible for it? We want to know. I do not care where the fellows are caught. I would feel pleased that we had some part to play in having them apprehended. I do not want to wait so long until I have lost a certain amount of confidence in the system.

The other sad disclosure of the Minister was the fact that so many vehicles have been bought and so much paid to mechanics and for equipment and then we cannot fix them. Some of these drivers treat these vehicles like young men who rent a vehicle for the weekend. They ride up and down until it goes down. That attitude has to change. I do not know whether the appointment of a fleet manager will help. I hope it does. I also hope that the recommendation of the Minister of National Security that they have garages other than police garages fix these vehicles, will help.

This is connected with mobility. Every time an excuse is made for the police service, it is made on the basis of mobility. That has some merit, but we cannot blame every shortfall in crime detection on mobility. I am saying that if the police have X cars, they should detect a certain number of crimes. It does not mean zero.

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What we are being fed here implies that there are no cars. But there are still some cars.

There is this cry that mobility affects the detection rate, affects the response the police can make to certain distress calls, but it does not mean zero response. The impression is being created that there are no cars, so we can expect zero response. It does not make sense. We still have some vehicles, so those vehicles should prove their worth. That is all I am saying about this matter. While I hold the view that mobility is very important, whether bicycles, cars or motorbikes, all the blame cannot be put on that.

The Minister has mentioned the non-co-operation of the police officers, and there are so many examples mentioned in this Final Report of New Scotland Yard. We cannot go into this book in detail, but I think that some of the suggestions mentioned here, in paragraph 12.2.3 ought to be taken up:

"Consideration should be given to separating the coroner's inquest from the criminal court system. Independent coroner's courts should be established and coroners appointed on a full time basis. This should speed up inquest hearings and act as a counter-measure to police cover-ups and inadequate or corrupt investigations into suspicious deaths."

Non-co-operation is mentioned in this book.

### **7.15 p.m.**

There is a team here in which Corporal Honoré was mentioned. This team was spoken of glowingly by New Scotland Yard. When the team went for its usual break after their four weeks tour of duty, they returned to find that these people had been transferred, and it was only because of their good offices that they were able to get these people back. It also highlights what the Minister said in terms of non-co-operation. He is quoted in the *Trinidad Guardian*, of Monday December 13, 1993 as follows:

"He said, under the present system of recruitment if you recruit a bad police officer, you're stuck with him for the rest of your life, because the hardest thing to do in this country is to fire a public servant or a police officer.

The Minister, admitting that he might get into trouble, added, there also appears to be a great reluctance on the part of Service Commissions to discipline anybody."

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Why is he afraid? What trouble is he going to get into? It is written here—he tabled this document in Parliament—in paragraph 7:3.

"...as has also been the general attitude of the Police Service Commission, the net result was inaction or suspension that further dented New Scotland Yard credibility, but more importantly, failed to remove key personnel who were known to be actively working to frustrate the enquiry."

He does not have to give his own quote, just quote the document and then he is safe. He is not going to get into any trouble, it is there!

One last comment on this report. We are talking about the quality of the people in the police service. Did anyone bother to look at the qualifications of a man who signed this document? CB, LLB M. Phil. This shows you the type of people who are in New Scotland Yard. I am not saying that you have to have a certain type of degree to be in that position, but if you want the quality of service, you have to recruit this type of person. I am glad the Minister of National Security did mention that there is going to be recruitment at a similar level.

I have one final point. In December, 1993 in the *Trinidad Guardian*, it was reported as follows:

"He revealed that to date six groups had met 53 times to continue the dialogue on race relations. He identified them as a National Council of Indian Culture, Confederation of African Associations of Trinidad and Tobago, Sanatan Dharma Maha Saba, Club L'Overture, The African Association and the Muslim Coordinating Council.

And there is a quote there, I do not know to whom it is attributed.

"Three African and three Indian Organizations."

Mr. Vice-President, I should like to announce to the Senate, the community and whoever cares to listen, that one of these groups mentioned is the Muslim Coordinating Council and it does not fall within either of these categories. It is neither an African nor an Indian association.

I thank you very much.

**Sen. Yuille-Williams:** Mr. Vice-President, I was trying to catch the Senator before he sat. I felt it was my responsibility to respond to something he said earlier, if you will permit me.

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To the question the Senator raised on the multi-purpose court, I really feel I should not sit and respond. He asked what it was designed for. As I said, the name is multi-purpose, it is really for indoor sports like netball, basketball, squash, badminton. What is important about it is that it allows for practice throughout the year, rain or shine.

When our national teams go abroad, most of the games that they play are played in indoor facilities. We are definitely at a disadvantage because the surface on which we practise here is quite different from what is out there. In fact, even our footwear is purchased abroad just for those facilities and sometimes when our national teams do not do too well, this could be the reason—that the facilities are quite different. It would give us a competitive edge, I am sure if we put in these facilities so that our teams will now have the facilities that they need for practice. This is one of the things we would benefit from with the indoor sports halls.

**Sen. H. Ali:** That is one of the things that I am very supportive of. I am glad.

*Motion made,* That the Senate do now adjourn to Tuesday, December 14, 1993 at 10.30 a.m. [*Hon. L. Saith*]

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Senate adjourned accordingly.*

*Adjourned at 7.23 p.m.*