SENATE

Tuesday, April 25, 1995

The Senate met at 1.30 p.m.

PRAYERS

[MR. PRESIDENT *in the Chair*]

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mr. President: Hon. Senators, I have granted leave of absence to Sen. The Hon. Camille Robinson-Regis to be absent from today's sitting due to illness. I have also granted leave of absence to Sen. Ashick Hassim to be absent from sittings during the period April 24 to May 19, 1995 as he will be out of the country.

SUGAR INDUSTRY CONTROL BOARD (REPEAL) BILL

Bill to repeal the Sugar Industry Control Board Act; brought from the House of Representatives [*The Minister of Planning and Development*] read the first time.

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

Question put and agreed to.

FLAMING WORD MINISTRY (INC'N) BILL

Question put and agreed to, That a Bill for the incorporation of the Flaming Word Ministry and matters incidental thereto, be now read the first time.

Bill accordingly read the first time.

PETITIONS

Port of Spain Chapter (AMORC)

Sen. Wade Mark: Mr. President, I have the honour to present the petition on behalf of the Port of Spain Chapter (AMORC).

I now ask that the Clerk be permitted to read the petition and that the promoters be allowed to proceed.

Petition read.

Question put and agreed to, That the promoters be allowed to proceed.

Trinidad And Tobago Secondary Schools Football League

Sen. Deodath Ojah-Maharaj: Mr. President, I have the honour to present the petition on behalf of the Trinidad and Tobago Secondary Schools Football League.

I now ask that the Clerk be permitted to read the petition and that the promoters be allowed to proceed.

Petition read.

Question put and agreed to, That the promoters be allowed to proceed.

PAPERS LAID

1. Report of the Auditor General on the accounts of the Students Revolving Loan Fund for the year ended December 31, 1990. [*The Minister of Planning and Development (Sen. The Hon. Dr. L. Saith)*]
2. Report of the Auditor General on the accounts of the Students Revolving Loan Fund for the year ended December 31, 1991. [*Sen. Dr. L. Saith*]
3. Report of the Auditor General on the accounts of the Students Revolving Loan Fund for the year ended December 31, 1992. [*Sen. Dr. L. Saith*]
4. The Value Added Tax Order, 1995. [*Sen. Dr. L. Saith*]

1.40 p.m.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Joint Select Committee

Presentation

Sen. Pundit Ramcharam Gosine: Mr. President, I wish to lay on the table the Second Special Report of the Joint Select Committee appointed by the Senate and the House of Representatives to consider the entire question of public holidays and to report by March 31, 1995.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The following questions stood on the Order Paper in the name of Sen. Wade Mark.

Public and Private Sector

(Severance/Retrenchment Scheme)

14. (a) Could the Minister of Labour and Co-operatives provide the Senate with the list of companies in both the public and private sectors which

have severed/retrenched their employees utilizing the various schemes such as Voluntary Early Separation Plans, Voluntary Early Retirement Plans, or Voluntary Early Termination Plans in the period 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994?

(b) Could the Minister of Labour and Co-operatives further state the number of employees involved in these schemes, the quantum of money involved in each scheme and the quantum of money, if any, still owed to workers during the period 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994?

Mark, Castillo and Toney
(Contracts, Awards and/or Assignments)

23. Could the Minister of Finance provide this Senate with the relevant information pertaining to the number of contracts, awards and/or assignments granted to the firm of Mark, Castillo and Toney for the period December 1992 to December 1994; the names of the companies involved in these assignments, the periods of time involved in these assignments; the fees paid to the firm of Mark, Castillo and Toney for each of the assignments over the same period, i.e. 1992-1994?

Consultancy Firms
(Divestment/Privatization)

26. (a) Could the Minister of Finance provide the Senate with the names of the consultancy firms involved in the divestment/privatization (either wholly owned or partially owned) during the period January 1992 to November 1994?

(b) Could the Minister further provide the Senate with copies of the independent valuation reports involved in the transactions in respect of those enterprises which were divested/privatized during the same period?

The Minister of Planning and Development (Sen. Dr. The Hon. Lenny Saith): Mr. President, I thought I had asked for two weeks extension on this question last week. I wish to advise the Senate that answers to questions 14, 23 and 26 are not ready and I would like another two weeks extension for these questions.

Questions, by leave, deferred.

FIREARMS (AMDT.) BILL

Bill to amend the Firearms Act, Chapter 16:01 [*The Minister of Planning and Development*]*;* read the first time.

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

Question put and agreed to.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FREE ZONES (AMDT.) BILL

Bill to amend the Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Act, 1988 [*The Minister of Trade and Industry*]; read the first time.

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

Question put and agreed to.

VISHWANATH HINDU SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION BILL

Question put and agreed to, That a Bill to provide for the incorporation of the Vishwanath Hindu Social and Cultural Organization and for matters incidental thereto, be read the first time.

Bill accordingly read the first time.

SAN FRANCIQUE SPORTS, EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL

COUNCIL OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO (INC'N.) BILL

Question put and agreed to, That a Bill to provide for the incorporation of the San Francique Sports, Educational and Cultural Council and for matters incidental thereto, be read the first time.

Bill accordingly read the first time.

CONSTITUTION (AMDT.) (NO. 2) BILL

Bill to repeal the Constitution (Amdt.) Act 1994 and to amend the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago brought from the House of Representatives (*The Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs);* read the first time.

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

Question put and agreed to.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

The Minister of Planning and Development (Sen. Dr. The Hon. Lenny Saith): Mr. President, I am seeking leave of the Senate to have a statement made by Minister Gordon Draper under "Statement by Ministers" later in the sitting.

Leave granted.

Hon. Dr. L. Saith: Mr. President, I also beg to move that the Senate proceed at this stage to deal with item No. 5 under Private Business Motions followed by Private Bills, second reading.

Question put and agreed to.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Joint Select Committee
Adoption

Sen. Pundit Ramcharan Gosine: Mr. President, I beg to move,

> That this Senate adopt the Second Special Report of the Joint Select Committee appointed by the Senate and the House of Representatives to consider the entire question of Public Holidays and to report by March 31, 1995.

Basically the Committee is seeking an extension of one week in order to conclude its business.

Seconded by Sen. Jean Elder.

Question put and agreed to

COUNTING OF UNREMUNERATED WORK BILL

[SECOND DAY]

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question [Tuesday, March 28, 1995]

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question again proposed.

Sen. Carol Merritt: Mr. President, the Private Members' Bill before this Senate seeks to require the Central Statistical Office and other public bodies to include a calculation of unremunerated work in the production of statistics that

relate to the gross domestic product and other accounts, including the calculation of the gross national product.

I wish to preface my presentation today by first congratulating the mover of this Motion, Sen. Diana Mahabir-Wyatt for having the courage to pilot this Private Members' Bill in the Senate. I also wish, at this point in time, to pay tribute to a true woman of substance, Miss Clotil Walcott, who, not only had the vision and determination but the dedication and commitment over the years to fight for this noble cause. I wish to acknowledge and praise all those women who have contributed tirelessly to this struggle in an attempt to secure national, regional and international recognition of this whole question of unpaid waged work in the household.

Before I go into the fundamentals of my presentation, I wish to disabuse from some myopic minds that this Private Members' Bill is a "woman's thing". It definitely is not so. It is far from it. This Bill deals with the whole question of unwaged work for both men and women and I think it is very important for us to fully understand and appreciate this, especially in the light of the implications of the Bill.

1.50 p.m.

Mr. President, at the outset, I would like to indicate that the United National Congress unequivocally supports this concept of including a calculation of unwaged work in national accounts. The international wages for housework campaign was founded in 1972—this is just historical background of the whole idea—its basic agenda is to have people and Governments recognize the economic value of housework, and to count it into their gross national product. In 1980, at the Mid-Decade World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women in Copenhagen, the United Nations declared that women do two-thirds of the world's work for 10 per cent of the income and own one per cent of the assets. In the United States women in the home produce 25 to 40 per cent of the gross national product, and in the Third World countries, women's production of wealth would be an even higher proportion of the GNP. In Africa alone, women's unwaged work produces an estimated 80 per cent of the food on which the continent survives. Also, according to Andaiye in an issue paper prepared for presentation to the Ministers responsible for Women's Affairs, Caribbean Subregional Conference to the Fourth World Conference on Women in Curacao on June 28 and 29, 1994 said:

"The value of this work internationally has been estimated at US $4 trillion. For India it has been estimated at 33 per cent of the GDP."

Mr. President, the concept of unremunerated work refers to the whole question of unpaid work in the household which is largely done by women. Unremunerated work involves a spectrum of activities—physical, mental and emotional—which somebody does, without a wage to keep individuals, families, and communities alive, and we must respect this. However, we need to be cognizant of the fact that today, a large number of men, who have been rendered unemployed due to the economic crisis and the acceleration of the structural adjustment policies, are now falling into this net. According to Andaiye of the Guyanese women's organization, Red Thread, the reason that this monumental workload is invisible is that it is not exchanged for money—the workload performed by women over the years in the household has been very invisible and it has not been exchanged for money, it is not a part of the formal system of exchange. Unpaid work in the household still transforms and distributes or adds value to products bought on the market before they are physically consumed. The borderline between production and consumption, as drawn in economics, is also a conventional line, convenient for distinguishing between relatively easy to measure monetary transactions on the one hand and non monetary production for exchange or self-consumption on the other.

Mr. President, the similarity between production processes occurring in the market and in the household is underlined by the overlap between two sectors: for example, children are cared for, food is prepared and so forth, as a result of paid and unpaid work inputs. Interactions between two sectors are continuous and are reflected in the following:

(a) Transfers of manpower from the household to the labour force.

(b) Transfer of production from the household to the market economy for example, when former full-time house-makers spend part of their wages in buying on the market, goods and services they were producing previously.

(c) And inversely, transfer from the market sector to the household.

According to some advocates of this concept—the concept of unwaged work—it is now largely undisputed that non-market household production is an economic activity sharing many characteristics with market production and linked to the market. It is also recognized that imputing a value on household production

meets with difficulties which have so far prevented its inclusion in the national accounts. These difficulties arise mainly from the lack of direct market transactions for household production, which for similar goods and services produced in the market, determine a socially accepted value, a price, according to M. Recal. I am quoting from A book entitled *Unpaid Work in the Household by Luisella Goldschmidt-Clermont published in 1986*—she states:

> "Household production consists of those unpaid activities which are carried on, by and for the members, which activities might be replaced by market goods or paid services, if circumstances such as income, market conditions and personal inclinations permit the services being delegated to someone outside the household group."

In order to distinguish which portion of domestic activities is "economic"—that is should be considered as production—and which is not, a widely accepted criterion is to determine whether the performance of an activity can be delegated to a paid outsider. This is popularly referred to as "the third person criterion", when one pays a domestic worker to do the duties that one normally performs.

The problem of the underestimation of women's work in labour force statistics and national income accounts has been observed in four general areas of activity:-

(a) Subsistence production;

(b) Informal paid work.

(c) Domestic production and related tasks

(d) Volunteer work.

According to Lourdes Beneria in her book *Accounting for Women's Work—The Progress of Two decades (1992),* even by accepted definition of the labour force, there seems to be a tendency to underestimate female labour force participation rates in the first and second areas above. As with the case of unpaid family workers in agriculture or with participants in the informal labour market, the main problem in the latter's case pertains to designing more comprehensive and accurate methods of data collection.

In the case of domestic production and related tasks, the problem has largely been conceptual in nature; in the conventional view, this type of production was not included in any national accounting statistics because it was defined as falling outside the economic realm unless performed as some form of remunerated activity. Similarly, in the case of volunteer work, the problem has also been conceptual and definitional.

The influence of the international women's movement since the 1970's, and the subsequent work carried out by other international and academic institutions, has been instrumental in providing the impetus to analyze and emphasize all aspects of the invisibility of women's work, including domestic production.

2.00 p.m.

The need to deal with the undercounting of women's work at all levels was given important recognition in the 1985 Nairobi Conference that culminated the Nations Decade for Women as was reflected in its report entitled *Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women*. Paragraph 120 of this report states *inter alia:*

> "The remunerated and, in particular, the unremunerated contributions of women to all aspects and sectors of development should be recognized, and appropriate efforts should be made to measure and reflect these contributions in national accounts and economic statistics in the gross national product. Concrete steps should be taken to quantify the unremunerated contribution of women in agriculture, food production, reproduction and household activities."

By strongly recommending appropriate efforts to measure the contribution of women's paid and unpaid work to all aspects and sectors of development, the report officially sanctioned the process by which the under-estimation of women's economic activities had been analyzed while the conceptual and practical obstacles to overcome the problem had gradually weakened.

Since then, strong support for a more systematic inclusion of statistics on women's work in the national accounts has been expressed by other international organizations and non-governmental institutions. The effort has been undertaken at the two levels which are most relevant—labour force and production statistics. Labour force statistics and national income accounts were historically designed to gather information about the level of economic activity and changes over time and to provide a basis for economic policy and planning.

I would like to refer to page 2 of a paper done by Andaye from the Red Thread organization in Guyana. She stated that:

> "In 1989 the Counting Women's Unremunerated Work Bill was introduced into the British Parliament by Mildred Gordon, Member of Parliament. The Bill was endorsed by over 100 Members of Parliament and followed by the

Recognition and Remuneration of Carers Bill for people engaged in full time care of elderly, disabled or very young relatives.

Also, in 1990, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women moved that the target date for implementation of paragraph 120 of the *Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women* be moved from the year 2000 to the year 1995.

In 1993 an Unremunerated Work Act first introduced in 1991 was reintroduced in the United States House of Representatives by Barbara Rose Collins. The Bill requires the Bureau of Labour Statistics to conduct time use of the unremunerated work performed in the United States including household work, work related to child care and other care services, agriculture work, work related to food production, work related to family businesses and volunteer work, to calculate the monetary value of this work and to include the measurement in the comprehensive gross national product.

The European Parliament adopted a report calling on European union governments to quantify and value women's unwaged work and include it in their GNP."

These are the few initiatives that were taken by the various countries to address this issue. In capitalist economies, the market has always been viewed as the core of economic activity. Similarly, participation in the labour force and the inclusion of production in national accounts have been defined in relation to their connection to the market or to the performance of some work "for pay or profit" as defined by the International Conference of Labour Force Statisticians in 1954. This meant that unremunerated work was not to be included in national incomes in most societies, and the persons performing it not be counted as a member of the labour force because they were not part of the market of paid exchange of goods and services and, therefore, not viewed as economically significant.

Mr. President, while perusing an article in the magazine *Women Speak* No. 26 and 27 of 1990, I came across an article entitled *Organizing From the Perspective of Unwaged Housework* by Selma James and she cited some information by Dr. Rhoda Reddock. According to Dr. Reddock, an analysis of the domestic labour force has identified the following components of housework:

1. The production of new labour which includes child bearing and child birth.

2. The training of new labourers including housewives in the duty of child rearing.

3. The daily reproduction of labour power replacing energy lost in the day's work. This include housework, cooking, cleaning, washing, shopping, sewing, tender loving care, and so forth.

Studies have shown that the family and the wife present the cheapest possibilities in most instances for the accomplishment of the above mentioned tasks. Many individuals in our society place little values on these tasks because they take for granted that they go home and meet a clean house and their children well fed and taken care of. These are important values in our society. If we had to pay for them on the open market they would have been quite costly.

At this time, maybe, I should refer to some modern-day parents, especially single parents. Some single parents have to produce on two levels—the household tasks and two jobs on the outside. To make ends meet, many young mothers have to perform two jobs including the one at home, so it is a three-fold type of production that is taking place at present.

2.10 p.m.

In analyzing the concept of unwaged, we have to look at the subsistence production. Despite the conceptual and practical progress made to include subsistence production in national accounting, for example, in countries such as Nepal, Papua—New Guinea, Tanzania and others, statistical information on women working in this sector was problematic according to Lourdes Beneria in her book, *Accounting for Women's Work—the Progress of Two Decades*". I had mentioned this author before in my presentation, but I had to do extensive research because this debate is a very scientific one, it is not just ordinary as some people might think it to be. Many scientific implications are indicated here. According to Miss Beneria this was problematic for a variety of reasons pertaining to the method of data collection: Enumeration procedures with respect to the application of concepts such as family labour.

As Derek Blades in his book *Non-Monetary (Subsistence) Activities in the National Accounts of Developing Countries (1975)*, based on a survey of 70 countries, an effort to incorporate subsistence production in agriculture in GDP accounts was gradually made in most countries, but the statistical estimation of subsistence activities was subject to variation in each country.

Therefore, Mr. President, what was considered an economic activity became arbitrary and differences between countries developed with respect to their inclusion in national accounts of activities such as home gardening, water carrying and food processing. All of these factors resulted in a tendency to

undercount the proportion of the population in the labour force and the value of goods and services included in national accounts. The problem has affected women in particular, given their high concentration in subsistence activities and their specific role in the domestic sphere.

Mr. President, in looking at the informal sector, a different type of problem is represented by the lack of statistical information on workers engaged in the informal sector of the economy. In this case, the problem is not one of conceptualization, but one of a lack of statistical information on the sector itself.

In looking at the domestic work historically in the case of domestic production the problem was of a different nature. Unlike subsistence production, this type of work was not viewed as a substitute for market oriented goods and services and not defined as an "economic activity". Therefore there was no attempt to include it in national accounts and labour force statistics, since it was regarded as falling outside the production boundary of these accounts.

However, since the late 1970s the absence of statistical information about domestic work has been under scrutiny. Progress has proceeded at different levels to an extent that, what seemed to be a far-fetched and quite unacceptable notion in 1970 has become a matter of serious and constructive work.

In looking at volunteer work, the wide range of tasks pertaining to this category creates both conceptual and methodological problems. Much remains to be done to account for women's volunteer work, particularly given that in many areas it has been increasing significantly as is the case with survival strategies—among the poor, resulting from the drastic deterioration of living standards in countries with structural adjustment packages.

Mr. President, I wish to quote from a document, *Valuing Unwaged Work*, that was sent to me by the mover of this Motion, Sen. Mahabir-Wyatt. If you will allow me, I will quote from the document. "*Valuing Unwaged Work: A Strategy for equity whose time has come*" by the International Women Count Network—

> "Volunteer work performed in the community for churches, educational institutions, hospitals, organized youth sports, etc., is essential to those institutions, to our happiness, to making everyone's life bearable, and sometimes to a community's survival; an enormous contribution that keeps society functioning, yet it is dismissed by having no official measure."

These tasks that are performed voluntarily in the community are not measured, Mr. President.

> "Those in the "sandwich generation" face caring for both young children and elderly parents, none of which is officially counted, and usually while juggling a waged job at the same time; policy makers have no data on how much time, effort and energy are involved in balancing caring work for children and the elderly. Nor is it clear how much unwaged work "retired" people do for the community, including helping with the childcare of grandchildren.
>
> According to the World Health Organization, the higher incidence of mental illness among women is due to stress..."

Especially in these times, Mr. President.

> "arising from greater poverty and overwork.

Women today, are overloaded, Mr. President.

> "For example, it has been proved that women tend to save precious time by doing more than one task at a time, which contributes to stress.
>
> What in the South is called 'Structural Adjustment Policies', in the industrialized north is called 'monetarism': cuts in social services and benefits, and increased unemployment. All of this is premised on women further lengthening their already killing working day with additional unwaged work. Although not counted, unwaged work is counted *on* in all policy decisions, south and north.
>
> More informal health care is provided by women worldwide than by all health care institutions combined. Counting unwaged health care work would help provide a realistic measure of the costs, including physical and mental health costs, of environmental devastation, stress, racism and other forms of discrimination.
>
> In cases of injury, "wrongful death" or compensation for rape or other crimes, women and their families are at a disadvantage in seeking damages because unwaged work is assumed to have no economic value, and legal and other professionals have no accurate official data on which to base claims and proposals.
>
> Counting unremunerated work would, for the first time, give us a measure of what it really takes for a society to function."

And what it really took for the society in the past—for our grandparents and great grandparents—to perform these functions.

I now turn to the benefits of calculating the unremunerated work in our society. Numerous reasons have been pointed out for dedicating efforts and resources to recording unremunerated production and improving the accuracy of statistical information in the areas of paid work or other types of activities with statistical deficiencies.

These reasons include not only the need to base national and international policies and planning on the most accurate assessment of reality, but also the need to recognize the contribution of women to all aspects of development, thus ending their invisibility, and to construct more comprehensive indicies or welfare.

A number of studies carried out in many countries indicate the value of unrecorded activities, a high proportion of which are performed by women, might range between 1/3 to 1/2 of measured GNP. In addition, different U.N. documents have repeatedly indicated that statistics on women contribution to the economy can be useful for human resource planning and estimation of potential output, agricultural policies, measures to be undertaken with respect to the informal sector and the different adjustment and stabilization policies designed during economic crises.

2.20 p.m.

Mr. President, furthermore, calculation of unremunerated work can be useful for the study of savings and consumption patterns of men and women, the analysis of household dynamics; regional and comparative studies of male and female participation in production and studies of time use by gender. More accurate data can be very useful to design appropriate policies regarding employment, income distribution, social security provision and pay equity.

Similarly, new systematic information about domestic production and related subsistence activities would shed light on estimation of welfare levels and on the current discussion about the intensification of women's work resulting from the structural adjustment policies implemented in many countries. According to Selma James in an article which I cited earlier, unwaged work not only underlies all industry and all profit, unwaged work is what all the workers of the world can unite against. Organizing on unwaged work can reverse the terms of class unity, the more powerful uniting with the less powerful, from the bottom up—men uniting with women, metropolitan with third world, waged with unwaged.

In addition, according to the *Issue* paper which I cited earlier, counting the unwaged work of producing and reproducing human resources under structural adjustment would provide policy-makers with the bases for evaluating true cost and for arriving at a more national allocation of resources.

The inclusion of domestic work in national accounts raises some special problems. Although a significant consensus has been generated on this inclusion, the pre-dominance of market-related rather than welfare-related criteria tends to place domestic production in a special category of work. For example, whereas household production definitely consists of productive activities relevant to welfare, it has been argued that including them into national accounts can be neither meaningful nor desirable, especially when one takes into consideration the traditional uses of the results of national accounts.

Therefore, most recommendations, including those of the expert group on measurement of women's income and their participation and production in the informal sector which met in Santo Domingo in 1986, have opted for the development of separate or supplementary accounts that would permit the generation of 'augmented' estimates of gross domestic products. The purpose of such 'satellite accounts' would be to record the economic processes of unpaid production of goods and services in households.

Given the numerous tasks being performed in the home, the question of which tasks are to be included or excluded has been an important area of discussion. The most accepted operational criterion is that of third person which was alluded to earlier.

Another problematic area which pertains to the whole question of estimating the value of household production is the difficulty of comparing it with that of market production especially in light of the fact that the two take place under very different conditions and that domestic work is not subject to the law of the market and the normal competitive pressure to which market-oriented production is subject. This is because no equivalent to some of the goods and services produced in the household may exist in the market and secondly, that no standard of productivity exists for domestic production. Domestic workers might presumably work at different levels of efficiency and therefore either take different time to produce the same output or produce a different quality of output with the same time.

As a further point of information, two main approaches to the estimation of the value of domestic work have been introduced one based on the imputation of value to labour time spent on housework (the input-related method) and another based on the imputation of market prices to goods and services produced in the domestic sphere (the output-related method).

The practical difficulties of adequately dealing with methodological problems should not be underestimated. In 1989 a United Nations report alluded to the causes of resistance to include the calculation of unpaid work in the national accounts as:

a) Lack of awareness of the problems at hand and of their possible solutions.

b) Belief in the adequacy of the current system and resistance to change. Some people believe in the system that they use presently for their national accounting and they would resist change at all costs.

c) Technical problems related to conceptual and methodological questions, including the difficulties of generating accurate data on a large scale.

d) Cost considerations. The cost that it would entail to do this type of accounting collecting the data.

Mr. President, I cited an article earlier on *Accounting for Women's work: The Progress of Two Decades* by Lourdes Beneria (1992), Cornell University, New York. As I told you before I did extensive research and the contribution this author has in her book is vital to this issue. I wish to refer to it again. The author says that at each country level, a starting point is a careful analysis of the different censuses and surveys taken regularly (in our case, it would be the Central Statistical Office), to deal with existing biases and to evaluate the extent to which they can incorporate additional questions and information regarding women. These include population censuses at business statistics as well as labour force and household surveys. For example, the male biases in existing population censuses, such as the reliance on information given by the head of the household, often assumed to be the male or the father, have often led to inaccurate information about women's work.

In order to address these issues, we, on this side, have done some research on the area and the existing literature suggests that work can be done on four main areas:

Firstly, the definitional issue implying a revision of the concepts used in the process of data collection and statistical classification. This includes a clear definition of keywords used in censuses and surveys and which might be interpreted very differently by different respondents.

Secondly, we need to examine the technical and methodological issues or questions about "how to" which will influence the outcome of data collection.

2.30 p.m.

An ILO project on the improvement of data collection and measurement methods shows that the accuracy of information on labour force data on women can be influenced by the type of questionnaire that is used, the sex and the age of the interviewer.

Thirdly are the cultural issues, to avoid the imposition of a country's standards and practices over others. For example, the United Nations report of 1989 cited earlier, warned about the incorporation of western biases in questionnaires dealing with other cultures.

Fourthly, are the practical issues of dealing with the implementation such as the need for training and supervision of interviewers and census workers.

Notwithstanding the difficulties associated with the calculation of unremunerated work, it is important to stress the economic value of housework to the entire society and the economy. The privatization of housework and the increasing individualist relations of the nuclear family tend to conceal this fact.

Furthermore, it is imperative that decision-makers recognize the clear implications which the inclusion of unremunerated work in national accounts could have on policy and planning, especially when one considers the objective of national income accounts. Labour force statistics should shift away from the goal of measuring goods and services exchanged through the market, towards providing more sophisticated indicators of social welfare and human development.

Mr. President, I have treated with both the pros and cons of this concept of unremunerated work. However, I wish to point out the problems to which I have alluded should in no way act as a deterrent for the support of this concept or in any way minimize the importance of the calculation of unremunerated work. In fact, because of the problems identified, I believe it is wise to recommend that this Bill be committed to a Special Select Committee for further study in the pursuit of devising a plan or policy which is both pragmatic and acceptable to everyone.

I was duly informed that the Government had sent a delegation to represent this country at the Sixth Session of the Regional Conference of the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin American and the Caribbean. This was held in Mar de la Plata in Argentina from December 25 to 29, 1994. The delegation from this country included Mrs. Hazel Manning, Miss Denise Debique, Sen. hon. Joan Yuille-Williams and Miss Hazel Brown. I did not

get the documentary facts but I understand that our delegates supported the whole concept of unremunerated wage work as was put forward at the conference. I do not think the Government would hesitate to make the facilities available to calculate women's work.

In conclusion, once more, I wish to commend Sen. Dianna Mahabir-Wyatt for her wisdom in bringing this Bill to the Senate. The United National Congress fully supports the concept of this Bill. I again ask that it be committed to a Special Select Committee for study so as to devise a plan and policy to address this matter.

Thank you.

Sen. Prof. John Spence: Mr. President, I do not think anyone can but agree with the previous Senator's comments as to the importance of work that is done by women. It is true that even today much of the housework is still being done by women in this country. One hopes this is a changing scenario. I certainly think it is. Young people of the coming generation have much more, by way of sharing household responsibilities than my generation. I think this is all in the good.

I hope that the emphasis that is being given to women's work in the presentations is in recognition of what has happened in the past, and it would not continue to be the case that we have to be recognizing all the extra work that is done in the house as mainly women's work. Undoubtedly for sometime to come it will be the case that the major part of this activity will be done by women, but one hopes it will be more and more shared between the two partners.

I have tried to determine the value of the Bill with respect to economic issues rather than just the recognition of the work being done by women and, indeed, the work that is now being done which does not come into the market place, so to speak, and therefore, is not recorded in our national statistics.

One needs to separate these two issues. It is important that we give recognition to that work. I am less convinced perhaps, that the way to give recognition to it is through the process of the national accounts. I certainly was somewhat relieved to see a document which Sen. Dianna Mahabir-Wyatt kindly showed me just before the start of the debate, which indicates that one can have what society can term satellite accounts, so that they do not, in fact, become a part of the calculation of GDP. I certainly had some concern that we were ahead of time, once again, in changing the way that we look at our economic indicators and our economic activities, so that we would publish data on GDP which included this unremunerated work when other countries were not yet doing it.

I certainly would very much caution against our being in advance of that process. When the rest of the world has adopted the system whereby GDP includes this unremunerated work then I think we can follow suit. I believe we would be doing ourselves a disservice if we were ahead in that regard: the same way that I have spoken greatly against the fact that we are ahead of the game with respect to trade liberalization.

As I listened to Sen. Carol Merritt's presentation, more and more did I feel convinced that the proposal which I had intended to make is the way that we should go. She was pointing to the need to analyse carefully what the circumstances of the household are; what the circumstances of people in the society are. I do not feel that one will get at that situation by the device of calculating unremunerated work. Just that raw figure certainly is not going to give us very much by way of insight into that area. One would then have to be publishing a great deal of breakdown of unremunerated work. I had previously advanced the concept that what we should be doing is to carry out periodic household surveys.

2.40 p.m.

I certainly think that is where we would be getting at the circumstances of many persons in our society, including to a large measure, the stress which is put on women, because the more our society becomes poor and the more disadvantaged households become, so does the stress become greater on the women folk. I do not think there is any doubt about this. As the men become unemployed the stress becomes greater on the women. I believe if we are going to expend resources on collecting additional data, I do not think in our present circumstances that those losses should be just put into collecting data on unremunerated work.

I think it is more important for us to analyze precisely what is going on in households and get at the budget of different sectors of the society to see what proportion of that budget is being spent on food, fuel, housing and recreation. This would really give us an insight into the circumstances of individual households and the quality of life of those persons. Take the case of fuel as an example, I think it is of interest. During the lunch hour I was told—I did not see the programme because it was at 11.00 a.m.—that Hazel Brown gave a very interesting example of how one could cook by using solar energy. Apparently she has done this extremely well.

When the Government looks at the results of household surveys, it would then indicate to the authority where the effort should be put with respect to relieving

the stress. For example, if the cost of electricity increases, the cost of natural gas and fuel would increase and that will put greater pressure on poor households. Clearly, this should be an indication that the Government should go on a campaign to show people how they can reduce their fuel cost, perhaps by solar energy cooking. This does not just happen. I do not know the details of these solar cookers and it may not be easy to get them. The Ministry of Information, which is now so concerned with the cost of food, and the Ministry of Consumer Affairs should be also concerned about how to reduce costs of fuel by using solar cookers and perhaps even manufacturing them at a low cost.

I am not convinced that the gathering of data on unremunerated work will really address the social issues which we now have. In my opinion, at this time, those social issues are most important for the women in our society. In that circumstance, we are not only addressing the woman. We would be addressing the situation of children in the household when one does that careful analysis. The survey will be such that one would get at nutritional levels, not by just getting the total food bill for the household, but analyzing perhaps in more detail, the sort of foods that are consumed in the family, and whether, as happens in many instances in developed countries, the man is getting the better nutrition because he has to go out to do the hard work, to the neglect of the wife and children.

That sort of approach I would fully support and would have no hesitation in saying that it is money well spent. Indeed, there is very great doubt as to the value, even of the existing data that is collected, such as the GDP figures because we discussed this in the past. GDP rises but unemployment and poverty increase. What is GDP really telling us? It is a way of fooling ourselves that our well-being is increasing when in fact it is not so for the majority of people in the country. We should get a detailed household survey of how people expend such small incomes as they may have, to a large part of the population, and feed that into our planning process. As Sen. Carol Merritt has said, it would allow us to know where to put our resources to increase the well being of a large part of the population.

Certainly, I am not convinced at this time time that we should go in the way that this Bill suggests for two reasons. One is that I do not think that we should be putting out data about our national statistics which is different from that in other countries. We must be very careful because that can have all sorts of adverse effects even though we say in theory, everybody will know that these statistics are different. Nevertheless, these figures have a way of circulating and influencing people in the decisions they make, even if they are not in practice. That is one difficulty.

The second difficulty is that there is a cost to it. If we are expending that money, I think we can do it in a different way by getting more useful information which would be of greater benefit to the women whom we are trying to benefit by this Bill.

Of course, there is an ancillary point of difficulty which we have in legislation of this sort. It mandates that we should put into general account, our national account, a certain line item, whereas in fact we have no bill which says we must produce national accounts. To me, it is a very unusual device to have in our law books; something which says one must put this line item in but there is nothing that says that one must have the accounts.

Again, it would seem to me that even if we want to get that line item into our national accounts, the way to do it the Bill as is set out seems to me to be a little unusual. Perhaps it is being done in other countries but I think we should use our own logic and not worry too much about other countries. Many countries may have had legislation put into their statute books but I would also ask the question as Sen. Merritt: How many have, in fact, passed the laws? They may have started the process but I do not believe that many countries have actually gone this way.

To summarize this very brief presentation, I really feel that it is extremely important for the well being of the family that we analyze carefully, by way of household surveys or whatever one wants to call them, the circumstances of individual families, the money that is spent on education, transport, fuel and food and the likes and the proportion that is spent on the children. Some of that data may also lead us to get information on the value of unremunerated work. I do not think that we should target the unremunerated work as such because I do not think that figure is going to add very much. We know that 10, 20 or 50 per cent of GDP arises in this way. If that helps us to understand better that women are valuable to the society and do a lot of work for us, then I think we need to have our heads examined if we need that device to tell us that.

Thank you.

The Minister of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs (Sen The Hon. Joan Yuille-Williams): Mr. President, let me begin by first giving thanks to Sen. Diana Mahabir-Wyatt for letting us take note of this important—almost a—mandate from the United Nations; to thank Sen. Carol Merritt for the obvious support which she is giving to the principle of this Bill and Sen. Prof. Spence for putting another direction into the whole debate. I am saying

so first of all because what is happening here today will help those of us who represent Trinidad and Tobago at conferences in which this issue will be discussed. What we are doing here will give us a sort of government position. When I say government, I mean a total government position with information from the Opposition, and the Independent Benches, something which I suppose many other countries would like to have.

2.50 p.m.

Therefore I think it is very timely at the point at which this is being discussed. It is timely because between May 8 and 12, the Caricom Ministers with responsibility for women's affairs, and the technical officers, will meet in the Bahamas and one of the items on the agenda is the issue we are debating here this afternoon.

I also want to put this whole thing into perspective. According to Sen. Prof. Spence, we might be the only Parliament at this moment debating this issue, but at the same time, nearly every country in the world is paying attention to this issue and the research that we have heard from Sen. Diana Mahabir-Wyatt and Sen. Carol Merritt would have shown that. The debate started, as you see, many years ago, in the 1970s, and in 1985, there was a conference in Nairobi which stated that governments should take concrete steps to measure the economic value of women's unpaid work and take such activity into account in national policies. That was a mandate given 10 years ago and after that, I suppose, all countries were in some way addressing the issue: we, in Parliament; some by articles, some using administrative measures. However, I can assure you it happened throughout the world.

At the beginning it pertained mainly to women, and probably on the agenda, it might still look that way. Over time, however, according to the different countries, emphasis has been placed on all unremunerated work. I was talking to a gentleman one day who said that it was a question of attitude; that if parents had done certain things to their children, there would have been no need for women to have started this. Probably it emanated from women's groups because the discrimination—if one can call it that—was greatest there. Even though Sen. Merritt recognized the broadening to include all unremunerated work, if you notice, she touched very closely still on the women and, as I said before, it is not only emotional, but that is where the discrimination arose.

If we can go back a bit, we would like to look at the issue. As Sen. Prof. Spence quite rightly implied, it is not just an accounting activity, but I would say

it is moreso one of giving recognition to the contribution that these unremunerated workers make to the social and economic well-being of the individual households in the first instance and, by extension, to the national good. That is where we would like to see it first of all. As I said before, it is not just an accounting exercise. Coming out of it would be recognition and that broadens many things otherwise.

Just a few days ago I was counseling a young woman of 21. She had lost all self-esteem. She came to me to help her get a job. What was her problem? She was at home with her father who had retired a long time before retirement age. Her elder sister is a teacher and she had hoped to be one, but due to circumstances she received one or two 'O' levels and she did not make it into teaching, so she stayed home while the others were working. It was her responsibility to do the work at home—prepare meals for her father. I can say he almost persecuted her mainly because he felt she was not contributing in any way. At 10.00 o'clock each day, regardless of what she was doing, he reminded her that it was time to get up to get his meal ready for 12.00 noon.

What I did, therefore, was go to one of the preschools in the area, talk to the principal, who employed her as an aide within the school environment. I also tried to get her into a programme at YTEPP. I suppose now he finds that she is making a contribution somewhere. I have not even asked her. However, when I see her she is a more bubbly. The persecution has been removed in some way. I do not know how he is making out for his meals. It is something of recognizing the value. He did not recognize what was happening. As far as he was concerned she was non-productive and therefore almost a disgrace to her family.

When I heard Sen. Prof. Spence speak, I recognized that we cannot just look at the figures which will come through. We look at some of our laws and just listen to some people talk about their rights in dividing property: "I have worked all my life and this is mine". I am not only talking about women. This can happen on both sides. "Because I have contributed in monetary ways; I have worked and all this belongs to me."

These are some of the things that happen and because of that kind of feeling, certain behavioural patterns emerge. We are not saying that some of the violence emanates from that kind of thing and people feel that you are wasting time, you are not important. I am saying that recognition is important at this time. If by doing this we can get that kind of recognition, we will move in that direction.

As I said, there are deeper considerations surrounding the issue. What are the skills which are within the households? What resources are available? Is there a

need for additional resources? We do not know. A survey in this direction will tell us what resources we have there. It could also help us to note the contribution of each member towards the material as well as the psychological maintenance of the most important institution in the society—the family. What does each member contribute to the family? That can also be borne out.

We are also taking steps to give effect to the United Nations' call for the new and expanding data base, for a fuller understanding of social and economic conditions of women, men and children. But we must be aware that in our attempt to do this there are certain contradictions. New sentiments that rose within the household, which have been traditionally ascribed and assigned exclusively to women, are not seen as being shared by both parties. We have to recognize the changed circumstances of women because a significantly increasing number has been forced to seek employment outside of the home. It is a question of economics. We have also to consider the role we want the household to play in this very much changed and challenging economic environment. Now there is a trend towards small business enterprise and no doubt this has served to restore the household, as an economic unit, to its former function.

3.00 p.m.

I am sure hon. Senators would remember the time when the household was an important economic unit; this would serve to do that. In fact, some of the programmes that we are establishing now as a Government; some of the training we are doing with some of the people, we are asking them—for example, even with the cottages that are established—after training, to go back to their homes into the family unit and teach that skill to the others there and then one would move into that kind of production.

Above all, there is a need for information gathering about each of the issues. There is currently a large body of unexplored data derived from the population census of 1990 and from ongoing labour force surveys. Sen. Prof. Spence quite rightly asserted, and I spoke to a statistician from the CSO who told me that there was this category called, "Home Duties" which can yield valuable information about much of the answers that we need to have about the extent and nature of this uncounted human effort and the value which should be placed on it.

Further, the new perception of development places the human elements at the centre. In this respect, recognition needs to be given to roles and functions, whether there are monetary values attached to these activities or not. I wish to repeat. The new development models place the human element at the centre, and

therefore, we need to give recognition to the roles and functions of each individual whether these functions are for monetary value or not.

The Bill that is before us is a Bill that has occupied the attention of all persons concerned with equity and growth in generalizations since the 1970s. It has emerged as a key issue at the Nairobi Conference and it would also be a key issue at the Beijing Conference later this year. In an economy such as ours the unwaged work plays a prominent role in shaping the reality of men and women and while it is not counted—and I agree with Sen. Merritt—it is counted on by every individual and institution.

Measurement and valuation of unpaid work and household production was recognized in principle several years ago and the debate has continued unabated. As the world stands on a threshold of a new millennium the debate has entered at its highest level of decision-making in countries throughout the world. That is why I feel very proud this evening that we are one of the countries that has taken the debate to the highest level. Also recognize, hon. Senators, that a decision of some kind would have to be made on this issue in Beijing. Although a small contingent will represent this country there, what we would be taking would be the views of the people of Trinidad and Tobago. That is why the views expressed here this evening are so very important.

If we look at some of the literature, quite recently, Trinidad and Tobago happened to be featured again, through it, because of the fact that the Motion has been made here by Sen. Diana Mahabir-Wyatt. Referring to Sen. Merritt, yes, Trinidad and Tobago has participated in all the "Prep-cons" leading up to the Beijing Conference: In Caracas; in Mar De La Plata, Mrs. Manning herself presented a paper at the preliminary session on unwaged work; and also in New York. We would take it again to the Caricom Women's Meeting in the Bahamas.

It is interesting to note however, that the Bill before the Senate has expanded the request to include all unremunerated work. The Bill therefore, Mr. President, has taken cognizance of all the present influences impacted on the production process and quite fairly has given equal weight to the unwaged work of men, women and the children. This is where we here have broadened the issue. In fact, as we go to these "Prep-cons" the issue has been broadened from just the work of women to include men and children.

Therefore again, we ask the question, why do you wish to measure it? There are several reasons people have been advocating why it should not be measured, or that there are difficulties in measuring the unremunerated work. In fact, I heard

someone saying quite recently that because of the difficulty in measuring it—because how could you measure certain things which we call unwaged work or certain things which we call household duties—and we went back to find out from the very beginning, how did one get a measure to measure some of the things which now fall into the GDP. It was not there from time immemorial. Whatever we wish to measure we can measure. I do not think the debate here this evening is how to measure this, because we are not the statisticians. We are not the people who must decide how it can be measured, although we may have suggestions. The fact remains that we are asking that it be measured. Without the official measurement and valuation there is an assumption that the political decision is in place and is being reaffirmed and that work is worth zero. That is one of the things we are trying to erase by the idea of having it measured. There is a value attached and what one does is productive in some way.

Evaluating unremunerated work in the home and the community is a strategy for equity, as well as a strategy for increasing the self-worth and esteem of a large portion of the society. People need to feel that what they are doing is productive. They need to know that what they are engaging in is a productive exercise, even though a monetary value has not been attached to it. Young people need to feel that way and to know that. Unremunerated work makes a valid and worthwhile contribution to the economy and to the reduction of poverty. Unremunerated work produces goods and services which no money can buy.

The Government is of the view that accurate and reliable data bases are very necessary prerequisites for making decisions. I think it was Sen. Merritt who went through in her contribution, showing how such decisions can affect both economic and social policies. Therefore the absence of statistics regarding unpaid work constitutes a significant gap in the calculation of national productivity.

On the basis of all this, I agree with the intent and purpose of the Bill, insofar as it attempts to produce statistics which calculate the unremunerated work performed in Trinidad and Tobago.

Trinidad and Tobago had been involved in a pilot survey done by the Caricom Secretariat.

3.10 p.m.

The survey is entitled, "Time Use of the Unwaged Household Worker." This was the first pilot survey which had been done—I understand that it has been extended to other Caricom countries after it had been evaluated, but it is just a pilot survey. It is interesting and Members would probably like to see what had happened. We

are not saying that we could use the measures in here or to use the questionnaire, but it was a survey to see the possibility and what is derived from it.

The question however, is the inclusion of the statistics produced in the GDP and the GNP, and that we have to carefully examine to ensure that the most efficient and productive impact is exacted from this Bill, which we would want to call, "a historical piece of legislation." The system of national accounting is the agreed standard for computing the GDP and the GNP, and when production is completed through that, it is easy for international comparisons. That does not lend itself to variations on the basis of national idiosyncrasies. That is an accepted international system. Therefore, even the definition of worker will be different when one looks at the calculation of the work which is produced with a monetary value as against the unremunerated work.

I want us to remember that when this survey was done even in Trinidad and Tobago, questions were asked about some of the items in it, because even some of these items did not relate to some of the other Caricom countries. Therefore, whereas we support the principle we would look at this time at its inclusion into the GDP or the GNP.

Sen. Prof. Spence referred to the satellite accounts, which I am sure Sen. Mahabir-Wyatt was careful to pass on to all of us here. This satellite account, what will it do, therefore? This will give us what we call a parallel accounting so that we are recognizing the GDP and with the satellite account one can get a parallel system. Even then one could not compare the results one will get from Trinidad and Tobago with any other country. So that what we will be getting here, for the time being, would be a system which we would have to use locally. Each country which uses a satellite account will determine its own measures or standards, even this would not be able to be used internationally. Therefore, it would be unfair for us to compare results from this with any other country. Even when I tried to make comparisons with other countries I recognized that it was an unfair statement to say the value of the unremunerated work in one country was 35 per cent and in another country it was 20 per cent unless it was compared with the GDP or whatever. It was difficult to use it for international imputation. The GDP does not lend itself to local and national manipulation of the system of national account. Should this occur the instrument ceases to be internationally comparable.

The definitions of the employed and other definitions would also have to be changed. Wherever work is included in the GDP, there are imputations of income

and expenditure, therefore the work will cease to be unremunerated. The case, therefore, for establishing a parallel or a satellite account is very strong. The satellite account expands the analythical capacity of national accounts without overburdening the central framework of the system of national account. It enhances the usefulness of the GDP by giving additional information. The main advantage is that it is more flexible and can go beyond conventional market evaluations.

To summarize very briefly, these accounts do not artificially inflate the GDP, as some fear, if we had it within the GDP, they cannot result in a negative effect on aid funding; and they include what the GDP excludes. Therefore, satellite account will enable us to measure the unremunerated work as a percentage of the GDP.

Sen. Prof. Spence: Mr. President, I wonder if the hon. Minister would react to the suggestion that we should do more detailed household surveys periodically with respect to their quality of life, expenditures and so forth, as well as the unremunerated work.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: This was apart from doing the household surveys, in fact, this is going a little deeper into what is already done. I do not see this as apart from doing the household surveys. In fact, this is also a part of the household survey. From the reports I had with the CSO, this whole area of the unremunerated work is the one area that has been excluded so far.

Sen. Prof. Spence: Unfortunately, the household surveys are done very infrequently, if it is going to be done frequently I am asking could we also do the more intensive household surveys frequently?

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: Thank you very much, I did not hear, but I agree with you. Not only had it been done very infrequently, it had been done in such a way that the data was not disaggregated and that was one of the main areas of difficulty. So that, even with the available data, the contribution of men, women and children—or what have you—could not be easily seen. One of the things in talking with the CSO we recognized that in the intended household surveys there was a need to disaggregate the data.

If one looks at what is in the Bill, some of those areas have been already included in the household surveys that are being done at the moment, but the fact that the data was not disaggregated, that recognition was not paid to the work of the men or the women as the case may be. I think the CSO has recognized that, and therefore that needs to be done. Yes, I agree with you totally that there should

be greater detail; disaggregation of the data even with this whole business of unremunerated work is very important.

In fact, when we were doing our National Report from 1985 to 1995 part of the problem we experienced was that the data was not disaggregated and one could not really focus on contributions in several areas. I am talking about gender-disaggregated, as the case may be, or even to show men, women and children that data was not disaggregated. Trinidad and Tobago was not the only country, I must say so, but still we felt with greater disaggregation of the data—even some of the areas in which we feel we do not have data (and CSO said yes), we would have been able to pick some of those up in the household surveys. The last one was in 1980, and yes, one needs to—

Sen. Prof. Spence: They need to be more frequent.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: Yes, things have changed quite often and they need to do these surveys much more frequently than they have been doing and disaggregating the data. Yes, I agree with you, and therefore putting this as another area within this survey could not be too much of a difficulty at all for the CSO.

3.20 p.m.

Therefore, I agree with Sen. Diana Mahabir-Wyatt when she says that we should not interfere with the sanctity of the GDP but that satellite or parallel accounts be kept. In separating the issues I recommend that we be extremely careful to keep the language of the Bill distinct and precise to reflect a clear demarcation between the measurement and valuation of unremunerated work and its inclusion in the GDP. We cannot afford the chaos that will ensue if the Bill remains open to misinterpretation regarding the GDP and the GNP and, at some later stage, we would table some amendments to the particular Bill just to tighten up, especially if there are any misinterpretations.

Since this Bill which is before the Senate is intended to address unremunerated work performed by either sex, that should be reflected somewhere in the recitals. We kept the term "women" very strongly and I know why that would have happened but some changes need to be made so that we can recognize the contribution of each person to the development of the social, political and economic life. Things such as these we would like to agree on in the amendments.

As the Minister with responsibility for women's affairs, I do not think that my contribution here or the fact that I am speaking on this Bill is simply because the

division is one which recognizes women. If one understands gender equity as it should be, one would recognize the business of women as well as men. Therefore, I reinforce that everything is equitable and patently clear in our contribution. I agree with the all embracing nature of the Bill but, at the same time, as we go through it we have to ensure that it reflects what the Constitution would like us to reflect which is the unremunerated work of both men and women.

I was pleased that the hon. Senator had seen it fit to single out the CSO as the main institution for giving effect to the Bill. When we were discussing it, someone asked why was it not put in the Women's Affairs Division or why was it not put in the Ministry of Planning and Development or anywhere else. People have been asking. I agree totally that the institution that should be heading this should be the Central Statistical Office which already has a large amount of data pertaining to productive work.

There is also a time use methodology which is used for the purpose of this Bill. United Nations International Research and Training on the Advancement of Women have reported on the improved valuation of time use data and it has collaborated with Eurostat in developing a standard activity classification scheme which will be valid for international comparison and which will facilitate the development of satellite accounts that can incorporate unremunerated activity. While the time use survey is an acceptable methodology, I do not know if at this time we would wish to establish within this Bill the kind of survey that we wish the CSO to carry out on our behalf. I do not know whether we should actually say what types of surveys we, as a Government, would want in this Bill. I would prefer to leave it up to the CSO to decide what kind of survey to carry out.

Mr. President, from my discussions with the Central Statistical Office, I have also found out that care services outside of the home—agricultural work, work related to food production and family businesses are already included in the GDP. So that we are looking at the specifications.

Sen. Mahabir-Wyatt: Mr. President, I wonder if the Minister could repeat that sentence. Did she say that work done outside of the home in relation to care services was included? Does this include things such as caring for the elderly and handicapped in the community? They are not remunerated now.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: Mr. President, we had the benefit of the statisticians. They were also looking at the Bill itself. They have advised that work related to care services outside of the home—agricultural work, work related to food production, family business—were already included in the GDP.

Sen. Mahabir-Wyatt: Mr. President, I am aware that agricultural work and family business are included but I am not aware the community services are included. That is very interesting because there is quite a radical departure from what I understand exists.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: Mr. President, probably we need to check that out. They were looking through some of the areas within the Bill. When we were thinking in terms of the amendments, some of these things were already taken up. In fact, one of the reasons some of these things have not come forward is simply because of the data not being disaggregate; some of these were missed. I have been reliably informed that those were taken care of already and included in the GDP. As I said before, there is no harm in double checking this with the CSO.

Mr. President, we were talking about calculating the monetary value of the unremunerated work. We were not calculating them separately—disaggregating. Disaggregating the data is something which we cannot over emphasize because gender neutral statistics are all misleading and they introduce a gender bias into the data.

3.30 p.m.

The challenge for the CSO, therefore, would be to ensure that the data collected reflects reality and document changes in the situations of both men and women. I wish to quote:

> "The development of valid gender statistics must eliminate gender bias in conventional data collection and filling the glaring statistical gaps in calculating national productivity, that is, the contribution of both men and women."

While I commend the CSO for their attempts in this regard so far, I also encourage them to carefully integrate gender specific information into all conventional censuses and surveys. I am taking this opportunity to shift a little—all conventional censuses and surveys.

Mr. President, if one looks at clause 2(c) it is also open for misinterpretation regarding the Gross National Product. I think that clause, too, needs to have an amendment, because we are going to be using the data we have for compiling supplemental records, mainly for statistical purposes and information, but we will table those as amendments later.

Therefore, Mr. President, in principle I wish to support this Bill. In principle, because with some amendments, if accepted, we will be able to support the entire

Bill. As I said before, the discussions that would emanate from here this evening or whenever we meet in committee stage, from the amendments, will be useful for us as we face the international tables and give us a mandate with which we could represent Trinidad and Tobago. Let me, again, emphasize the importance of this, not necessarily counting the work, but also recognizing the importance of the work done. This is very important to us.

I understand from the CSO that, with satellite accounts, can also be put into GDP at a local level; and read whatever one would like to read out of it if it means telling what percentage of the GDP is for unremunerated work. I know that some people do not really wish to go the full way like that, but I want to feel that there is merit in it. Let us realize that it is not only Trinidad and Tobago that is involved in this. At this time we might be the only ones debating it at parliamentary level, but in all countries this has been done.

I also wish to support Prof. Spence in the fact that we do much more detail on the household surveys; have them done much more regularly with this disaggregated data and, therefore, if that is done the data will find its place and would be a much more worthwhile mandate. What Prof. Spence would probably like is that the mandate does not go to the CSO only for the unremunerated work; he would probably like a detailed survey of household duties be done, so that the data will be much more available for use and much more effective for economic and social policies.

I want, again, to thank the Senator for the Motion and to thank all those who are going to support it. I want to lend the support of the Government to this. I must say that the CSO had already started some work on it, this will give them much more impetus to go on. Of course, one of the things they have already told me is—yes, they are waiting for it to come, but bring staff and finances and all that goes with it. I am going to personally try to see what we can do. The historic piece of legislation we are debating here today will remain that kind of vehicle, feed into the CSO. The data will be made available to other countries and probably we could become leaders in what we are doing.

The ILO, as a body, has gone into defining some new terms if this has to go on an international level. I am hoping that we recognize in the Senate that the GDP and the SMA, that system of accounting, whenever unremunerated work gets into that, the standard measures will be drawn from the ILO. We are now looking at definitions of "worker", "unemployed" and that sort of thing. That is going to happen at that level. We, therefore, cannot go into international standards as yet, but what we are doing will be for the local community because we feel there is

some worth in it and as Prof. Spence says, we will wait on the international bodies to do it. If ever it gets into there, and we hope that it will at some time, the data could be compared throughout the world.

Mr. President, I would like to close, saying thanks again, to those who are supporting me. I know that I will need to congratulate Clotil Walcott herself for leading this Bill, because for years she has been writing about it to let us know that we are not alone in this. The rest of the world also is part of this. I will indicate that at committee stage some amendments will be tabled.

I thank you.

Sen. Rev. Daniel Teelucksingh: Mr. President, I too, join with the other Senators in congratulating Sen. Diana Mahabir-Wyatt for bringing to this honourable House a Bill of national significance, one that I hope will be successful in its objective—that of creating a new awareness—and that is how I see the Bill—creating a new awareness concerning the role of women and the place of women in the economic and social development of our country.

Mr. President, as I understand it, I believe that the intention and purpose; and the inspiration and underlying motivation of the Bill as being a sort of plea for us to recognize and appreciate the contribution of women to our social and communal well-being. I understand the Bill as a request on behalf of womenfolk for the recognition of their basic rights within the community. That is how I see the Bill. I see this Bill as part of the universal voice of womankind, weeping for acceptance and appreciation—the mournful, pitiable, wailing of women who, in many countries, are the object of continuous abuse and exploitation. This is how I see the Bill.

I see the Bill as more than a compilation of statistics. One question I ask myself is: would the calculation of the unremunerated work of women in terms of figures, by the Central Statistical Office, be sufficient to build healthier relationships. Mr. President, women are among the poorest of the earth—women are the beasts of burden of developing countries, reeling under the agony of structural adjustment demands; and our country had to be included. Our women are to be numbered among them.

I see this Bill, then, as a call, again, for appreciation or recognition of the place of the woman in society and in community. But in addition to all that has been said, I want to raise one matter from Sen. Wyatt's presentation in piloting the Bill about which I am particularly concerned, one matter which requires urgent and immediate consideration, Mr. President. She made reference to domestic

violence: the heinous crimes against women in Trinidad and Tobago within recent times. The incidence of domestic violence, Mr. President, its brutality and gruesome manifestation, particularly, towards women, reflects the low estimation we have of these whom God has created as partners and co-workers with men in the happiness and preservation of the human family.

Mr. President, as a nation, we really have to sit down and do some more study about violence towards women and the abuse of women. This I see as included in the background of this Bill before us. Much is made of unemployment as the cause and the excuse for the brutalizing and maiming of women. I am worried very much because I see unemployment as being with us for a long time to come. Are you telling me that this is the excuse that men will make—that unemployment is the cause and the excuse? Then, the brutalizing and the abuse of women will continue as long as the unemployment continues? I am worried about that. I really believe that we need to rise above this. We must find another way out.

It has been said that poverty is also one of the major factors and causes of violence and abuse towards our womenfolk, but we need to observe that domestic violence is a tragedy, not only in poor families, but also it is an affliction of certain persons in the upper crust of our society.

3.40 p.m.

I am very glad that Sen. Joan Yuille-Williams spoke about attitude. There is need for an immediate change in the attitude of men towards our womenfolk. We must begin in the home and the school. Our boys and young men who verbally abuse and molest school girls need to be addressed. Our young girls have been subjected, on a daily basis, to a kind of verbal persecution from our young men and boys, reflecting this lack of appreciation for women that we are talking about, an underlying motive in the Bill. We need to begin immediately training our young men. We need to try in schools and homes, and fathers have a sacred responsibility to begin at home. It is most important that we do this.

I support the Bill and congratulate Sen. Mahabir-Wyatt. This Bill, I think, is a small start, but it is significant, indeed, in national awakening to recognize and appreciate the toil and sacrifice of our women and girls. If such appreciation had existed in the man/woman relationship in our society, this Bill would not have been necessary. Women would have continued doing their work at home or in the fields, not wanting any thanks and not wanting it to be counted in the statistics.

I thank you.

Sen. Mahabir-Wyatt: Mr. President, I thank everybody who has participated in the debate today. I am very pleased that, in fact, as many people did participate as did do so. I think this is a healthy sign that the position of women and the recognition of the work that women do is something which is finally coming to the fore. There have been a number of statements made about the need for definition. The Minister, for example, said that we have to wait on the ILO's final definitive work on the definition of what unremunerated work means. While I can certainly accept this, it has not passed me by that the ILO has been working on exactly that for over 40 years and has not yet come to any final decision simply because there has been no grounds well of opinion from the constitutent members of the ILO, as there has been none in the society in Trinidad and Tobago or in the Caribbean, for this kind of recognition. Today's debate, at least, persuades me that it is beginning to happen.

I specifically thank Sen. Merritt for her contribution. She has done some very impressive research into both the labour aspect and the statistical field. It is a very technical subject and an extremely difficult one to grasp and I think she did an absolutely brilliant job with it. The point she made about 'caring work', I would take up a little later because it also came up in the Minister's contribution, is one of the things about which I am very much concerned, because with structural adjustment and the cuts in social services, that 'caring work' has gone into the community and is being done on an unpaid basis but is being unrecognized. As a result, sometimes I think it is being done very badly. My hope is that by recognizing this and putting a value to it which is socially acceptable, that the esteem of the people doing it will be raised; their status in the community will be raised and the value of the work itself will be raised.

The point also made by Sen. Merritt about calculating damages, I thought was a particularly important one because we have got precedent for this. Where there are marriages breaking up and in the high court assessment is being made of who should get what, even though a woman has not had remunerative work during the course of the marital relationship, there is still a calculation made of her contribution towards the joint property. It could be made far more easily, as Sen. Merritt has pointed out, if we could have a national agreed standard on this.

If I could just follow her point with an example. We use specifically the example of a victim who had been abused and was therefore no longer able to work, whether this is by physical violence or by rape, it does not matter. It is very

difficult at the present time for the courts to assign a value to those damages because nobody really understands what is the value of the unwaged work which, say, a mother of several small children does.

What happens, actually, if she is unable to work, there has to be a full-time day care worker for the children, a full-time night care worker for the children, plus at least a day shift worker, if you want to put it that way, to take care of things like household work, which begins to give a dimension of what we are talking about.

Having been the one who introduced this Bill, naturally I would very much like to see this adopted immediately in its entirety just as it was suggested. I do accept the Minister's point that more work needs to be done on the definitional issues. I do agree that the key words used in surveys are very important in terms of how information is gathered, and how it is going to be used. The methodological point which the Minister brought up as well, I think, is something which needs closer attention. It may not need to be done on a legislative basis but I accept entirely that things like the sex and age of the interviewer can affect the responses of the interviewee.

Sen. Spence's contribution, I think, was very valuable. He started off with the point about the need for the recognition of women's work and I appreciate that Sen. Spence asked the question, in order to give recognition to the work that women have done historically, and, presumably, presently and in the future, "why do you need to put this in national accounts?" Like Sen. Spence, I have certain grave reservations about GNP and GDP and the uses to which they are put. The point is that is the system we have to work with, and if we are going to get that recognition on a national basis, we have got to work, for the time being anyway, with the systems which we have.

I do not think that we really need to worry about getting ahead of the rest of the world because there are a number of countries, as the recent OECD paper pointed out, which, in fact, have already produced these measures, and these include Netherlands, Norway, Australia and Germany, and I believe that the Minister recently made an announcement to the effect that she had an official visitor from India who had said that in India this is already being done. The information from India, apparently, is on the way, so we should get additional information as we go along.

So we are not, breaking the ice completely ahead of the icebergs and trying to get through the water; it is something which has been underway for some time.

But I appreciate his point about the household surveys. I really think that since the last one was done some time in the 1980s it is high time that those household surveys, because of the changing economic conditions the need for this kind of unremunerated work of human beings, be counted.

3.50 p.m.

In this change in the economic situation, which is going to take us into the turn of the century and the beginning of the next century, the social issues are getting to be more and more important. There is need for detailed household surveys to determine matters like the cost of fuel, cost of food which is becoming one of our biggest social problems, also the cost of things such as solar heaters, that were mentioned by Mrs. Brown today. I agree entirely that both of these matters should be done together. It is something that we need to do. It is not one or the other.

I would also like to thank the Minister for her contribution which very much broaden and deepen with what I said in the introduction of the Bill particularly in terms of pointing out that this is a world-wide move, that we are not alone. That we have, in fact—her words were "almost a mandate from the United Nations"—certainly is one that we have waited far too long to do something about. I would like to echo her words that it is important that our society recognizes value according to monetary value. Unless we place monetary value on community and household work, the work that is unremunerated, I just do not think that we are gong to get the sort of movement in the community which we are going to need to maintain social stability in this country, to take us through the very difficult years between now and the turn of the century. The point has to be made over and over again that if you are looking for social 'development' you have to give recognition to the 'development' and the work that half the population has done, which has not been given recognition in any variable way.

I accept what Sen. Prof. Spence said about focusing on the role that we want the household to play in this changing economy and community. I like the point about the family as an economic unit. If we start to focus on that and give a value to it which is recognized in the society—rightly or wrongly, our values are tied to monetary measures—once we can start to do this, the family as an economic unit which has family unity and values is going to begin to become more important. I believe it could go a long way towards repairing some of the disunity which we presently have in families which are becoming disunited, with young people going more and more into crime. It is not the only thing that is going to help, but

anything that we can do to help as a society, if we want to prevent instability towards the end of the century, has to be done.

I would just like to underline the point that the Minister made that the new development models which are taking place internationally now are placing the human element at the centre rather than simply market values. I cannot emphasize too much that this is something we are going to have at some point in time to start to accept. The market values as Sen. Prof. Spence was pointing out in his contribution last week, the basic market economies values, even the World Bank is beginning to say we have got to go to the social development market because by itself market values are not going to get the society through difficult days ahead.

Where the concern is over the methodology and over how statistics are going to be included, the Minister took us back quite rightly to the SNA and to the inequality of international standards. I wonder if I could just explain why this is so.

It is very difficult to equate the value of unremunerated work in Trinidad and Tobago with the value of unremunerated work in, for example, the United States. If I can go back to my mythical example of a woman who has been so badly raped or abused that she can no longer work to look after her children either in the home or outside of the home, if you calculate the cost of two full-care child workers, one day and one night in the United States plus one housekeeping worker during the day, and you compare that value with the cost of that labour in Trinidad and Tobago you will see there is a wide disparity. It seems, although the quality of work and the purpose for the work is the same, and until we can find somewhere of creating those particular market values—I realize I am going back to market values—we are not playing on an entirely level field, but that does not mean that the value of that sort of calculation is not useful in terms of our own society and perhaps, even the broader Caribbean society.

I thank the Minister again for digging as much as she did into the background of the Bill, and for working with the people from CSO. I am not wedded to the time use methodology. I have some doubts about it myself—that it is the most effective way of going about this. I am quite happy to look at amendments to the Bill. I do not want to get into the whole point of a gender bias and statistics. It is just that I have learnt over many years of experience where the contribution of women is not specifically identified and targeted, that contribution almost inevitably gets lost. I know that counting and recognizing are not mutually exclusive in a society. I am quite happy to look at any amendments which might be forthcoming as long as the basic purpose of the Bill goes through.

In closing, I would just like to say to Sen. Teelucksingh that in bringing forward this Bill, this is not the voice of women weeping and mourning. This is the voice of women standing up to be counted and refusing to be dismissed and marginalized. [*Desk thumping*] It is women joining together across countries, across races, across status, across religion, across everything to get the recognition that we believe that women historically and in the future need, and we hope that that recognition will confer or will have the effect that he mentioned in giving recognition to the value of women as human beings so that the levels of domestic violence that we have been experiencing will, in fact, go down. I thank him for his understanding and for bringing that into the debate.

Mr. President, I move that this honourable Senate adopt this Bill.

Seconded by Sen. Wade Mark.

Question proposed.

Bill accordingly read a second time.

Bill referred to a select committee of the Senate appointed by the President as follows: Hon. J. Yuille-Williams (Chairman), Sen. The Hon. C. Robinson-Regis, Sen. Pundit R. Gosine, Sen. D. Mahabir-Wyatt, Sen. C. Merritt.

4.00 p.m.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

Mr. President: I recall earlier in the proceedings as was indicated by the Leader of Government Business in the Senate, that Sen. the Hon. Gordon Draper has to make a statement. I think this is a convenient time before we move the adjournment to allow the Minister to make his short statement.

INTEGRITY OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS (ATTACK ON)

The Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Public Administration (Sen. The Hon. Gordon Draper): Mr. President at a media conference on Monday April 24, 1995, Dr. Faye Williams purporting to represent an institution called the Centre for the Study of the Harassment of African Americans made certain statements which sought to impugn the character and integrity of the Prime Minister and other elected and appointed officials and members of the private sector. Further these statements could have the effect of calling into question the executive and judicial authorities of the sovereign State of Trinidad and Tobago. For the benefit of this Parliament and the national

community, the Government has a responsibility to report on its preliminary investigations into this matter based on information from official representatives in Washington.

The Government wishes to report that the independence of the purported investigation and report is in question. One member of the team and author of the report Dr. Faye Williams served for more than a decade as one of the staff assistants of former Congressman Mr. Mervyn Dymally, who is at present a high profile member of the official Opposition party in Trinidad and Tobago. Our investigations so far reveal that Dr. Williams continues to maintain a business relationship with the said Mr. Mervyn Dymally, and is in fact employed by him in his consulting firm. In addition, her two unsuccessful attempts in 1986 and 1988 to obtain a seat in the US Congress had the support and financial backing of Mr. Mervyn Dymally.

The intellectual integrity of the report is also in question, based as it is on substantial repetition of statements made and positions taken by leading Members of the official parliamentary Opposition in their capacity as such, as well as in their capacity as attorneys for the defence. It is also noteworthy that attempts to locate the organization at the address stated in the report, 103015 Street, North West, Washington DC have revealed that no such centre occupies offices there.

Our investigation will, therefore, now be expanded to determine the status of the centre as it has also come to our attention, that its founder Mr. Clarence Mitchell III, a former Maryland State Senator and Member of the centre's investigating team in this matter was himself convicted for accepting a bribe while in office.

The Government views with concern, as should all right thinking members of the national community, the use of self serving mechanisms which have the effect of damaging the good name of Trinidad and Tobago in the international community. The Government will continue to keep the Parliament and citizens informed as our investigations continue.

Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Planning and Development (Sen. The Hon. Dr. Lenny Saith): I beg to move that the Senate do now adjourn to Tuesday May 2, 1995 at 1.30 p.m. at which time we would deal with the Constitution (Amdt.) No. 2 Bill 1995 and the Firearms (Amdt.) Bill 1995.

Mr. President: Before putting the question for the adjournment there are two matters for which leave has been granted on the Adjournment. Unfortunately the second one which was filed by Sen. Hosein has now become subjudice and will therefore stay in abeyance until the matter has been determined.

The matter for which leave has been granted is raised by Sen. Wade Mark and it deals with the violations of the rights and freedoms of the people of Beetham Estate and its environs by the Crime Suppression Unit over the past two months. I do not need to remind you that you are allowed 15 minutes and the Minister will also have 15 minutes to reply.

Violation of Rights and Freedoms (Beetham Estate Residents)

Sen. Wade Mark: Mr. President, the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is the supreme law of the land. No one is above the Constitution. Under Chap 1 Part I of the Constitution certain fundamental rights and freedoms are enshrined which all of our citizens enjoy unless otherwise specifically removed either by an Act of Parliament requiring a specified majority, or the suspension of the Constitution through a state of emergency. Chap 1 Part I of the Constitution states:

"4. It is hereby recognised and declared that in Trinidad and Tobago there have existed and shall continue to exist, without discrimination by reason of race, origin, colour, religion or sex, the following fundamental human rights and freedoms, namely—

(a) the right of the individual to life, liberty, security of the person and enjoyment of property and the right not to be deprived thereof except by due process of law;

(j) freedom of association and assembly;"

Notwithstanding the rights and freedoms enshrined in Chap 1 Part I especially as it relates to the life, the question of the right of individual to life as well as the right to freely assemble, there appears to be a tendency on the part of a section of the law enforcement agency to abrogate, trample, infringe or violate this right among others. Many reports have been submitted to the United National Congress concerning an increase in harassment, intimidation and victimization of residents of the Beetham Estate and its environs by certain elements attached to the Crime Suppression Unit of the Police Service of Trinidad and Tobago.

Of course we recognize the role of the police service and that is to protect, serve and uphold the laws under the most difficult of circumstances. What cannot and must never be tolerated in our country is any attempt to abuse and/or misuse one's authority to suppress the rights and freedoms of innocent citizens.

4.10 p.m.

Mr. President, it has been brought to our attention by the residents of Beetham Estate and Laventille that there exists a pattern of harrassment by certain elements of this Crime Suppression Unit. Youths appear to be the main target. Many of them are not allowed to assemble in their respective communities. Indeed, our investigations have revealed that whenever youths assemble they are asked to disperse by this particular Unit which patrols the area.

Only recently there was a commotion in the Beetham Estate in which a UNC activist sought to take pictures of the harassment process of the residents by elements of this Unit, only to be aggressively confronted by a member of the Unit. Indeed, one officer—from the report that we have received—actually cracked his gun and threatened to kill the lady in question merely because she stood up for the rights of residents of the Beetham Estate.

Another incident resulted in an elderly lady being physically assaulted by elements of this Unit who apparently were in hot pursuit of some alleged aggressors.

The situation of harassment is also evident in Picton, St. Barb's and many other blocks in Laventille. This has had an unsettling effect on the community and there is need for the Government to take some action in this matter. I want to make it very clear, Sir, that no one is above the law, including police officers. No one must use the law to abuse and/or oppress the rights of innocent citizens in this Republic of ours.

Without a doubt there are good and hard-working policemen in our country who seek scrupulously to upkeep the law. But there are also reckless and irresponsible elements which the Government needs to monitor. People are not prepared to report these officers since they do not have confidence in the present complaints arrangements.

It appears that citizens in these communities are treated less than fairly. Police brutality seems to be on the rise in these communities. People's rights appear to be trampled upon. Citizens are killed and no inquiries are held. Reference is made to Jeffrey "Kazim" Alexis. I hold no brief for anyone, but justice must not only be done, but must be seen to be done.

I refer to an article on page 24 of the *T&T Mirror* dated Sunday, March 19, 1995. I quote:

> "A Crime Suppression Unit (CSU) officer was paid to kill Jeffrey "Kazim" Alexis.
>
> That is the startling new twist in the suspicious death, last December, of 28-year-old Kazim on Block 22 in Laventille.
>
> Kazim was reportedly killed after he was shot in the foot by CSU officers after he had opened fire on them in Block 22 last December 5."

This is what was reported. It goes on to say that:

> "Alexis was shot and killed by members of the Crime Suppression Unit (CSU) in Block 22 in Laventille last December 5.
>
> A Police Public Affairs Unit report later stated that 26-year-old Alexis, from Gonzales, had fired on police with a sawed-off shot gun, and sustained injuries when he fell over a precipice after he was shot in the leg by the police.
>
> However, according to terrified eyewitnesses who said they would like to remain anonymous: 'The police are a bunch of advantageous fireballs who shot and beat an unarmed man in broad daylight.'
>
> 'They are getting away with murder and it's just because we are in the Black people area of Laventille,' one eyewitness cried.
>
> Residents of Block 22 said they are still reeling from the death, and expressed outrage at the brutal manner in which the members of the CSU invaded their neighbourhood to kill an unarmed. man.
>
> 'They came up here and committed a murder in broad daylight in someone's yard and they are going to get away with it,' one man told *Sunday Mirror."*

The final quote I would like to refer to is:

> "'They were bent on what they were doing, that they could not even care less about anyone up here ...'"

And there are related issues to this question of police brutality. I am referring to police, not in a general sense, but to elements of the police service.

Mr. President, a dangerous tendency is developing in our country, particularly over the last year, where we have witnessed the lives of innocent citizens being

snuffed out. Whether the citizens are from Laventille, Tobago or Matelot, it seems that frustration has now entered the ranks of the police service. Nothing short of an independent inquiry will satisfy the cries and the hurts and pains of the grieving family and relatives of these people. Those who are guilty must be punished. It is an extremely disturbing trend that is unfolding and there is need to nip it in the bud before it gets completely out of control.

It is against this background and in view of these developments that we on this side seek the Minister's intervention to restore some element of trust between the citizens and the police service, particularly the Crime Suppression Unit. Citizens cannot be allowed to view the police service as a group of killers and lawless armed individuals. We have to correct that image. This is why we have brought this Motion; not to castigate, not to condemn or attack the police service, but to bring to the attention of the Parliament and the Government of this country, through the Minister of National Security, certain ugly developments that are unfolding in these communities and the need for some kind of intervention to ensure that people's rights and freedoms are not violated, trampled upon and suppressed.

Thank you very much.

The Minister of National Security (Sen. The Hon. Russell Huggins): Mr. President, I would attempt to stick as closely as possible to the Motion which was raised and which seems to relate to certain activities on the part of the Crime Suppression Unit in the Beetham Estate area.

I have before me a record of police activities carried out in the Beetham Estate area for the months of February and March, 1995. The Criminal Investigation Department carried out exercises in the Beetham Estate area on February 2, 1995, on which date three persons were arrested, all for trafficking in marijuana. On February 8, 1995, another exercise was carried out. No arrests were made.

4.20 p.m.

On February 16, 1995, three persons were arrested on suspicion of robbery. On February 17, 1995 another exercise was carried out, no arrests were made. On March 8, 1995, two persons were arrested for trafficking in marijuana. On March 18, 1995, another exercise was carried out, no arrest was made. Likewise on March 21, 1995 and on March 22, 1995, where two arrests were made, one for obscene language and one for malicious damage.

The Guard and Emergency Branch of the Police Service for the months of February and March 1995 carried out: in February, three exercises where there were four arrests and on March 2, 1995, five exercises were carried out.

The Crime Suppression Unit came about principally as a result of the outcry of citizens including those citizens who sit on the Opposition Benches, for the Government and the Police Service to take drastic action to deal with crime in the country. In February, 1995, there were 93 patrols carried out in the Beetham Estate. In March, 1995, 123 patrols were carried out.

The statistics which I have just given in no way show that there has been any sort of determined activity to provide the police service, in other words, there has been no action on the part of the police service which one can say has been designed to deny citizens in the Beetham Estate area of their constitutional rights.

I want to give this Senate the assurance that the police is going to continue to deal with the question of crime with the intensity which it requires. Whilst I am aware that there are some areas for concern as it relates to police activities, I am certain that it is not as bad as Sen. Wade Mark sought to put the picture across. We have to understand, Mr. President, that we are living in times in Trinidad and Tobago where crimes are committed in rather brutal fashion. The simplest quarrel would result in someone pulling out a revolver and shooting someone. It seems as though one cannot even go and sit in a bar and take a drink these days if one does not run the risk of being shot.

One really has to decide what one really wants. If one wants the Government and the police service to deal with the crime situation then the Government and the police service would do that. But I am really concerned that every time the police puts some plan of action in place to deal with the crime situation we get these comments being made that we must hold them back, we must not do this or that and we really have to decide what we really want. One really has to decide what one really wants.

I want to make it clear, that whilst I agree with Sen. Wade Mark that members of the police service are not above the law, I do not intend to stand in front of or to impede the police service in any way in carrying out its responsibilities of dealing with crime in this country. The police service would get every support that I can give to deal with crime in this country. [*Desk thumping*] If crime needs to be dealt with aggressively, then they would have my support to deal with it aggressively. I would also seek to ensure that in dealing with the question of crime that the police service also operates within the confines of the law.

Mr. President, I do not think that there is very much more that I can say on this matter. *[Interruption]* I did not know you had a right of reply. *[Laughter]* You have no right of reply, you had your say.

Mr. President, that is all I really to say on this matter.

Question put and agreed to

House adjourned accordingly

Adjourned at 4.26 p.m.