

Leave of Absence

Tuesday, July 03, 2001

SENATE

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The Senate met at 1.30 p.m.

PRAYERS

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mr. Vice-President: Hon. Senators, I have granted leave of absence to Sen. Mary Kathleen King from sittings of the Senate during the period July 02—15, 2001. I have also granted leave to Sen. Glenda Morean during the period July 2—9, 2001, and I have also granted leave of absence from today's sitting to the Minister of Finance, Sen. The Hon. Gerald Yetming.

CONDOLENCES

(MR. TAHIR KASSIM ALI)

Mr. Vice-President: Hon. Senators, I wish to announce the passing of a former Member of Parliament, Mr. Tahir Kassim Ali, Mr. Ali died on June 27, 2001, he served as a Member of the House of Representatives for Couva during the period 1971—1976. During his term of office he served as Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Public Utilities, and he took a very active part in CPA activities during his tenure.

On behalf of Members of the Senate, I wish to convey to his family our sincere condolences and pray God's blessing that his soul may rest in eternal peace. The Clerk of the Senate has been requested to send an appropriate letter of condolence to the bereaved family.

Senators wishing to pay tribute may do so at this time.

The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries (Sen. The Hon. Lindsay Gillette): Mr. Vice-President, on behalf of this side, we would like to extend our condolences to the family of the late Mr. Tahir Ali, who served as a Member of Parliament from 1971—1976 for Couva. May his soul rest in peace. Amen.

Sen. Danny Montano: Mr. Vice-President, Mr. Tahir Ali was an early member of the People's National Movement and a strong and ardent supporter of the late Dr. Eric Williams. He remained a strong, vibrant and active member of the party right up to the Prime Ministership of Mr. Manning during which time he

Condolences (Mr. Tahir Kassim Ali)
[SEN. MONTANO]

Tuesday, July 03, 2001

became ill and withdrew from active politics but remained, till his death, a loyal member of the People's National Movement. It is noteworthy, Mr. Vice-President, because he was a loyal member of the party coming from an area where it was not particularly fashionable to be a supporter of the People's National Movement, and he would be fondly remembered within the ranks of the movement.

As you indicated, he entered Parliament in 1971 and he was a vibrant and active member. He was always in contact with the members of his constituency. Tahir never missed any activity that was being held in the central area especially in the Couva area and its surroundings. He was also President of the Orange Valley Fishing Association, and for a number of years actively pursued the interest of the fishing industry in Central Trinidad. He was a community man and in the days when tassa was in its infancy in the national stage, Tahir was one of the founders of the "Tassarama" competition which played a major role in ushering tassa to be accepted as a national art form.

Serving in the Government between 1971 and 1976, he served as a Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Public Utilities.

Mr. President, Senators on this side would wish to convey our deepest condolences to his family and to his friends and neighbours and we commend his soul to the Almighty.

Thank you very much.

Sen. Prof. Ramesh Deosaran: Mr. Vice-President, Members of the Senate, on behalf of the Independent Bench, I wish to convey our condolences to the family of the late Tahir Ali. Once more, Sir, our common destiny has caught up with yet another one of us and if only for spiritual instruction, perhaps we should note that several of our veterans, as it were, are one by one passing away.

I had known Mr. Ali when, as a youthful member of a community organization I had developed some regard for him in his larger role as a social worker and sometimes as a social activist in the various communities which he served, and it is quite fair to judge him in that regard as being a social worker and a servant of his constituency before he actually became an office holder in politics. Eventually, as some of us here may know—some more than others—he was able to integrate both the social work that he was doing with his political office, and though he became recognized as such, was eventually an elected member.

Condolences

Tuesday, July 03, 2001

So it is in that light, Mr. Vice-President, that we regret his passing and extend our sympathies to his family.

Mr. Vice-President: As a mark of respect, could we all stand for a minute's silence.

The Senate stood.

PAPERS LAID

1. 23rd Annual Report of the Ombudsman for the period January 01, 2000 to December 31, 2000. [*The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries (Sen. The Hon. Lindsay Gillette)*]
2. A Special Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on an audit into certain areas of internal controls at the North West Regional Health Authority (NWRHA). [*Hon. L. Gillette*]
3. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the accounts and financial statements of the Basic Education Project for the year ended September 30, 2000 as required by Loan Agreement No. 3956-TR between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. [*Hon. L. Gillette*]
4. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the accounts and financial statements of the Project Execution Unit of the Ministry of Housing and Settlements in respect of the National Settlements Programme for the year ended September 30 1999 as required by Loan Contract No. 584/OC-TT between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Inter-American Development Bank. [*Hon. L. Gillette*]

The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries (Sen. The Hon. Lindsay Gillette): Mr. Vice-President, I seek leave to lay another paper at a later stage of the proceedings.

Agreed to.

ARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries (Sen. The Hon. Lindsay Gillette): Mr. Vice-President, I seek leave to defer "Introduction of Bills" to a later stage of the proceedings.

Arrangement of Business
[SEN. THE HON. L. GILLETTE]

Tuesday, July 03, 2001

Mr. Vice-President, today is “Government Business”. However, after discussions with the Leader of the Opposition Senators and the Leader of the Independent Senators, it was agreed that we deal with “Private Business” instead of “Government Business”.

I therefore seek leave to deal with “Private Business” instead of “Government Business”.

Agreed to.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

(Government’s Policy)

[Third Day]

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question [February 13, 2001]:

Be It Resolved that Government make a full statement to this House on its plans to meet the objectives of sustainable growth with particular regard to involving citizens in planning the development of the country, minimizing negative effects of physical development, enforcement of planning decisions and meeting its obligations to international treaties for protection of the environment.

Question again proposed.

Mr. Vice-President: May I remind you that the following Senators have already spoken: Sen. Prof. Julian Kenny, Hon. John Humphrey, Sen. Christine Kangaloo, Sen. Mary Kathleen King, Sen. Dr. Tim Gopeesingh, Sen. Prof. Ramesh Deosaran, Sen. Joel London and Sen. The Hon. Gerald Yetming.

The Minister in the Ministry of Labour, Manpower Planning and Industrial Relations (Sen. Dr. The Hon. Roodal Moonilal): Mr. Vice-President, this afternoon I would have the honour to make a contribution on the Motion before us in the name of our very good friend, Sen. Prof. Julian Kenny. At the risk of boring people into a longer than necessary discourse on sustainable development and sustainable growth, I would like to outline very briefly how I propose to respond in this contribution.

First, I would like to focus for a few minutes on issues of sustainable growth and sustainable development—issues that are more conceptual and analytical—so that in a way, we set the parameter or the framework for discussing in greater detail many of the challenges and issues raised in the Motion. So first, to look at sustainable development and growth in a more holistic or universal sense.

The second area is to focus on sustainable growth within the context of the Caribbean, the British (English), and the Caricom region as it were, to look at sustainable development and growth and how the Caribbean sees itself within a globalization framework and within a debate such as this.

Next, I propose to look at the issue and the Motion in the context of Trinidad and Tobago, in the context of the Government's vision and plan as it were to promote sustainable growth and, of course, to make particular reference to the area that is of primary concern to me, notably employment. I will propose later to outline Government's employment policy consistent with promoting sustainable growth and development and to outline as well the importance of employment to a debate on sustainable growth.

Mr. Vice-President, the Motion reads as follows:

Whereas the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has adopted as national policy the general objective of sustainable growth, and

Whereas sustainable growth aims at meeting current and future needs of citizens while minimizing the impacts of negative effects of development, and

Whereas economic growth and development worldwide has been accompanied with various negative effects, both nationally and internationally,

Be It Resolved that Government make a full statement to this House on its plans to meet the objectives of sustainable growth with particular regard to involving citizens in planning the development of the country, minimizing negative effects of physical development, enforcement of planning decisions and meeting its obligations to international treaties for protection of the environment .

Mr. Vice-President, this Motion speaks to several issues on the development agenda. It speaks to our economic policy making, it speaks to social development, to matters of the environment, and to national security. So that the Motion focuses not only on inter-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary issues, but also on process.

The Motion also requires a discussion on Government planning, the process involved in Government planning and in including citizens, and by extension organizations in the planning process. So it is about issues—a cluster of multi-disciplinary issues—but it is also about process.

Mr. Vice-President, sustainable development is defined as a pattern of social and structured economic transformation which optimizes the economic and

societal benefits available in the present without jeopardizing the likely potential for similar benefits in the future. A primary goal of sustainable development is to achieve a reasonable and equitably distributed level of economic well-being that can be perpetuated continually for many human generations.

This definition or explanation is taken from the United Nations Development Programme on sustainable development. By definition, sustainable development speaks about promoting growth and development, but also with the future in mind—about preserving for the future and for other generations yet to come. When the concept of sustainability was introduced a decade and a half ago, more or less, the term was used within discourses on the environment where it was understood to mean meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generations.

1.50 p.m.

That term also evolved as a concept within discourses, primarily on the environment, but today it is used in several areas to discuss social development; to discuss not just environment but society, economic decision making and so on. So it is multidisciplinary. Some of the key challenges to sustainable development in developing countries are as follows:

I am still making an introductory discourse on sustainable development; what it should mean in the context of planning; and outlining our own policy and so forth.

There are several challenges to sustainable development, among them, extreme poverty. In several areas of the developing world there is extreme poverty which poses a big challenge to development planners. We know of no country that is plagued by political instability and has sustainable growth or economic development.

A key theme of my presentation this afternoon is the issue of the political preconditions for sustainable growth. There are political conditions for growth and I will get into that later.

Extreme poverty and political instability are also challenges that we face. Of course, environmental deterioration is a huge discourse. There are others on the Government Benches who are much more equipped and trained to deal with issues of the environment and I am sure they would get into that in more detail.

Population growth and HIV AIDS are also two important challenges that face developing countries when dealing with issues of sustainability. On the social side there is the issue of marginalization and alienation which are other development challenges to planning and implementing plans.

It has also been the experience that governments across the world can outline their policy measures and so forth, but if there is not ample participation, if there is not ample inclusion in planning and in implementing, then there is little hope of executing some of those policies to the benefit of populations across the world. Some of the challenges are political; others are social and demographic.

A strategy for sustainable development should comprise a coordinated set of participatory and continuously improving processes of analysis, debate, capacity strengthening, planning and investment, which integrates the economic, social and environmental objectives of society. As I say economic, social and environmental, I reflect again on the challenges facing developing countries.

So we have heard a bit about the challenges facing these countries and what a strategy for sustainable development should include. At the outset we made the point that this is also a dynamic, fluid area.

The challenges that face us today may not be the challenges that would be facing us ten years down the road; and they are not the challenges that may have faced a country ten years before. Processes are continuously changing and continuously in need of revisiting. So it is dynamic, it is fluid, it is culturally specific, while at the same time being universal.

The World Development Report 1999/2000 also speaks of the importance of sustainable development and its many objectives. Raising per capita income is only one among many development objectives; but improving the quality of life involves more specific goals that would include health services, educational opportunities, participation, a clean environment, intergenerational equity and much more. So that sometimes in these discussions one focuses on economic development and on economic data and so on and we can paint, as we do, a very positive picture of our country in terms of our economic and investment outlook.

I think the hon. Minister of Finance also raised this issue during his contribution, but development must be much more. It must be much more than economic data; it must be about society and about people.

Mr. Vice-President, in the context of the Caribbean what have been the tenets, the flavour on debates on sustainable growth and development? As early as 1992

Sustainable Growth (Government's Policy)
[SEN. DR. THE HON. R. MOONILAL]

Tuesday, July 03, 2001

the report of the West Indian Commission "Time for Action" raised the issue of sustainable growth in the context of the Caricom region, supporting an export propelled strategy of development. The report in a chapter "New Emphasis in Development" states:

"CARICOM has the opportunity for self-sustained growth, based on a strong orientation towards export of goods and services in the context of the changing global environment.

The development strategy involves the mobilization of capital, labour and skills throughout the CARICOM Region.

Firms producing export goods and services must develop a strong information base and the capability to shift production in a strategic fashion in response to market changes."

In a section entitled "Economic Growth and Human Development" the report states:

"Economic development is first and foremost about people and the quality of their lives. The search for self-sustained growth is a quest for resources with which to enhance the lifestyles of all Caribbean peoples. The emphasis on export oriented growth reflects the fact that we can offer our people a diversified range of necessities and quality products only by importing either final products or the fuels and raw materials from which to produce them."

Clearly, the agenda outlined in 1992 dealt with promoting the Caricom region as an export centre, shifting production structures to gearing much more to the outside world and participating in a fuller way into the international global environment.

In another edition *Caribbean Economic Development*, edited by Prof. Stanley Lalta and Mary Freckleton, in a chapter by Prof. Clive Thomas of Guyana whom I think is well known to several of us. He defines "development" as follows:

"Development is about people; about the concrete context of their existence, and this is largely influenced by the social conditions they inherit and the movements and the rhythms underlying them."

Dr. Camille Lampart states, in the same edition:

"The concept of sustainable development emerged from worldwide environmental concerns...It has a strong emphasis on the inheritance of future generations..."

For much of the Third World, this idea of fairness to the future is a complex and sensitive issue.”

Finally, without wanting to carry on and on about Caribbean scholars and their discussions on sustainable development, I want to take a quotation from Prof. Norman Girvan, who is well known as the Secretary General of the Association of Caribbean States; former Director of the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies.

2.00 p.m.

In a section on process and ideology, Prof. Girvan states:

Inssofar as the construction of a capitalist world economy is an historical process that commenced with European maritime and commercial expansion towards the end of the fifteenth century, it can be said that globalisation...

and sustainable development

“...in the substantive sense has been taking place for over the past 500 years. The ‘South’, as it is known today, was brought into being by this process.”

Prof. Girvan goes on to deal with the changing labels over time; “Free Trade” “Mercantilism”, “Imperialism”, “The White Man’s Burden”, “Development” and the “Cold War”.

The point I want to make with referencing these materials is that in the context of the Caribbean, sustainable development took not only an economic and an environmental slant, but it was also couched within a perspective that had history and a sense of self-determination. There is an ideological usage of sustainability in the context of the Caribbean where issues of self-determination, emancipation and liberalization were found in discourses on development and sustainability. That is not so, I suspect, in discourses on sustainability in other regions in the developing world. So, the Caribbean, in a way, has a particular slant on sustainability that is not just economic and environmental, but emancipative and historical.

Mr. Vice-President, in this context the Government has outlined our own policy approach to development and growth. I prefer not to dwell on the enormous accomplishments of the Government over the past five years or so, which would take the entire hour, but to make reference to our colourful and intellectually sound manifesto 2000 of the United National Congress, entitled

Sustainable Growth (Government's Policy)
[SEN. DR. THE HON. R. MOONILAL]

Tuesday, July 03, 2001

Better Now for Everybody...Better to come. In this document, which is a public document, we clearly outlined our accomplishments over the past five years or so, and Members who are not in possession of this document should feel a sense of loss because they cannot acquaint themselves with the high accomplishments and performance of the United National Congress Government. [Interruption] We will get to that. I am coming to that in a while. [Interruption] Mr. Vice-President, I notice that the tone changes a bit when we move from concept and analysis to performance.

Mr. Vice-President, in this document the United National Congress outlines our nine national objectives. We see these objectives as the key to a prosperous future for our country which include: sustainable growth, an intelligent nation, more and better jobs—we all know about the 60,000 jobs—a faster pace of development; a better quality of life for all our citizens; high quality health care for all citizens; greater equity in our society; peace, harmony, security and a competitive economy. These are clear, unambiguous objectives of our Government as spelt out in our manifesto and I would make a point on policy.

Sometimes, in this honourable Chamber and elsewhere, we would hear comments to the effect that there is no policy; there is no plan and we do not know the policy. Where is the policy? The policy of our Government can always be found in several documents. There is a *Medium Term Policy Framework*, the manifesto of the party, which on the basis of this manifesto captured the imagination of the electorate in December, 2000 and this Government was returned to office based upon our manifesto, our performance and our ideas and vision for the future and we should not underestimate that. Sometimes there is a propensity to look at that and be sarcastic, bitter, cynical and so on, but it is on the basis of performance and vision that a party was returned to power.

In this document we clearly spell out our policy which would find itself as Government policy. There is also the annual budget when the Hon. Minister of Finance will address the Chamber and the nation to outline our policy for the next year.

There are three major sources of policy but, as if that was not enough, within the first three months of the new year, 2001, when several national actors were participating in their own version of constitutional adventurism, Government officials, the Cabinet and the planners were meeting, discussing and planning. In the first three months, to the credit of those planners, we were able to put forward a document entitled “Towards First World Status Within the next Decade, Initial Government Plan 2001—2005”. This document deals with issues of leadership

and governance, inclusion, national planning, human development, physical infrastructure and development, technology infrastructure development, employment creation, security of the society, the management of change. This has nothing to do with the enormous performance—the 60,000 jobs, the 100,000 houses, security and so forth. This has nothing to do with that. We have finished one term of office, we moved forward and this is the plan we are outlining. In the first three months the Government came up with the plan.

Mr. Vice-President, while it would be the role of other speakers to deal with other matters of technology and physical infrastructure, and so on, given our office and our interest, I would like to focus on the matters dealing with employment and governance. I reemphasize that there are several policy documents to which we can turn; the latest being “Towards First World Status within the next Decade”.

Mr. Vice-President, I want to indicate that this document was then taken to another forum of leadership in the month of May—it was postponed, it should have been earlier—at the Trinidad Hilton, the leadership of the Government, the civil service, the public service, labour, business, representatives from the inter-religious organizations and the academic community, together with the NGOs, all congregated to discuss, and debate this issue and plan.

Mr. Vice-President, the Motion—I want to keep myself relevant because there will be people provoking me—addresses the issue of participation in planning. *[Interruption]* I am correct. Participation in planning. This is the first time in the history of this country that a government has embarked upon this process of national planning.

2.10 p.m.

Before, you would recall that we read and heard of five-year development plans. There were five-year development plans from the early 60's, with which the government of the day in collaboration with their technocrats and the finest minds would come up. They would have become governments' documents and we would then place them on the national agenda. The government would have indicated that this was its plan. There was not this level of participation and inclusion in that period. I do not know for what reason. Maybe, it was the nature of the society at that time, that they needed this sort of centralist planning.

It is the nature of our society at this time, that we need inclusion and participation. We need to deal with the issue of marginalization which is a critical

Sustainable Growth (Government's Policy)
[SEN. DR. THE HON. R. MOONILAL]

Tuesday, July 03, 2001

challenge to sustainable development, as I outlined in the beginning. The process included all. It included representatives who are also within this Chamber and those from different organizations. I want to emphasize that. We need to put on record that participatory framework within which this document was discussed and debated.

I had the very good fortune and opportunity to present my document on the employment policy for the Government. In any discussion on sustainable growth, employment, I submit, must be central. Employment is the highest form of empowerment. It is very difficult for a citizen to have a sense of empowerment when he or she cannot afford to buy the basic goods with which to live, to sustain himself or herself. Employment is a key pillar of our vision. The employment policy was outlined in another document entitled, *An Employment Matrix Towards Full Employment Transforming Employment Policies and Structure* by Dr. Roodal Moonilal, Minister in the Ministry of Labour, Manpower Development and Industrial Relations. For the record, I need to put this. If I do not quote my sources, then the Hansard Editor would seek me out at a later date. [Interruption] No, no, my thesis is here. This is not my thesis. I would make reference to that later.

The research was done by the very able researchers at the Ministry of Labour, Manpower Development and Industrial Relations. In coming up with this document, we had to deal with the fundamental issue which is employment creation "Towards Full Employment" A key objective of the Government is to pursue a policy towards full employment. Full employment has been a priority of economic planning since the second world war.

Milton Keanes, in the *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money, 1942*, gave the initial intellectual inspiration to the term, "full employment" which meant the point at which aggregate demand could not further increase employment and output. Full employment is generally felt to be between 3 and 4 per cent. Those of us who are also a bit versed in some of the Marxist theories would know about the reserve army of labour which is called the 3 per cent. It keeps in check the workings of the labour market. Enough on theory.

The objectives of our employment policy would be to sustain employment creation, through investment in certain key sectors of our economy; increase levels of foreign direct investment in specific sectors of the economy, by expanding our export output from the manufacturing sector, diversification of the services sector, expansion in education and training opportunities for the youth

and synchronizing labour demand with labour supply. We intend to promote job creation.

A key issue raised in this report was the link between investment policy and employment policy. The Government recognizes that employment is the highest form of empowerment. The lead sectors of the economy which are targetted for job creation are downstream industries from gas, the telecommunications sector and its downstream industries, the services sector and the manufacturing sector. There are certain constraints to employment creation, such as our training infrastructure, population growth and labour force growth. It is logical, that in discussing employment, we need to discuss population and labour force growth. If our labour force grows at an abnormal rate, it would mean that it would put a further strain on planners to secure more jobs.

The growth of the labour force in the period 1994—1999 was 1.68 per cent. The total employment growth was 3.7 per cent. As all would know by now, our unemployment figure went down dramatically between the period 1995–2000, when the Government increased the number of jobs available. It is estimated that our population would grow at a rate of 0.6 per cent for the period 1998–2015. Our labour force would grow by 1.06 per cent.

In dealing with the unemployment problem, several other matters were raised in this report, such as the lack of a fit between supply and demand. We hear it on and on again. Several business analysts and labour market specialists speak to this imbalance between what is required in the labour market by employers and what is supplied. This is where the massive investment in our training infrastructure, led by the National Training Agency, would help us to bring demand and supply in harmony. The skills that are required by industries and new industries would be passed on to the new labour market entrants and for retraining.

The other problem that we face as a structural and historical problem, is the low participation of female workers in the labour market. That is now about 49 per cent, but comparatively and historically low. Specific policy measures need to be adopted to address the fuller participation of female workers in our labour market. This document outlines some policy initiatives, such as training; providing greater facilities at work for working mothers and promoting more flexible working options in terms of time and task, so that female members of the labour market can better access jobs and opportunities. These are important developmental challenges which we face in the domain of employment.

We did a trend line analysis which is a very basic analysis for projecting future percentages of job creation and job provision, based on other types of sophisticated methodologies, such as employment elasticity. In a nutshell, we projected that in order to get to our target of full employment by 2005 which is an objective—and we can debate how ambitious it is—we need to create 130,711 new jobs. I say this because it is very important. When you hear 130,000 jobs and in the first five years we created officially, 60,000—but it could have been more—you feel 130,000 would be so much. From where would it come? What sector? It is important that we spell out these objectives and plans and get our targets, so that we could start benchmarking, and every quarter, or half of the year, or annually, we can see how many jobs we are creating and where we are on the road.

When we are tracking investors into certain targetted industries, we must know the job creating potential, whether directly or indirectly. Sometimes, people look at the gas-based industries and feel that we only have 4 per cent of the labour force there, so that we do not create jobs. Very few people look at the other sectors in manufacturing, construction and services, to know that when there is heavy investment in gas or oil, there is a spillover effect which indirectly creates jobs. That you would see in the data.

It may or may not be an ambitious projection, but we need to create 130,000 jobs, more than 11,000 each year to reduce our unemployment figure. To do that, other Ministers will speak about diversification of the gas and oil sectors, manufacturing services, telecommunications system and others. As a minister with some responsibility for employment, I can say that it is very critical that we diversify our economy to the extent that the job-creating sectors are assisted.

We have also seen a very static structure of employment for this country, meaning that there are different sectors such as sugar, agriculture, petroleum, manufacturing and so on. When you put it on a graph and look over the last 10 or 15 years, you would see all the lines are more or less straight, in that the economy and employment grow. In those sectors, the lines are still straight, in that we still create the same number of jobs per sector, proportionally. There is a need to look at this inter-sectoral movement of jobs to new industries, dynamic industries, knowledge-based industries and the movement away from what could be regarded as uncompetitive sectors, which may not be identified as a growth pole and where there may be surplus labour that needs to be trained and deployed. That is a fundamental challenge outlined in our document to which we are up to the task.

We must also include our partners in government, such as labour and non-governmental organizations. Other developmental partners must participate to come up with solutions to deal with these issues from an employment perspective. The Government would not sit and draft policy and shove it down the throats of the population. We need to participate so we can remove obstacles in the throat, so that when the policy comes out, there would be that sense of ownership and inclusion. Actors such as the trade union movement and the non-governmental organizations will participate and support. We have a sense of that from our inclusion in other pieces of legislation, such as occupational health and safety.

I thought it fit to put on record and indicate to our hon. Senators, that the employment policy which is one chapter of that bigger vision document which other Ministers may address, is very clear as to the challenges and data which are important. Sometimes there is a culture, where we talk and make big conclusions about big matters and, when you look at the data, it is inadequate, not good, poor and soft. Recently, there was a debate on a youth report. There was a youth report entitled, *Youth at Risk*. Another report came out in the public domain which had a very strong critique of that report of the United Nations Development Programme.

2.25 p.m.

And these are serious matters, compiling data that are flawed and coming to the population with conclusions and the data cannot stand up so that your conclusion sounds nice and you go every morning on television and talk about it but, the data are not good enough.

Mr. Vice-President, you would also recall within the last few days there has been a lot of debate on a CPI Report, Corruption Perception Index Report of Transparency International in which Trinidad and Tobago ranked 31, tying with several other countries. Having done my research, you will glean that I take my research seriously. While I would notice from the list of countries headed by Finland, Trinidad and Tobago ranks 31, interestingly, above Trinidad and Tobago there are only four other countries that could be considered developing or countries in transition.

I want to make the point that whether it is UNDP or Transparency International, these are important issues that deserve national attention, that deserve our collective participation, and when the issue of data and methodology comes out it, is also a tricky issue because we need to get the methodology right if we are going to come up with adequate conclusions, and that is a subject I am sure others will address. But sometimes one does not know where one gets data.

Sustainable Growth (Government's Policy)
[SEN. DR. THE HON. R. MOONILAL]

Tuesday, July 03, 2001

Mr. Vice-President, a key issue I wanted to raise in the context of this debate is the political preconditions for sustainable development. I said at the beginning that we know of no country—and I stand corrected—where there is sustained political instability and economic growth and development, and in our region there are examples as well, to indicate the economic and social effects of sustained political instability.

Mr. Vice-President, I want to stay relevant because I for one dare not run the risk of usurping your authority. It is a risk I will not take. There are political preconditions for sustainable development and one of them—in a Westminster party government, a government by opposition—is discipline. We need sustainable discipline if we are to have sustainable growth. I have had the opportunity within the last three weeks to visit several secondary and primary schools and to meet and address the children.

I am always taken aback when I meet children who are so aware, who are so conscious of issues, of people, of national leaders. Sometimes I wonder whether leaders know how much our children at secondary or primary schools look on, learn, emulate and copy.

When we storm out of our Parliament then we wonder why children storm out of a classroom. When we talk about indiscipline and we practise indiscipline at high levels in the society there is a paradox. At a high level there would be indiscipline and then you go to the secondary schools and tell the children they must listen to their teachers, very important; have respect for those in authority when some of us may not have respect for those in authority, and this is a very critical issue. What is also important is that we need a responsible two-party system or many other parties for that matter. But we are in a system of government by opposition, which is the name of our system. We need responsible parties that will stand strong on certain fundamental issues, on certain principles and we are committed in this country as our national anthem tells us—every creed and race find an equal place.

Mr. Vice-President: Hon. Senators, the speaking time of the hon. Senator has expired.

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

Question put and agreed to.

Sen. Dr. The Hon: R. Moonilal: Mr. Vice-President, I am making the point that there is need for political stability and sustainable discipline for sustainable growth. There is need for a mature two-party-or-more system as the case may be, when our country is committed and not only aspiring to—every creed and race find an equal place—it is not an aspiration; it is a commitment. When one reads that in leading political parties leading figures are resigning over charges of racism in their party, it is a matter of national concern.

A few weeks ago I had the opportunity to go on national television and indicate to the nation that I am a proud child of the United National Congress. When I looked at the other party their children were leaving in circumstances that were less than dignified, and I was amazed when I read the *Saturday Express* of June 16, at page 3 a former colleague of this honourable Senate made the point concerning the People's National Movement:

“He said the party had abandoned its original ideals, principles and philosophy, preferring instead the politics of convenience that pander to the base instincts of the electorate, as opposed to appealing to the population's highest ideals.”

This former colleague referred to what he called the “favoured race”, which had preference, and “window dressing” and the rank and file and leadership of that party engaging in promoting that type of racism. I will say no more on this matter because I know it is uncomfortable. It must be uncomfortable so I will not carry this on.

I am just making the point that we will not have sustainable growth and development when national political organizations that offer themselves as serious bidders for power face this type of allegation from such an individual. This is not a party group member from somewhere else. This is a child of that party and one should notice children of that party have been leaving. You then notice this movement from the politics of coalition to the politics of collusion and the politics of collision where there is a threat to butt someone in the Chair.

Mr. Vice-President, I want to tell you that I am happy and proud today that good sense has prevailed and now these matters appear to be on the back burner and dealt with by responsible leadership.

I do not want to harp on this because it would make our colleagues uncomfortable. I want to say that sustainable growth would not come from a policy of rumour-mongering, to scare mongering, and of moving from “ol' talk”

to gun talk. We had a national issue capturing our attention a few months ago where there was an allegation of a minister having millions of dollars in a bank account and so forth, and ministers having so many billions and that data came from hacking. When we move from a hacker to a hoaxer, we are moving from risibility to irrelevance. This is not conducive to sustainable growth. I want to say as well, that our country is on a growth path, not just in economic data and statistics but in the context of development. We have our plan for creating employment. We have a process that includes every sector for the first time in our country—and this is something we are very proud of and this must not go hand in hand with scare mongering, with instability, with toy soldiers marching from I do not know where.

While we want to keep our children in school and promote education and training, we do not want to promote that type of environment; we want to promote an environment for learning and for development.

I will now move on from that very uncomfortable area, I admit, to return in a direct way to the issue of growth and development as outlined in the Motion, and to say there are other challenges which we face presently. We have outlined—and I am hoping that all Senators would have an opportunity to study in some detail—our policy document towards first-world status. There is another document which I want to mention briefly because this debate and these issues are so passionate, one can get carried away. Since I am so committed to that issue of political stability as a precondition, I do not want to get back to it.

At the end of a strategy session that lasted a few days in Tobago recently where the Government invited all the stakeholders to discuss, debate, criticize, add and subtract from our Vision, we then returned to Trinidad to another process of summarizing and came up with another document which is more a document that speaks to implementation called a Strategic Vision for Trinidad and Tobago, June 2001—hot off the press—we indicated it is our goal to have Trinidad and Tobago as the jewel of the Americas, and that jewel would be tarnished if we do not have political stability. This document which I will skim through, deals with using the energy sector as the sector for wealth creation to create employment, positioning our country in the international community through several policy measures. The employment potential of sectors deals with Trinidad and Tobago in a globally competitive, technologically driven world and outlines the policy measures and the strategic imperatives to get there. This document is very, very important. We identified our critical success factors, we identified the prerequisites for development, we identified the key drivers and a fundamental

point is that we will not move forward without inclusion. We were happy to announce to the nation that a task force has been set up under the chairmanship of the President of BP Trinidad to come up with another plan in the very short term for implementation. We have gone through visioning. We have on the table, visioning and strategic objectives.

I hope I was very clear on some of the matters dealing with our employment objectives. There is a task force, which has to deal with the issue of implementation, which is critical. It is one thing to have all the plans, but we would not get far unless there is also machinery for monitoring the implementation of our policy document.

I would like to end by indicating that the Motion before us is very important and it is good for us to reflect once per month as the case may be, on some of the challenges to sustainable growth, and the meaning of sustainable growth. It is good for us to outline the plans and there are several of the Government's plans for all Members in terms of the different sectors. I did not seek to go in the direction of talking about economic planning, of technology, of infrastructure, of the environment, because there are colleagues on this side who are more capable than I am of addressing those issues. I wanted to address the issue of employment and labour.

I wanted to talk about the political prerequisites for sustainable growth because I think we cannot forget that. I think there are some people who really think that if the society goes up in some unrest somehow it would still grow and that the economy would prosper.

2.40 p.m.

I end now by quoting from Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Mahatma Ghandi, who said:

“Recall the face of the poorest person you have seen and ask yourself whether the steps you contemplate will make any difference to his or her life.”

I repeat:

“Recall the face of the poorest person you have seen and ask yourself whether the steps you contemplate will make any difference to his or her life.”

When we plan, when we participate in visioning and when we implement, we think about the face of the poorest person and we believe that we will help that person.

I thank you very much.

Sen. Rennie Dumas: Mr. Vice-President, before I proceed I hope you will spare me a minute to offer my congratulations to the goodly Senators who have all been recently promoted. They have taken on serious responsibilities in the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Congratulations are critical, especially in the Motion that we have and the whole question of the sustainable development of our country and the roles they play.

Few have been the occasions where a government could have had an opportunity to lay down its vision, to lay out its programme for sustainable development of its people, as was afforded by this one that came from the goodly Professor Senator. Fewer still would have been the administrations who would have received a favourable response in a very non-combative atmosphere as we have in this Senate now, sadly being expanded to this session.

The earlier presentations made from the Government Benches were, to say the least, disappointing. Then I heard the start of the presentation today and I looked around and saw a line of Senator Professors: 37, Senator Professor; 38, Senator Professor; 39, Senator Professor. I said, "Soon we will have to elevate Senator Professor 18 to join the ranks of these goodly gentlemen, who have proved themselves in the academic area as exponents and teachers in the society." Unfortunately, Mr. Vice-President, my expectations have been dashed.

We have a situation where the framework for sustainable development as developed by the scholars of the world, in a real sense, were placed on the floor without relevance to our country, our situation and, in a very real way, abused in a process that so much more could have been done to the credit of the Senator and the Senate.

To me the Motion talks about national policy. While we had a waving of documents, one thing we can say for each of those documents is that they cannot be described as national policy if they have not had the honour of being placed before us in the institutions of the nation to discuss the national framework for development in the context of the use of a parliament, especially the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago as set out in our Constitution.

This is a paper that is developed in the backwoods of some place, by some group of people who had the audacity to link action taken in that place with the poor people of the nation. These are people getting together in a place that nobody recognizes; that people recognize because of the denigration it has brought on the island; because of the abuse of the employed population on the island; because of the absence of inclusion of any part of the managerial capacity on the island and

you use that document coming out of that environment and say, "This is for poor people. This is for the elevation of the nation."

If they understood sustainable development, they would not dare do such a thing. They cannot link what happened with the development of that site and our beautiful island of Tobago with sustainable development. It is the biggest demonstration of what sustainable development is not about. It is taking 700-odd acres, destroying the physical characteristics of those acres, employing people in conditions that could not last, that paid no attention to the employment rules in the country; that led to the destruction of a number of institutions and enterprises on the island, and then saying, "Here, we have created sustainable development for the country."

Mr. Vice-President, the only consolation I had is that sometimes it takes a little while for learning and experience to catch up with reality and become true knowledge. As a teacher, I know that capacities change and with willingness, there is hope still. It is only if you believe there is hope that you can participate in these activities. It serves to demonstrate and to remind me that the issues we face have local and communal impact, have island impact, have national impact and certainly we have to be very careful how we export them to the rest of the region and internationally.

If we revisit what was required of us, we have to be honest with ourselves. When was this Motion drafted? If I remember rightly, this Motion was drafted in January. When it was drafted, the population, as the Senate and the rest of the Parliament, as the drafter of the Motion, there was no conception of the policies that are being waived now as having come out of that exercise. The nation had difficulty in a number of areas. Some people call it adventurism—utter rudeness. The old people say you must know your elders and pay due respect to them.

The Motion called for a full statement of the Government, about its plan to meet the objective of sustainable growth as outlined. The Senator obliged and brought a phrase from a document that was on the streets, that has never been made official policy; he brought it and gave you the opportunity to bring it to the Senate and say, "This is our policy." Instead of taking that opportunity, we used our heel on it and attempted to engage in this wishy-washy kind of intellectualism to attempt to fool the population.

The Senator said to us that the objective of sustainable growth—where did we find it? In a manifesto on the streets of the nation. He said, "Bring it into the

Senate and bring it into the fullness of the governance of the country, by bringing it before the people in a sensible and coherent manner.” He said. “How does this pay regard to the citizens' participation in planning and development of the country?” Sometimes we talk without understanding what we are saying.

The Senator has not understood that he is saying, “This labour policy which is mine. This employment policy, which is mine.” He puts away the contributions of everybody else to own and claim this employment policy as his personally, quoting himself into the *Hansard* as owner of the policy of the nation. We have to be careful. Where is the citizenry participation in that? Where are the employers and employees that you have brought on board? I remember that same trip—hundreds of people coming up—where were the Tobagonians on Tobago soil engaged in that activity?

Sen. Dr. Moonilal: On a point of information alone, the hon. Chief Secretary of the Tobago House of Assembly was invited and participated in that session.

Sen. R. Dumas: I suggest that the Chief Secretary did not participate in the deliberations.

There is no presentation, as required by the Motion, of a feasible programme for minimizing the effects of the physical development and growth as was explained in the Motion.

We could not do anything but notice, and I am sure that the nation would remember, and would take note that we have serious problems still in understanding the Government's response in an explicit, coherent and credible manner to the request of this Motion. It is just not there.

We heard a set of statements about what is a theoretic policy framework for sustainable development. Nobody has yet told us what is this Government's framework. What is their framework for sustainable development in Trinidad and Tobago? That framework is not yet made clear. It is not put out.

A number of objectives have been identified. Can we honour these statements as strategic objectives for a nation in a policy development framework? I saw something last week, which I thought was quite a critical development. Last week there was a situation where the Ministry of Food Production and Marine Resources honoured us with a Paper that said, “This is the policy.” Whether you agree with it or not, the policy is there. This is what I think the goodly professor was asking when he coined this Motion by saying, “Say to us what they are.”

In asking for the policy, I think people are trying to have measures of accountability. If we know what the policy is, we can evaluate the Government, not necessarily negatively. We must be able to evaluate, on the measures of effectiveness or efficiency, whether in fact performance is what it is, instead of some created words—performance slogans. Repeat them often enough and maybe people would believe. It is an old tactic.

I do not want to be rude, but this is the time of year when we award grades and it would be difficult to give a grade at this time of which any parent would be proud, given the performance we have seen.

2.55 p.m.

I had the good fortune to listen to the Minister of Integrated Planning as he was the speaker on this Motion, and the Minister at the time reminded me that there was a real problem with our environment. That there was a situation where our environment was being denigrated greatly, and it reminded me of what was asked by Prof. Kenny in terms of planning and quality control, and one noted that people were, in fact, grappling with that problem.

I was trying to put in place a response to what was happening and again, that is something that people would find commendable. What was unfortunate is the very clear contempt which the Minister had for poor people. Therefore, it was in that context of remembering that contempt when one hears that the poor people are what drives the policy of this Government, one cannot help but ask, is it that we are going about glamourizing the study and attention given to poverty, while we hold the poor in contempt themselves and use them as tools for argument? Because you see, I remember when I was a boy with honest John, champion of the poor.

When I sat less than 20 feet away from him and looked at him, and saw his emphasis on denigration, “the non-contribution of these poor people to the city of Port of Spain”—if you want to find the reference in his speech. It is in the *Hansard*. I want to suggest to you my confidence that the Minister of Integrated Planning in this Government could begin to understand what is required for sustainability was lost.

It was your Senator, in his survey of international literature, who was talking about the critical place for the poor, the critical need for political stability. Do you know what that reminded me of? Every single dictator in the world, every single leader who had his heel in the neck of the poor people used one argument.

Political stability is going to lead to investment which is going to cause growth in the society and, therefore, nobody should make a noise. That is familiar. That is so familiar, it is frightening, and every time you hear it you know it is a warning not to be quiet, because it means that you are facilitating someone grinding your nose into the dust. [*Desk thumping*]

I am saying to you, ask the people in the Public Services Association (PSA). Ask the workers. Ask the workers who are being moved from a wage that can pay their way, to wage slaves in this country! They cannot pay their way in the country given the prices in the economy, given the earnings in the economy. They have no access to capital for their homes, et cetera. These things are now being used as tools and you have to ask yourselves: How do we respond to that? How do we make the families and the communities sustainable, leaving the people with their pride? That is what they have to do. Not glamorize poverty. "We are the champions of the poor."

I heard the Minister say, "In my watch, I want to remove destitution. I want to help the poor." These are failed paradigms. Work with people—empowerment and making sure they are part of the economy. I am not hearing that. Mr. Vice-President, it is known that our economic system, our social system, our cultural practices and our institutional systems are all interlocked. Each receives feedback from the other, and we do not have to go international.

In 1984 in Georgetown, the people in the Caribbean sat and identified a number of constraints to development in the Caribbean. They went as far as identifying an index of vulnerability for our communities; our index of vulnerability for our islands. This index was commended to our governments as instruments for consideration in our economic planning and our development management. This index had a number of indicators including population growth, land fertility, investment competition and consumption demand. The rate at which we use up our natural resources and, in particular, the way we manage our investment depreciation ratios to ensure that growth goes on at a pace that we can sustain.

When we talk about that growth that we must sustain, I have heard no indication of whether we identify the limits to our own growth or, limits to the rate at which we grow and, of course, how we distribute the benefits of this growth. The Minister joined with using certain national income type measures and said that these are growing. We are in a growing economy. Then I asked, how do you place growing at the rate of 5 per cent, as measured in our national income, as against the degradation going on in major parts of the country physically; as

against the tonnes of waste that the Minister of Integrated Planning claims is running in from the Caroni River into the Caribbean Sea; as against the absence of confidence of the people in the country and the systems.

How do we measure 5 per cent growth against that, and maybe we should be looking at whether our measures of change, our measures of growth are real, and whether we should not be importing the cost of these losses of the systems into our measurement and, maybe, we may find that 5 per cent growth is not enough to pay for those negative externalities. If we understand that, we will know that it is not enough to stand and boast about growth of 5 per cent. We have work to do. And all we are asking is, "Are you doing the work?" That is the question. Are you doing the work?

You see, we have to be careful about the trap. There is a trap, you know. There is a trap that says, we accept certain ways of seeing the world and, therefore, those become the way which we work towards. We have to be careful. We cannot talk on one hand of politics and a vision of emancipation—fancy language—and then we turn around and make sure that two weeks before that we are talking about the need to get laws passed because certain people want them. You cannot have the two.

Is it that as we grow, we are attempting to remove the powerlessness faced by people? That disease that threatens us, threatens our young people and in continuance, our families and communities—are we battling with them? I am looking at this question of employment that we talk about, and I really am worried about the sort of concepts used. We are looking at employment, but what exactly is the structure of our workforce in its various ways that we can measure it? What is the structure of opportunity facing this workforce? This labour force, if you want.

How are we matching these two? How are we adding to the second? How are we improving the structure of opportunity faced by the workforce? We have to measure things like that. We have to have full conceptions of those things. If we want to be in charge of finding work for our population and we do not understand what the structure of opportunity facing the workforce means, then we should look for another job. If we cannot explicate it to the country, then it means that we cannot solve the employment problems of the country.

You see, we have a serious problem, a set of serious constraints—call them what you want, but we have a situation that we have to deal with. While we complain about our problem in managing our ecology, we have an ecological

footprint that is growing, and one has to ask, how are our trade and our trade patterns adding to the growth of that footprint? Is it for our use? Or, is it that we, in our trade practices, are ensuring that our natural resources are used up by the ecological footprint of another country?

In the Caribbean—you know, I sat here and I listened to the Minister of what was then Trade, Tourism and Foreign Affairs? I think we have to amend that now. That Minister was boasting about the capacity of Trinidad and Tobago to manage the trade relationship with the rest of the Caribbean. But critical to that—and we wonder sometimes why the rest of the Caribbean has problems with our attitude—when I saw the Minister, I am saying, “I hope that is not the way he speaks to the rest of the Caribbean. I hope he reserves that demeanour for this House and inside of the nation.” Because, certainly, that posture would only remind the rest of the Caribbean that we are, in fact, using up the resources of the Caribbean for our own enjoyment.

The question that comes is, if we are really in a relationship with the rest of the Caribbean, what is the balance that we want to strike? Does someone need to examine this? I just want to suggest that we should examine it. There was one writer who suggested that we face, in this part of the generation, a phenomena where production and economic growth lead to a decline in the welfare, the general welfare of the people. We want to be very careful of that, because I want to suggest to you that a lot has been written about that problem in the context of Tobago, and in the wider national context. And as people move into some parts of Trinidad to do tourism development, you also have to pay regard to the impact of that phenomena in the various localities and the various communities.

We have to ask ourselves about the concept of the tourist-carrying capacity of these communities. Why it is relevant is because we have a situation where tourism uses up a number of our common property goods with a zero price. When we have this zero price, it means that a number of these facilities and institutions are not paying the proper price for the use of our national income; our natural national income, and we want to know what measures are we going to use to deal with that.

Are we going to end up in a situation where the host societies for these tourist installations become reactive to these installations? We have to deal with it, because we say spend more money. There was an analysis done on crime in Tobago. That analysis showed that we had increased the spending on security in Tobago by about \$1.1 million per year. An increase of 7-plus per cent in spending

on security and security matters. One of the statistics that we must join to that, is that there was a 4.5 per cent increase in crime.

One could interpret that the possibility is that the society could be rebelling against some of these installations, and if we depend on our social capital and our natural capital to carry this activity, we have to be careful about the impact of how we manage those investments. I know we do not want to hear it. We talk about discomfort, but there is an argument that says that the pathway of development we have in Trinidad and Tobago can be described as a model of loss—not a model of growth.

We have a situation where workers are wondering whether the technology that we bring into play would not put them out of work. And I am asking, what is being done to deal with that? What is being done to deal with our bad public transport systems? What is being done to deal with how our town centres look? I heard some people deriding the attempts that were made in Port of Spain with the Brian Lara Promenade and so forth. What is being done about our poor-performing education system?

Sen. Dr. Moonilal: Poor?

Sen. R. Dumas: Yes. Poor performing education system. The quantity again, brother. You leave out the quality. What is being done about our neglect to culture? Critically, what is being done about the denial of capital to our people?

Sen. Dr. Moonilal: What is being done about racism?

Sen. R. Dumas: Racism in political parties was demonstrated ably in the last election in the UNC. [*Laughter*] Ably demonstrated! I think we should look in our own eyes before we look elsewhere. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Dr. Moonilal: We are waiting for September.

Sen. R. Dumas: Mr. Vice-President, I want to suggest that we need to look at something that was alluded to earlier. The concept is that we need to involve the whole community in our development. We are saying that a number of people do not feel included. Whatever may be the perception of the leadership in the Government, a whole cross-section of the population, various groups in the population, do not feel included. They do not feel that they are participants either in the processes of development, or in the benefits of development.

Sustainable Growth (Government's Policy)
[SEN. DUMAS]

Tuesday, July 03, 2001

3.15 p.m.

In some parts of the country some people are asking: “What is being done about our transport system to make us a full part of the nation?” Some people are asking: “What is the degree of support that this administration will give to the development of a proper waste-water management system?” Some people are asking: “What is the support given to the development of education systems throughout the nation?” Some people are asking: “What is our opportunity to participate equitably in what is happening in the creation of wealth, distribution of wealth and the access to long-term opportunity?”

I am suggesting that if you have a view that sustainable development is where we should go, and if you agree that a serious attempt be made to put in a general framework which will embody some of the fancy language in real terms—the fancy language of sustainable development only meets the test when it delivers a better quality of life to our people, and I am suggesting that this Government has not yet said how it will do that. [*Desk thumping*]

Thank you, Mr. Vice-President.

ARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

Mr. Vice-President: Hon. Senators, I did indicate earlier that we have a Paper based on what the Leader of Government Business had said—a Paper to lay, and a Bill to introduce. I think this is an appropriate time for us to do so. So I now call on the Clerk to deal with the relevant item.

Agreed to.

PAPER LAID

5. The Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amdt.) Regulations, 2001. [*The Minister of Transport (Sen. The Hon. Jearlean John)*]

MOTOR VEHICLES AND ROAD TRAFFIC (AMDT.) REGULATIONS, 1999 VALIDATION BILL

Bill to validate the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amdt.) Regulations, 1999 [*The Minister of Transport*]; read the first time.

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

Question put and agreed to.

**SUSTAINABLE GROWTH
(Government's Policy)**

Mr. Vice-President: Hon. Senators, I just want to remind you of Standing Order 35(6) and it states specifically, that Ministers shall be referred to by their title and other Senators by their name, and in this instance, not by numbers. So I want to remind Senators, lest they forget, of Standing Order 35(6), that Senators are to be referred to by their names and Ministers by their titles.

We shall proceed.

Sen. Derek Outridge: Mr. Vice-President, I want to draw the attention of the Senate to certain aspects within the Motion. First of all, the Motion mentions the adoption as national policy; it also mentions the meeting of current and future needs of citizens; it emphasizes minimizing the impact of negative effects of development and it also importantly states, involving citizens in planning the development of the country; and I recall the hon. Sen. Dr. Roodal Moonilal mentioning several definitions this afternoon in respect of development and essentially each one of those definitions was the important aspect that development is about society and people.

Mr. Vice-President, the whole concept of sustainable development was formulated in the 1987 Brundtland Commission Report. It came about as a result of the frustration of continuing environmental decline and the failures of international development strategies. What about the frustration of the people of Trinidad and Tobago in local environmental decline and local development strategies?

Mr. Vice-President, I want to draw your attention to what society's basic needs are in respect of sustainable development. People require food, shelter, clothing, water, employment, health, education, a clean environment and safety. How has the Government been able to sustain these strategies of living? I want to draw attention to the use of Government's expenditure in respect of sustainable development.

Mr. Vice-President, in 1980—1985 we spent \$2 billion on a handful of projects: a financial complex, a Hall of Justice, a medical complex, a failed racing complex and a project we call "Pride". In 1996—2001 we spent more than \$3 billion also on a handful of projects: a new airport, four stadia, a Miss Universe Pageant, Savannah and road pavings, and what have the people of Trinidad and Tobago got in respect of sustainable living from these expenditures? Let me tell

you what we have got; unacceptable poverty levels, rampant crime, double digit unemployment, HIV/AIDS explosion, cancer on the increase, environment degradation and destruction, corruption at all levels, illegal squatting and street vending, and pollution.

Mr. Vice-President, we started with an airport with a contract sum of \$600,000,000; we are now being told it will cost more than \$1.7 billion without interest. What have we got in respect of an additional facility for that extra \$1.7 billion? Did Birk Hillman, who were the designers of this airport envisage that they would provide us with this exact facility for over three times the cost? If that was the case then we have wasted and frittered away money that should have been spent on alleviating several of these ills in society. [*Desk thumping*] Why were these additional Government expenditures not allocated to social, environmental and medical initiatives? How much more money are we going to allocate to alleviate the society's ills in the next budget?

Mr. Vice-President, I am looking for the Government to outline in its policy in respect of this Motion the time frames in which it intends to alleviate these needs, and the amount of money it intends to put towards these needs. I want to draw your attention, Mr. Vice-President, to certain instances that cause this sort of wasted expenditure. We mentioned recently in this Senate about authorities being given exemption from Central Tenders Board rules. We have several state boards and authorities failing: squandermania, procurement breaches. Who are accountable? What about personal responsibilities? We know accounting officers in these institutions are personally responsible.

We have the Airports Authority embarking on an airport; we have the Minister of Finance reviewing some MTS programmes. We have been reading in the newspapers all week about the unacceptable level of breaches in the North West Regional Health Authority (NWRHA). We have a review into an overpass that was proposed by UDECOTT at the Uriah Butler Highway. We now have breaches in respect of procurement by the National Carnival Commission (NCC).

Mr. Vice-President, if we were to add the quantum of money about which we are talking in respect of the squandering and frittering away of moneys that could be allocated to the poor and the underprivileged, then we are not really serious about sustainable living, we are not serious about sustainable development and growth. It appears to me that our policies in respect of sustainable development are misplaced.

Mr. Vice-President, the hon. Minister of Finance whilst addressing the greater Tunapuna Chamber of Industry and Commerce last week indicated that he was

very serious about accountability, that he was intending to ensure that those who have frittered away the country's expenses and allocations will be brought to some form of justice, but I would also like to draw reference in respect of asking whether any Minister—be it the Minister of Finance, or any other Minister—is not subject to the Central Tenders Board rules. We know of a consultancy contract that has been awarded in respect of the review of schools, the SEMP schools. I certainly do not know that that has gone out to a competitive bid. We know of a review on the overpass at Uriah Butler Highway. We know now, even as of yesterday, of a review in respect of audited accounts of the NWRHA. How did these firms come to be awarded these contracts? We must ensure that money for the people must go towards policies; that we must take great pains to ensure sustainable growth and development, and that the participation of people is very important in respect of the development of the country.

Mr. Vice-President: Senators, let us try to have some order. We are having too much feedback and people are being disturbed, so let us have silence when Senators are speaking.

Sen. D. Outridge: Thank you, Mr. Vice-President. I have mentioned a slew of causes and I want to suggest that the Government take these on board when reviewing their policy, or when looking at new policy, or when determining policy in respect of sustainable development. Participation and involvement of people are critical. It is critical that they know they represent people and that we ensure that whatever we do in respect of those policies will impact upon generations and generations of our society.

I would like to suggest that in looking at sustaining and protecting our environment that we consider using the Green Fund. I have read recently that \$21 million has been made available from the Green Fund and that we use this Green Fund to create employment.

Mr. Vice-President, we notice every single dry season what happens on our hills. I see no reason why we cannot use some of that Fund in respect of creating employment for people by hiring fire crews, and, as soon as the fires are detected over the dry season, they can be dealt with effectively and efficiently and during the rainy season, we would ensure the sustainable growth of our hills by using the same crews for reforestation. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Vice-President, I want to suggest that we have frittered away billions of dollars of our people's money and we look towards providing some form of dole

Sustainable Growth (Government's Policy)
[SEN. OUTRIDGE]

Tuesday, July 03, 2001

system, as they have in other countries, so that the poor and the underprivileged can access funds once they qualify for it. What that would also do is that that money will be spent here in Trinidad and Tobago and our manufacturers would be able to provide the products and services to these people and, therefore, we would be creating jobs. We will be helping our own local industries, we will not be sending the money away with Birk Hillman abroad and all over the place like most of our foreign consultants. And whilst I am at it, I have to say that our local consultants stand their own anywhere in the world, and that when our local consultants stand up for sustainable development and say: "Hey, what are you doing?" We do not say that you are sore losers.

I think the Joint Consultative Council which represents most of the construction industry's professionals and businessmen in the manufacturing sector were vindicated when they said many years ago you are wasting on these foreign consultants. They do not know what they are doing. [*Desk thumping*]

I want to say, in closing, that it is quite important that we have Motions like these that we can debate all the issues, that we can look at ourselves and ask ourselves what we are doing. Are we just looking at policies in books and several documents and so forth, and not implementing any of them? The practice of policy is not indicating that we are following any of these documents, consultations, or anything that anybody is telling us. It is all theory, it is not practice. We must ensure that we develop policies that we can implement. Policies in respect of economic, social, security, environmental, government planning. We must ensure that we develop a process that we can be able to implement.

Remember, Mr. Vice-President, the Motion is about involving citizens in the planning and development of the country and I commend Sen. Prof. Julian Kenny for bringing this Motion forward.

Thank you very much.

Sen. Michael Als: Mr. Vice-President, I rise on another occasion in this honourable Senate to speak on a very critical Motion brought by our very learned and accomplished friend, Sen. Prof. Kenny.

3.35 p.m.

The crux of his Motion really addresses something that is more than fundamental because without growth there is no development, and without development there is no growth. I am very thankful for the contribution made on the Government's side. Some people thought it was a shopping list that Sen. Dr.

Tim Gopeesingh brought to the Senate, when he elucidated some of the accomplishments of the Government; and some people thought that perhaps, there was little relevance to that list in respect of the Motion that is before us.

The Minister of Finance also spoke with great elucidation, and very frankly too, about some of the critical and complex problems we have in the governance of this republic on the administrative side and the political side. In addition, Sen. Dr. The Hon. Roodal Moonilal gave us, in my view, a comprehensive theoretical—and in addition to the theoretical, he elucidated a number of the policies of the Government, in the contextual framework of how sustainable development is being approached.

Other Senators also spoke and I am glad to have listened to them because for one moment, I must say that the last contributor, I thought, perhaps, he was sitting at a lower level, at the Front Benches, in terms of the Opposition. I thought for one moment that perhaps, he had forgotten his presence as an Independent Senator. That is not to say that his contribution did not have some relevance and some importance. Only if to guard and to guide us, in some respects, to the direction we need to go and why we need to go there.

Before I make my contribution on this very critical Motion, by our good friend, I want to make a point in this Senate. I have been here for a few sittings and what I have observed about the staff in this place, whether it is Miss Cox and her team or the Marshal, is that they do their job with such efficiency and such elegance that I am really certain that if other sectors of the public service attended to their duties in the same manner, we would have an exceedingly well-oiled machine in this country. [*Applause*]

Sustainable development is also about work; it is also about attitudes; it is also about government and involvement; it is also about how people are involved in the process for sustainable development. I am a practitioner myself. In fact, I am certainly more of a developmentalist than a politician and in that context I have been involved for many years in work that is quite related to how people and communities can move forward in order to be able to make their own lives more relevant and perhaps, fundamentally more relevant.

I want to pay some attention—because sometimes we miss it; sometimes we do not see it; sometimes it is before our eyes; sometimes we do not understand that the proof of the pudding is in the eating; not in the smelling, not in the sighting, not even in the cooking. The proof of the pudding is in the eating and we cannot ignore that; we cannot deny that in spite of some of the limitations that

Sustainable Growth (Government's Policy)
[SEN. ALS]

Tuesday, July 03, 2001

continue to exist. The Minister of Finance was very clear about some of the problems that we have and you would have noticed clearly, even in this Senate, the attitude of the Government.

We had the Telecommunications Bill here. There were 78 amendments from the other side. What took place with that Bill was that nearly all of those amendments were included when that Bill went to committee. The Telecommunications Bill moved from a Government Bill to a people's Bill because it incorporated the Opposition Senators' and Independent Senators' amendments. I think indicative of that is the policy of the Government. We need to look outside of this House to see the policy of the Government.

One particular area that we need to look at and to be clear about, with no equivocation whatsoever, is the level in this society, within the last six years, that has been giving critical assistance to the development of the people's needs in this country, in the area of training. Not only enabling those institutions that existed before—and some of them I would list—as well as adding over a dozen of them in that short period of time, to those organizations and institutions: State, private and NGOs. I want to list some of them.

Some of them are traditional and many more have been added; and they have added great quality to the lives of thousands of young people in this country. I want to take the time to point some of them out because many of us who live behind gates that are propelled by electricity do not always have an understanding of how the lives of ordinary people are affected. I think it is important to take some note of it.

There is YTEPP, Niherst; COSTAATT; the Extramural department of UWI; Cipriani Labour College; National Skills Development Programme; Servol; the Child Welfare League; the Women's Federation; the Toco Foundation; FundAid; Youth Training Centre; the Small Business Development Company; the National Energy Skills Centre; Roytec; the Trinidad & Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute; the National Centre for Persons with Disabilities; the Caribbean Fisheries Training Development Institute, the Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry; Tidco. [*Laughter*]

You may laugh, but a tremendous amount of training opportunities continue, and I would explain how they go about it.

There are training programmes in various government ministries in which thousands of people are being trained and retrained, as well as in private companies.

The Police Community Youth Groups; the Village Councils, the Rotary Clubs and Lions Clubs and so forth.

A number of young people, in particular, are being interlocked in a whole process initiated and strengthened by this Government, in which training takes people from where they are and tries to carry them to another level. It is interesting because sometimes only legitimate statistics may be able to give us a sense and an understanding—and I want to use some of the organizations—FundAid being one of them.

I can use many, but I am using FundAid. That is a very important institution in this country. It is not always given the credit that it is supposed to be given, or the funding, but the fact is it has touched the lives of hundreds upon hundreds of people, in rural and non-rural communities. These people, as an instance, are not able to interact and link with money directly from the major banking centres, but can get, in the first instance, training, because FundAid does not release its money to a person like that.

We have dozens of persons on the Toco coast who have gone to FundAid and got assistance, but the first pre-requirement is training. The people must have an understanding of business, similar to the Small Business Development Company and then these people are provided with resources and funds to make a better living for themselves.

I want to make another connection and that is in the brilliance of the Prime Minister to remove the URP programme to another type of programme, the ATP Programme. I can tell people quite frankly that that programme was a sad programme in many respects and it inflicted a tremendous amount of punishment on ordinary people because in real terms nothing much was accomplished.

3.45 p.m.

Mr. Vice-President, I can tell people quite frankly that the inheritance of that programme, previously, was a sad one in many respects which inflicted a tremendous amount of punishment on ordinary people. In real terms, nothing much was accomplished and a very sad attitude was developed whereby people expected to receive money without working. Today, the Adult Training Programme (ATP) is involving a training programme with hundreds of people who have to study, on one hand, and work on the other, and bring themselves to a point where they begin to understand that they are no longer part of the “gimme-gimme” gang, which is a sad gang, because you cannot be working and not

working. When you go to work you are supposed to work. That is a cardinal principle. The “gimme gimme” gang attitude—the dependency syndrome that has been very chronic in this country—has, principally, afflicted a lot of poor people. Today, the programme has been revised and is part of the sustainable development effort of the Government to bring ordinary people into the mainstream where they can gain more skills and equip themselves later on without having to depend on the State. [*Desk thumping*]

I make the point that when you are looking at development and the painful exercise where the poor and government policy, all over the world, lag behind social reality, that is a fact. But we cannot deny that this Government has been making efforts—some very important efforts—in respect of beginning to address the chronic problems that are confronted by poor people.

Mr. Vice-President, I come from a rural community, and I still live there in spite of the difficulties of having to come to this place. During the election campaign recently in December, I walked hundreds of miles, to be very honest, meeting hundreds of people. When I went into some areas of the constituency I saw not five, 10 or 15 years of neglect—not even 30 years as is common for some people to say—I saw an endemic condition where people from generation to generation were meeting certain situations which had to be resolved if they are to move forward. I could talk about areas such as KP Lands. That is an area in which the Land Settlements Agency was attempting to regulate housing, but for 22 years those people did not have a road. There was one standpipe for 966 households. It was a little different in places like Bois-Bandé—no relevance to what people may perceive—an area where these trees grew in abundance. There are none of them there now, but that is what the place is called. That is the northeastern settlement where hundreds of people also took the opportunity to live. In that entire area it had one standpipe for 1,006 households, precious little electricity and none of the roads were in any order. Today, of course, if you take the opportunity to go into KP Lands there is a major water project going on, most of the roads, not all, have been properly paved, and, similarly, in Bois-Bandé.

Mr. Vice-President, those are rural communities where people do not demand much of the State. Although they, indeed, should make more demands, they live with certain expectations that directly touch their lives as well as the policy of the Government. When we look at the question of primary health care, sustainable livelihood, early childhood care, vocational training as well as the human poverty index, we may dismiss it if we want, but the fact is that in 1997 Trinidad and Tobago ranked in this new index among 78 countries, as number one. In 1998 it

repeated that feat and in 1999 came second to Barbados. These are not imaginary indicators. These are not indicators that suggest that we should believe that somebody else did it. These indicators came directly from the United Nations.

Mr. Vice-President, this, therefore, places Trinidad and Tobago in a particular category where, clearly, there was a movement. That is why I say the proof of the pudding is not just in the smelling, but in the eating. If the Government has not put all its various policy programmes into one particular document, or into one shopping area—into a mall—it is because there are so many and some of them are doing so well that some people are not able to identify the fact that they are taking place in this Republic and they want to see it in one place. Shops do not have to be in one place; activities of Government do not have to be in one place. That is why I bring the question of teacher quality.

Mr. Vice-President, very often when you go to one secondary school, as you enter the school the security guard says, “All yuh go inside nah”. In another school they stop you, ask your name, who you want to see and sometimes, why you want to see that person. In the second school you do not see children running all about the place; you do not see children on the compound; all of them are in their classes. In the first school children are running all over the place; many of the teachers are not in their positions, and the question is school management and leadership. That is what the question is. Why is it that in some schools a certain principal can have all his teachers and students in a particular order and when you pull him out of the system and another principal or manager is placed there, the whole system breaks down? Why is it? The point that I am raising in sustainable development is that people also have to accept responsibility for themselves whether they have or do not have responsibilities. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Vice-President, very often, even in the process of the conceptual question here, where in this country, as I have said before, it is hard to govern, easy to rule, the question that we have to face is that individuals in their communities have to pay attention to themselves. Recently, I brought a question with respect to that same constituency in Valencia. We put out a document asking people to indicate in what areas they wanted training. The need and hunger was so great that in a matter of two weeks over 560 residents applied to be trained: 338 in computer literacy alone, in a small community. We started the programmes. The first one was on tour guiding. What took place? We thought that the 24 people who would come for the training would have been men. What took place? Twenty-one of them were women. There is a serious social phenomenon taking place in this country. Only three men registered for the training programme. The rest were

female. The same thing is applicable to the common entrance, CXC, A'levels and at the university levels. The phenomenon is that the females in our country are taking sustainable development seriously. They are taking it because they are facing a conscious reality and we do have a problem in this Republic. The Government cannot run from it, the society cannot run from it, and people cannot run from it. The young males in our country are not as tuned as they should be even when the opportunities arise. One of the phenomena is that we have to attempt, in the process of sustainable development, to touch the spirit of those young men to bring them into the area where they can understand that they must take responsibility for themselves.

3.55 p.m.

In sustainable development, some of the figures as an example in the labour force according to the reports of the Central Bank, as well as this information correlated by the Ministry of Finance, unskilled levels of workers between 15 and 24 years of age, in 1996, were classified as elementary occupations. Largely speaking, unskilled persons were 26.2 per cent. Through the various efforts and energies of this Government, as well as those of other sectors, it went down to 21.4 per cent. In one year, it went down. These are not imaginary statistics, but real and valid statistics.

In respect of the question of that same aircraft and related occupations, it was 20.1 per cent. The fact is that it went to 23.1 per cent in respect of those workers moving at a higher level in the skills area.

In services and workers in shops where there was a definite growth and you needed to have more training capacity, one year later, in 1996, it moved from 20 to 24.7 per cent.

In respect of clerks, I want to make a point in the Senate that is a personal matter. One of my daughters had completed her secondary education both at O' and A'levels. She has four subjects at A'level and wanted to work. We saw a notice in the newspaper where they wanted a cashier. I told her to get that work because at that time, I thought she needed to do something. She went to the capital training centre. They selected her at one of the food outlets. She was provided with the sumptuous salary of \$850 and had to work from 7 to 5 with a half an hour break. It was stunning, but I told her to go and gain the experience. Subsequently, she left and went to another institution to continue her studies. It struck me that there was a young woman in our country with her O'level and four A'level subjects, qualified to get a job as a cashier.

Later on, when you look at the newspapers, you would see that if people want to work at those outlets, they must have Maths, English, computer studies and a number of things. In the country, the qualification requirements are increasing for those persons whom you might just dismiss as people serving chicken and chips. The demand for the more intelligent worker based on the policies of this Government to have an intelligent working force, is clearly evident. Of course, there is need for greater remuneration. There is no doubt about it. I am not just speaking as a former trade unionist. As a social activist, clearly, people need to be paid better for some of the jobs that they are doing in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. That is obvious.

Tech clerks moved from 15.5 to 26 per cent in 1997. Technicians—this is extremely important—and associate professionals, in the same year 1996, went from 7.7 per cent to nearly 100 per cent better at 13.2 per cent in the following year. That is indicative of the activities of the Government in the context of training and how it is impacting on people in this country.

In addition, we have to look at some other factors. The International Labour Organization (ILO) base line survey in 1996, when I raised the question of FundAid, indicated that only 3 to 4 per cent of the people in this country under 25 years were in micro business. The majority of them, about 68.8 per cent were between 25 and 44 years. Why is this statistic important? It is important because a number of people in this country recognize that they can no longer depend on the government alone for their livelihood. Many of them are taking up small and important business opportunities assisted by a policy of this Government to encourage micro business. The State alone cannot do it. Therefore, as a consequence, those training opportunities are expanding and more and more people are moving towards getting involved.

The point I am emphasizing is that when you look at the Government as the only focus for development, we are in serious trouble. The Government cannot do it alone. That is why so many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Servol, the Women's Federation, and the Child Welfare League are in a particular sector doing the same thing assisted by the State. Among them and other organizations, annually, they get nearly \$30 million. They also get assistance in training what are classified as "underprivileged" young people in a nationwide programme, where they are involved in skills development. Believe me, if the State had to take on that, it would cost over \$150 million.

The NGOs are co-partners in the process of social development as well as sustainable development. I think we need to pay attention to that because

sometimes people take the NGOs for granted. They provide an enormous opportunity not only for training, but also for guidance in teenaged sexuality. The majority of that work is done by the NGOs. When you see the Government's policy, not in a one-stop-shop, but in the context of where it is going and growing, you would understand that this particular consciousness developing in Trinidad and Tobago about people participating, needs to be recognized. I want to pay some attention to that.

Very often people say that only the Government is doing or planning this or that. It is a long time that that shift has taken place in the country, in spite of the Government. I think previous to 1995, it was not recognized. The government was oblivious to the fact that it needed to support NGOs, the private sector and individuals in that whole development of identifying the fact that all of us have to take particular steps to move the country forward. It is very indicative in that quest for identifying where that whole movement was leading to—the NGOs, private sector and the State—of what is actually taking place. That is why I say that the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

There is a social pupation going on in our country. Some people want to get the butterfly ready-made; some people want to get social development in a plastic bag, well wrapped with ribbon and presented at their doors. It does not happen so and it has never happened so anywhere. In the process of this pupation, there is a mushrooming of community organizations all over the place.

That is why the police can go into communities and have so many community police youth groups. There is a response by the young people to which many people are not paying attention. The Government has identified it, that is why it has strengthened programmes like that and given very clear indicators. As they mushroom, it is the State through its very enlightened policy, that is moving towards identifying with those groups that are prepared to face the responsibilities in their development and move forward. If people were not paying attention to it before, it is taking place right under our noses.

The Government has been looking at a number of important measures. When Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh listed the whole structure of the Government's achievements, one was related to the Common Entrance Examination. What is the connection between the Common Entrance Examination and sustainable development? I will tell you. If this Government that is now in office did not take that decision—and many people who are *status quo* bound felt that the Common Entrance Examination should continue—there were no schools, what did we do? What happened?

There was an approach which required infrastructural development. In some connection there is a relation between sustainable development and infrastructural development. Why is this? If you left those young people outside the school system and did not provide schools for them, what would have been their fate? When you look at it, this Government has rescued thousands of young people and placed them in an environment where they have to pay some attention to their school work.

In this country, very often, too many parents simply abdicate this responsibility to their children and feel that everything must be done by the schoolteacher, from the time they leave to the time they come back home. Some parents pay no attention to homework and where the children are going and then, sometimes, blame the schoolteacher in this particular environment. Sustainable development requires not a theoretical base, but parents in the country to take a particular interest in the welfare of their children outside of just sending them to school. Many parents say it is the Government. Sometimes something breaks down in a school and they blame the Ministry of Education. The Minister of Education is not there. The persons who have to manage it are the manager of the school, security and the principal. The Government is only able to do part of that work. The majority of parents, teachers and the Parent-Teacher Associations do a good job in this country. The majority of parents pay attention to their children. Some of them are delinquent and as a consequence, they place a burden on the society. The response of the Government was to provide infrastructure; put the children in the institution and link a development process that would have given them greater opportunity.

You cannot say that the Government does not have a policy. It is to educate the young children in the country and find the schools. As we speak, ten more secondary schools would be going up in the country because there is a need for it. The development of the country requires it in the same way when 24 primary schools were built, one of which was in Toco. For 100 years the Anglican School was not repaired. Two years ago, a three storey building went up in Toco. People felt that in Toco there was no need for a school like that. There was a struggle to get that school built. Today those young people are able to get a whole new vision in terms of their operation. There are many things to which people are not paying attention.

It is this Government that introduced the distance learning education system in this country, that has touched thousands of young people who today, can go on the Internet. I can tell you the second distance learning centre was set up in Toco.

People asked, why was that being set up in Toco? The fact is that over 500 young people can go to it. You can dismiss it if you want. We can say distance learning has nothing to do with the question of social development or the question of this particular Motion. Now thousands of young people are able to go on the Internet and use the computers in the schools. It is a dramatic intervention in the lives of people. We have to face it. It is the policy of the Government to provide computers in the schools. Before that, nobody thought about it. Nobody thought that poor people's children needed computers because that was a bourgeois thing for a few selected young people in their homes. Today, masses of young people are involved in the training. That is policy implementation.

4.10 p.m.

One has to face the fact that it has impacted on the lives of the people of this country. Social development and sustainable development are directly related to training, directly related to people being able to elevate and see themselves with self-esteem and an understanding, and there are problems. I am not afraid to run away from some of the problems. The Minister of Finance was very frank. In fact, when he was speaking, I said to myself, how is he so frank? It is the policy of the Government to be able to speak not only with elucidation, because we all do that, but also to speak with policy formation when one is making one's presentation and we do that also. And, therefore, Independent and other Senators need to listen when we speak on this side, and not only listen, but to hear. *[Interruption]* It is critical, therefore, that we are pointing out some of the achievements on the question of sustainable development.

I have pointed to some of the difficulties, particularly with the young men in our country. I have also indicated that it is not only the Government that is responsible. Some people are very quick to blame the Government—to use an example that I previously spoke about, the Adult Training Programme (ATP). Prior to now, every week one would have seen in the newspapers hundreds of people protesting here and there. Today, what is the demand? The demand is that a person coming into that system has to be prepared to accept that they must go through a process of training. What has happened as a result? The majority of the young men who were in the programme pulled out. Why did they pull out? Because they have to sit and learn to sew a shirt to become tailors, to learn to make wines, to do food preservation, to learn to be mechanics, to be plumbers. The programme is moving in that particular direction.

What is happening? More than 75 per cent of the persons in the programme are now females. It is a problem, and the state has to face it; the society has to

face it; the community has to face it; everywhere you go: the church groups, the village councils and the youth groups. Very often there is a youth group with 50 young persons and 45 of them are female and the chairman of the group is a male. Somehow in the process of socialization, one still seems to insist that a male be there while the majority of the work is done by whom? We see it on the Opposition Benches I am also informed.

When we are looking at how the sustainable development process is taking place and how the training is going on, I want to make two important points. What is emerging in the pupation of that policy is that there is a triangular social development taking place in the country. It may not satisfy all of us and that triangular formulation is directly related to the citizen, the community and the State. That is where that triangular formulation is emerging. It is emerging in the context of the things people are doing at the NGO level, at the individual level, the private sector level and at the state level. That pupation or that social development is something we have to confront because it is not a policy that the Government could define on its own. If something is emerging it has to be brought to the attention of the State.

The social scientists in our midst have sometimes to be able to provide a focus for it, but it is taking place and while it is taking place, the Government itself is sending a whole number of signals that one needs to pay attention to. Some people who are in opposition indicate that the Government is not sufficiently sensitive. The truth is that the proof of the pudding is in the eating and sometimes when one looks at it, one may be able to look at that criticism and say, perhaps it is true. But when one examines the policy formulation, the implementation programmes, one sees that everywhere in our social development, the indicators are on the rise. When something is insensitive it is on the decrease and it is not on the decrease in this country. Every single one of the social indicators is showing clearly that the Government is very sensitive to many of the criticisms that are levelled at it.

I come back again to the contribution made by the Minister of Finance and the audacity with which he spoke in this Senate. One should recognize how clear he was. He could not have come to speak on his own behalf. He spoke on behalf of the Cabinet of this country, he spoke on behalf of the discussions that take place there, and it is important for us to recognize that all of us have a recognition factor to come to terms with: a sensible and sensitive Government. That is what you have.

I want to point out that on the question of the Motion brought by Sen. Prof. Kenny there is another very important matter, which is related to the environment.

Sustainable Growth (Government's Policy)
[SEN. ALS]

Tuesday, July 03, 2001

I wanted to raise this question when I would be speaking next Tuesday on the Planning and Development of Land Bill—[*Interruption*] that is very alive. It is more alive than you think.

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

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

Question put and agreed to.

Sen. M. Als: Mr. Vice-President, there are many people who are troubled by the condition of the environment in this country, and I am one of them. I say not enough is being done at varying levels to address some of the critical questions that face us in the environment. Recently, a Senator indicated that a particular agency was a flunkey agency; that it appeared to have had no jurisdictional power arising out of an issue in which an award was to be presented to a particular group.

I had the experience myself of being telephoned and informed last year that I was going to be receiving a Green Leaf award as an individual in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Then, a few days before the Award Ceremony, I was called and told I was no longer the individual who was going to be receiving the award, and that they would be giving the award to an individual that had not been so high profile. As a consequence, the committee had decided that they would give it to somebody at another level. I was amused, as I am in these matters. I never take them too seriously. But I did not at the time believe that on account of that being done, that the agency that had suggested that I be given this award was a flunkey. I did not think so then and I do not think so now.

Absolutely too many people are on the back of the EMA. We are here in the Senate and it is important to make it in the context of the very sustainable development we are talking about. The previous Government which was running this country for years and years did nothing about it. In fact, when the EMA had to come to Trinidad and Tobago it was international agencies that demanded that if we did not have it, we would not be able to be facilitated loans and so forth. That is how the EMA came into this Republic. That is not an indigenous suggestion. It was not something that came from the bowels of the political leadership then, although people were making demands about it. It came as a result of external agencies asking for it. Similarly, the EMA is a perpetuating organization because we should have had that EMA 10 years ago in this country and we would not be discussing now what we are discussing about the EMA today.

If the political leadership was responsible, if it was sensitive, if it had ideas, if it understood where it should have been going—because it does not even know where it is coming from—it would have been able to establish that EMA in this country. Some of those difficulties we are talking about. You do not give an agency that has such tremendous responsibilities the kind of pressure that the people who should know better seem to want to place at its door. It is not that the difficulties do not exist, not that everything that the environmental movement does is correct. It is not that everything the EMA does is correct, it is not that everything even the Government does is correct. I make that statement very openly because we know that if we are criticized when that criticism comes our way we correct our ways, and there is evidence in this Senate to show that.

There are three Bills that came here. On the three occasions people criticized the Bills. They said it was not good. We were wrong and said that these contributions were better than the ones we brought. With our intelligence and wisdom, and our participatory capacity to be able to identify the fact that if one gets a contribution that is all-inclusive, one brings it into the system for the benefit of the people. That is the nature and the character of the Government we have now. Get it right! That is the system we have now. When one is talking, we must not be afraid to make particular comments because those comments in terms of sustainable development where everybody has to make a contribution—the state, non-state, private individual, communities—the state has to take all those factors into consideration because everybody in the Republic has a say in the system.

4.25 p.m.

In the system that we have now—criticism for criticism's sake—we need to stop. We need to stop criticizing some of those useful agencies and make statements that will help them up. There are two kinds of people in society today in Trinidad and Tobago—those who help you up and those, in spite of all their protestations and talk, who help you down. We must know the difference between those people who want to help this country up, carry it forward, who want to identify with the things that are good and reasonable and we need to be able to understand.

Mr. Vice-President, when the Motion and the question of sustainable development came, I thought I would add a particular kind of focus to it. I would add that focus because, fearlessly, this Government has been committing itself to the progressive development of this country. Nowhere in the world is anything perfect, but we have come very close, at the performance level, to being perfect in

comparison to what took place in the past. That is no suggestion that we are judging our parameters on the basis of the past. We have gone way beyond that. That is why, on this side, we are able to appoint, as minister, a sister from Tobago, to do the work of this country, giving her those responsibilities, which she will do with remarkable capacity. In the same way, we are able to do it with another young sister, who is a minister in the Ministry of Food Production and Marine Resources. She, too, will be able to perform.

What was taking place before? Women on the other side were not being allowed to move forward. They were in a kitchen cabinet. Sustainable development was not even understood. That is why we are also able to have a Deputy Attorney General—another young woman. What are they telling me about? Do they think I can miss out the hon. Sen. Dr. Daphne Phillips?

Those women are giving a capacity to the Government that no government ever had before. That is part of sustainable development. That is part of the growth and development of our society. It is also part of how people need to begin to perceive and see. [*Interruption*] You wish me to do what, Madam? [*Interruption*] I think you want to engage me in an issue that I would not engage you in. We are much wiser on this side.

The Leader of the Opposition was attempting to become the Prime Minister and seek some prerogative that he did not possess before, or he had before and lost and wanted to get back. We were able to deal with that in a reasonable manner. Of course, it is also something we need to reflect on. It is clearly something that is being handled again. Does this Government run from that issue? It does not run from the issue. You see people want to determine for the Government how it must manage its business. A government has to manage its business on the basis of public opinion. It has to manage its business on the basis of its own capacity, its own interest and the interest of the people. We are, therefore, managing that quite well. Continue observing our business and you would learn many things. You would learn how to conduct your own business.

I know that I have not really touched enough with respect to this Motion. I have been instructed legally to speak for five more minutes, Mr. Vice-President, with your permission, and I want to use my time very seriously.

When communities or societies are moving towards sustainable development, it is not so much trying to produce sustainable jobs. That is not so much the issue today with people who are quite serious about it. They say that you have to create sustainable livelihoods. There is a very big difference. When you are going about

training people, you have to train them in multi skills, so that in rural communities like mine, a woman may be a gardener or she may be a vendor, but where does the emphasis on training go? She learns to make wines. She is taught to sew. She is also taught, if she wants, to do carpentry. It is not so much the question of sustainable jobs, it is the question of a sustainable livelihood. That is why today you will advise young men, not only to have a licence to drive a truck, but to get one to drive a backhoe, also get one to drive a lift. Apply yourself in the context of being able to give yourself a chance whenever the opportunity arises.

This is what the State is doing in its training programmes in this country. We are moving towards sustainable livelihood. It may be a difficult concept for many people: for many of the planners. Many of the people are beginning to understand the issue of sustainable development. The country moves forward when people who are in the know are able to provide information, as in the case of Sen. Dr. The Hon. Roodal Moonilal, who presented from the theoretical side. Without the theory, we do not have practice. Without the application of the practice, the theory does not emerge. So, the criticism made by the previous Senator—I make the point in closing—shows that he clearly misunderstood what was being presented. Apparently, the intellectual sagacity presented was of such a level that, perhaps, it was not fully understood. It is important for us to know, therefore, that all of us need to be able to develop our skills in understanding where the society is going; why it is going there and why this Government has a commitment to the ordinary people of Trinidad and Tobago.

I thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Energy and Energy Industries (Sen. The Hon. Lindsay Gillette): Mr. Vice-President, before moving the adjournment, I wish to inform Senators that at the next sitting, we will deal first, under Government Business, with the Cinematograph and Video Entertainment (Amdt.) Regulations, then we will move into the Planning and Development of Land Bill. That should be a late day next week.

I beg to move that the House do now adjourn to Tuesday, July 10, 2001 at 1.30 p.m.

Mr. Vice-President: Before moving to adjourn the Senate, may I, with your indulgence, make two small observations.

*Adjournment**Tuesday, July 03, 2001*

[MR. VICE-PRESIDENT]

I would like to congratulate our two Senators: Sen. Dr. Jennifer Jones-Kernahan, who has been promoted to a Minister in the Ministry of Food Production and Marine Resources. I take this opportunity to congratulate also, Sen. Jearlean John, the Minister of Transport, who is now the new Minister of Tourism and Tobago Affairs. Congratulations!

I also bring to the attention of hon. Members that our Marshal, Mr. Grantley Dick, will be leaving tomorrow. His last sitting would have been today and I would like, on our behalf, to extend to him our heartfelt thanks. Whilst he was here, he provided excellent service to this Parliament. We want to wish him well in all his future endeavours.

Question put and agreed to.

Senate adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 4.35 p.m.