

*Leave of Absence**Tuesday, January 27, 2004***SENATE***Tuesday, January 27, 2004*

The Senate met at 1.30 p.m.

**PRAYERS**[MADAM PRESIDENT *in the Chair*]**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**Madam President:** Hon. Members, I have granted leave of absence to Senators The Hon. John Jeremie and Martin Joseph from today's sitting of the Senate.

**SENATORS' APPOINTMENT**

**Madam President:** Hon. Members, I have received the following correspondence from His Excellency the President, George Maxwell Richards:

“THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

By His Excellency Professor GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS,  
T.C., C.M.T., Ph.D., President and Commander-in-Chief  
of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

/s/ G. Richards  
President.

TO: MRS. JOAN HACKSHAW-MARSLIN

WHEREAS Senator John Jeremie is incapable of performing his duties as a Senator by reason of his absence from Trinidad and Tobago:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS, President as aforesaid, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, in exercise of the power vested in me by section 44 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, do hereby appoint you, JOAN HACKSHAW-MARSLIN, to be temporarily a member of the Senate, with effect from 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2004 and continuing during the absence from Trinidad and Tobago of the said Senator John Jeremie.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of the  
President of the Republic of Trinidad and  
Tobago at the Office of the President, St.  
Ann's, this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2004.”

*Senators' Appointment*  
[MADAM PRESIDENT]

*Tuesday, January 27, 2004*

“THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

By His Excellency Professor GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS,  
T.C., C.M.T., Ph.D., President and Commander-in-Chief of  
the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

/s/ G. Richards  
President.

TO: MRS. MAGNA WILLIAMS-SMITH

WHEREAS Senator Martin Joseph is incapable of performing his duties as a Senator by reason of his absence from Trinidad and Tobago:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS, President as aforesaid, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, in exercise of the power vested in me by section 44 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, do hereby appoint you, MAGNA WILLIAMS-SMITH, to be temporarily a member of the Senate, with effect from 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2004 and continuing during the absence from Trinidad and Tobago of the said Senator Martin Joseph.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago at the Office of the President, St. Ann's, this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of January, 2004.”

**OATH OF ALLEGIANCE**

*Senators Joan Hackshaw-Marshlin and Magna Williams-Smith took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance as required by law.*

**NATIONAL INSURANCE (AMDT.) BILL**

Bill to amend the National Insurance Act, Chap. 32:01, brought from the House of Representatives, [*The Minister in the Ministry of Finance*]; read the first time.

**FINANCE (SUPPLEMENTATION AND VARIATION OF**

**APPROPRIATION) (2003) BILL**

Bill to supplement and vary the appropriation of the sum the issue of which was authorized by the Appropriation Act, 2003, [*The Minister in the Ministry of Finance*]; read the first time.

*Motion made*, That the next stage be taken later in the proceedings. [*Hon. C. Enill*]

*Question put and agreed to.*

**FINANCE BILL**

Bill to amend the Central Tenders Board Ordinance, the Income Tax Act, the Corporation Tax Act, the Petroleum Taxes Act, the Customs Act, the Finance Act, 1987, the Miscellaneous Taxes Act, the Stamp Duty Act, the Value Added Tax Act and for matters incidental thereto, [*The Minister in the Ministry of Finance*]; read the first time.

**PAPERS LAID**

1. Report of the Statutory Authorities Service Commission for the period October 01, 2002 to September 30, 2003. [*The Minister of Public Administration and Information (Sen. The Hon. Dr. Lenny Saith)*]
2. Report of the Eastern Regional Health Authority for the year 2002/2003. [*Sen. The Hon. Dr. L. Saith*]

**ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

**Programme for Upgrading Road Efficiency  
(Revision Details)**

- 20. Sen. Wade Mark** asked the hon. Minister of Works and Transport:
- A. Could the Minister state whether the Programme for Upgrading Road Efficiency (PURE) has undergone any revision?
  - B. If the answer to (A) is in the affirmative, could he provide the necessary details of the revision done as follows:
    - (i) By whom was this new value authorized?
    - (ii) The total amount involved in revision?
    - (iii) When was it authorized?

**The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Franklin Khan):** Madam President, the Programme for Upgrading Road Efficiency (PURE) did not undergo any revisions per se. Cabinet authorized the programme on June 06, 2002 in the sum of TT \$250 million and on April 10, 2003 Cabinet approved an extension of the programme in the sum of \$45 million, giving a total cost for the entire programme of TT \$295 million.

In that regard, Madam President, part B is no longer relevant to the answer.

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

**Programme for Upgrading Road Efficiency  
(Details of Sums Owed)**

- 22.** Could the Minister of Works and Transport provide details on:
- (i) The outstanding sums of moneys owed to contractors for works done under the PURE Programme as at October 31, 2003?
  - (ii) The breakdown of the sums owed and to whom?

**Sen. Wade Mark:** The Minister has indicated to me, Madam President, that he would like a deferral to question No. 22 for one week.

**Madam President:** You have agreed to this?

**Hon. F. Khan:** Yes, Madam President.

*Question, by leave, deferred.*

**Programme for Upgrading Road Efficiency  
(Role of Individuals and Institutions)**

- 23. Sen. Wade Mark** asked the hon. Minister of Works and Transport:
- A. Could the Minister indicate to this Senate the precise role, if any, to be undertaken by the following institutions and individuals in the PURE Programme:
    - (i) National Insurance Property Development Company (NIPDEC)?
    - (ii) Planning Associates (a firm of consultants)?
    - (iii) Ministry of Works and Transport?
    - (iv) The parliamentary representatives of the areas where the programme is being undertaken?
  - B. If the firm of Planning Associates has a role in the PURE Programme, could the Minister state:
    - (i) Whether the firm has a contract to validate its involvement in the programme?
    - (ii) What is the value of the contract?

**The Minister of Works and Transport (Hon. Franklin Khan):** Madam President, I wish to reply to question No. 23 as posed by Sen. Wade Mark.

In response to part A, the precise role to be undertaken by the institutions and individuals is detailed below.

The National Insurance Property Development Company (Nipdec), its roles and functions are as follows:

- (a) To recruit additional experienced field supervisory personnel and expertise to carry out its duties under the Memorandum of Understanding;
- (b) To raise the prerequisite financing for the works;
- (c) To provide project management services;
- (d) To effect payments;
- (e) To provide an audited statement of expenditure from a recognized firm of auditors at the end of the programme;
- (f) To procure design services;
- (g) To ensure quality assurance and control mechanisms are in place during the execution of the programme;
- (h) To procure two portable scales;
- (i) To provide fortnightly status reports and monthly forecast of works and expenditure;
- (j) To provide detailed professional and supervisory manpower schedules required for the execution of the overall programme; and
- (k) To indemnify the employer, that is the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, against all claims, demands, actions, suits and any legal liability arising from the services to be provided.

The answer to part B—the role of Planning Associates, which is a firm of consultants, their roles were as follows:

- (a) To review scope of works of the individual projects;
- (b) To review tender documents including technical specification and bill of quantities;
- (c) Design and/or supervise rehabilitation and paving works;
- (d) To review contractor's strategy and work programme;
- (e) To perform site inspection for construction activities;

- (f) To supervise specification compliance;
- (g) To approve completed works;
- (h) To undertake site measurements and surveys;
- (i) To prepare interim payment certificates;
- (j) To verify issues of safety and operations;
- (k) To advise on contractor's work plan, claims, extensions, et cetera;
- (l) To advise or respond to employer's requests;
- (m) To interpret contract documents for claims, extensions, et cetera; and

To prepare progress and other reports.

The role of the Ministry of Works and Transport was as follows:

- (a) To coordinate the programme in accordance with its overall plans for upgrading roads;
- (b) To identify the roads to be repaired, provide a scope of works for the projects and provide appropriate draft contract documents for review by Nipdec;
- (c) To supplement the list of prequalified or registered contractors for works in accordance with Nipdec's tender procedures;
- (d) To ratify the recommendation of Nipdec regarding the award of contracts; and
- (e) To provide assistance, approvals, letters of comfort guarantees as shall be reasonably required by Nipdec for carrying out its duties under the Memorandum of Understanding.

In response to the role of the parliamentary representatives: the parliamentary representatives requested and/or submitted projects to be undertaken in the areas which they represented.

In response to section B of the question, the firm Planning Associates Limited had a contract to validate its involvement in the programme. The estimated value of the contract is \$6,769,292 VAT inclusive.

I thank you, Madam President.

**Sen. Mark:** Madam President, could the hon. Minister indicate what is the role of the Ministry of Works and Transport in roadworks and road repairs? Is it purely a facilitating role at this time?

**Hon. F. Khan:** Madam President, the role of the Ministry of Works and Transport is clear, that we are a delivery Ministry and directly responsible for providing a modern and proper infrastructure as it relates to highways in this country. However, from time to time, from a project management point of view, it may be appropriate and cost-effective to procure consultants and/or third-party agencies, for example, Nipdec and/or MTS at times; Tidco, you guys used Tidco quite a lot, for what reason I do not know. Nipdec is a reputable project management firm and we have been using Nipdec from time to time in the execution of some of our works, but the responsibility for the Ministry of Works and Transport as a delivery Ministry to provide the infrastructure is obviously clear to all of us.

**Sen. Mark:** Madam President, could the hon. Minister indicate how many parliamentary representatives were involved and which constituencies? Could you identify as it relates to the programme?

**Hon. F. Khan:** I am unable to do it at this time, but, consistent with PNM policy, we normally communicate with all Members of Parliament to make their suggestions. [*Crosstalk*] [*Laughter*] To laugh, I mean, I was reading the *Hansard* and the hon. Winston Dookeran was complimenting the Minister of Public Utilities and the Environment for receiving letters indicating where you have or do not have electricity. We have a track record to so justify.

**Sen. Mark:** Madam President, could I ask the hon. Minister whether there is any intention on the part of the Government to privatize the roadworks repair function that is currently or traditionally undertaken by his Ministry in the near future?

**Hon. F. Khan:** That is a totally new question, Madam President, which I am willing to answer once you ask it in the proper way.

#### WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*The following question was asked by Sen. Robin Montano:*

#### **State Enterprises (Advertising Budget Details)**

5. A. Could the hon. Minister of Finance give for the year 2002 and up to the current month in the year 2003, the amount of monies spent by all state enterprises:

- (i) for advertising in the print media;
  - (ii) to CCN TV6 and Trinidad and Tobago Television (TTT) for advertising?
- B. Could the Minister state the names of the newspapers in which the advertisements were placed and the amount of monies paid to each newspaper for the said period?

*Vide end of sitting for written answer.*

*The following question was asked by Sen. Wade Mark:*

**National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited  
(Details of Loans Recipients)**

7. Could the hon. Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development provide the Senate with the:

- (i) names;
- (ii) addresses; and
- (iii) occupations of all recipients of loans transactions issued by the National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited since its launch in August 2002 to November 30, 2003?

*Vide end of sitting for written answer.*

**ARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS**

**The Minister of Public Administration and Information (Sen. The Hon. Dr. Lenny Saith):** Madam President, I seek the leave of the Senate to deal with “Government Business” instead of “Private Business” at this sitting.

*Agreed to.*

**FINANCE (SUPPLEMENTATION AND VARIATION OF  
APPROPRIATION) (2003) BILL**

**The Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Sen. The Hon. Conrad Enill):** Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I beg to move,

That a Bill to vary the appropriation of the sum the issue of which was authorized by the appropriation Act, 2003 be now read a second time.

Madam President, this is a money Bill and was approved in the other place on January 23, 2004. The Bill provides for the supplementation of the appropriation under Head 18, Ministry of Finance, for fiscal year 2003 in the sum of



\$474,620,300. This supplementation is required to bring to account debits raised against the Treasury Suspense Account in respect of Trinidad and Tobago's financial obligations to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It should be noted that this transaction will not negatively affect our fiscal balance. The IMF has stated that transactions with the international monetary organizations, such as the IMF, are recorded as transactions of monetary authorities forming part of the financial institutions sector and not as transactions of the Government.

Madam President, the Bill also provides for the variation of the 2003 appropriation in the sum of \$256,514,000 under six heads of expenditure as follows. From Head of Expenditure 22—Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation—\$80,314,000; from Head 26—Ministry of Education—\$117,500,000; from Ministry of Works and Transport, Head 43—\$28,700,000; from Head 56—Ministry of Social Development—\$30 million. These were allocated from these particular Heads and they went to Head of Expenditure 28—Ministry of Health—\$33,514,000 and Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, \$223 million.

The augmentation of funds for the above Heads was undertaken for the following specific reasons. Under Head 28, Ministry of Health, this was required to meet inescapable contractual obligations with respect to certain infrastructural projects which could not have been suspended without incurring significant cost overruns, and also meeting deadlines which were part of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Health Sector Reform Programme.

Under Head 40, Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, this was required to facilitate the retirement of Treasury Deposit Warrants with respect to the following:

1. Payment made to National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited and the United Independent Petroleum Company Limited (UNIPET) for shortfalls in subsidy related to the sale of petroleum products for fiscal year 2003; and
2. The partial settlement of debt owed to Petrotrin by the National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited, which was estimated at \$686 million and this excludes interest as at May 2003. The debt is in respect of deficit on payments to Petrotrin arising from high petroleum prices.

Madam President, in order to do this, savings were available under a number of Heads of Expenditure for the following reasons. Insofar as the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation was concerned:

1. In fiscal 2003, funds were provided to meet costs for the recruitment of 1,320 persons to increase the strength of the military and paramilitary forces of the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation. However, during the fiscal period only 850 persons or 64 per cent were, in fact, recruited.
2. The non-payment of arrears of increments owed to officers in the police, prison and fire services who have either migrated, died or are involved in disciplinary proceedings;
3. The process with regard to recruitment of the technical personnel for the communication network unit of the Ministry which was not completed during that fiscal year; and
4. Restructuring of the strategic services agencies which was also not completed during the year, as the head of that particular agency was only appointed in June 2003.

Under the Ministry of Education, the full settlement of arrears of increments to secondary school teachers was not achieved because of the following:

- (i) Outstanding queries with respect to statements;
  - (ii) Non-receipt of statement by officers from other ministries;
  - (iii) Awaiting applications from retirees; and
  - (iv) Legal documents required in certain cases were not received.
2. Upgrading of primary school teachers was not undertaken in the fiscal year as anticipated;
  3. The primary school computerization project phase IV was not completed because of the non-finalization of security and supporting infrastructure in some schools;
  4. The secondary schools book grant credit card initiative was not completed during the fiscal year as returns were only finalized in the new school term;
  5. One supplier of textbooks for primary schools did not fulfil the terms of the contract; and
  6. Late submission of claims with respect to works undertaken on assisted primary schools.

Under Head 43, the Ministry of Works and Transport, we had:

- (i) The non-filling of daily paid establishment posts due to a delay in the finalization of an agreement with the bargaining union for workers laid off in 1998;
- (ii) All bills with respect to the Infrastructure Rehabilitation and Flood Mitigation Programme were not submitted in time to effect payment during the fiscal year; and
- (iii) The tendering process with respect to the undermentioned projects were not completed during 2003. These were, strengthening of aviation security, traffic signal coordination and central management and restoration of Queen's Royal College.

Under Head 56, the Ministry of Social Development, a number of projects under non-profit institutions were not executed during the fiscal year, some of which included the following:

- (i) Community mothers;
- (ii) Criminal Injuries Compensation Board;
- (iii) Children's Authority;
- (iv) Day centres for older persons;
- (v) Establishment of a payroll system; and
- (vi) Halfway house for children leaving institutions.

Madam President, I now refer to transfer of funds between subhead under the same head of expenditure. With effect from August 01, 1988, Cabinet delegated its authority to approve transfers between subheads to the Minister of Finance when it agreed that requests for transfer of funds between separate subheads under the same head of expenditure should no longer be submitted to Cabinet but can be decided by the Minister of Finance on the advice of the Budget Division. In keeping with this delegated authority, the Minister of Finance approved the transfer of funds in the sum of \$437,765,743 between subheads under the same head of expenditure. These transfers were approved based on notes received from the respective ministries requesting transfers between subheads and were done as circumstances changed and priorities were reordered.

Madam President, a statement showing the transfers approved by the hon. Minister of Finance, as well as explanations for some of the more significant

*Supplementation and Variation Bill*  
[(SEN. THE HON. C. ENILL)]

*Tuesday, January 27, 2004*

transfers, are attached as Appendices I and II of the document entitled “The (Supplementation and Variation of the Appropriation) for fiscal year 2003” which has been laid before this Senate.

Madam President, in spite of the supplementation and variation of the 2003 appropriation now before the Senate, the actual fiscal out-turn for 2003 was a surplus of \$461 million. This surplus is after taking into consideration the transfer of \$497 million to the Revenue Stabilization Fund. This position represents a substantially better position than was budgeted at the beginning of the year, that is, a fiscal deficit of \$618.9 million or the revised projection that was articulated in the budget statement, that of a small surplus of \$28.9 million.

**2.00 p.m.**

The variation between the revised projections of \$28.9 million which was determined in early September and the actual out-turn of \$461 million at the end of September is \$432.1 million. This variation occurred as a result of increased revenue of \$.5 million and lower expenditure of \$431.6 million.

The major areas of reduced expenditure are in personnel expenditure, some \$256.8 million, goods and services of \$97.9 million and interest payments of \$117.7 million, while capital expenditure was \$76.2 million higher than expected. The reduced expenditure under personnel expenditure was a direct result of the failure of ministries and departments to settle outstanding arrears of salaries and increments due to public servants, teachers, and so forth.

It should also be noted that due to the refusal of teachers to accept the amount quantified by the Ministry of Education, the sum of approximately \$180 million was not expended. The savings in interest payments was due to falling interest rates, reduction in open market operations and delays in the implementation of externally funded development projects.

Madam President, these, therefore, are the issues that arose during the course of the year and the action that was taken and, at this time, it is required for these matters to be deliberated on.

Madam President, I beg to move.

*Question proposed.*

**Sen. Wade Mark:** Madam President, the Bill before us, as was alluded to by the hon. Minister, seeks to address after the fact, three essential areas as outlined. One, to provide some supplementation in the context of what the Minister has described as an inescapable obligation. I think he probably needs to provide us

with some more details on this one as it relates to the financial obligations to the International Monetary Fund. Does that have to do with our annual contribution to the fund? I would like the hon. Minister to indicate to this honourable Senate in his winding up, when he speaks to the issue of financial obligations amounting to close to \$500 million, whether that has to do with Trinidad and Tobago's annual financial contribution to the International Monetary Fund.

Secondly, the Bill seeks to vary, as has been indicated, a sum of \$256 million in order to balance off accounts as the Government sought to move from one particular ministry to others, surplus funds where they existed and deficits where they may have arisen. And, of course, the other aspect of this piece of legislation before us has to address the issue of transfer of funds from different heads in the context of changes within subheads. That again has been outlined by the hon. Minister.

Madam President, one of the difficulties that we have in our Republic, and we have always said that there is need for greater constitutional improvement, has to do with the fact that these expenditure patterns have already been consumed. They have already occurred and the Government is seeking simply to bring its accounts to a close.

There is nothing that we can do as parliamentarians, apart from criticizing, examining and analyzing some of these movements, because it has already taken place. It is a *fait accompli*. That is a very unfortunate situation in our Parliament, because when we talk about a Parliament being used merely to rubber stamp activities, actions, on the part of the Executive, this is a classic manifestation of the uselessness sometimes of debates of this nature, because the Government has already varied a sum of \$256 million from one ministry to another ministry, and we are being told this afternoon that they need parliamentary approval. That is why we are engaged in this particular exercise today.

I would like to indicate that when the hon. Minister speaks to the issue of a surplus and he says to us that was an improvement on what was initially budgeted for—because when we looked at what happened in 2002/2003, initially there was a large deficit, and at the end of the financial year, there was a slight or limited surplus—he is now indicating that, for instance, there has been an improvement over that small surplus. He mentioned the figure of \$461 million.

Madam President, the question has to be asked, is this really an improvement, or is it an artificial improvement? Does it manifest or represent real improvement in this economy that has led to this so-called surplus? The evidence is before you.

It is before this honourable Senate, and I will demonstrate in my contribution where, for instance, this so-called surplus is purely a bubble. It is artificial. It is because of certain inactivities that has come about, because of the incompetence of the regime to carry out its responsibility to the society that they have been unable to expend moneys and, therefore, that to my mind has now accounted for the so-called surplus that the hon. Minister has referred to.

This economy is not performing in the way it ought to perform, and whilst we have another debate to come on the Finance Bill sometime later on, it is clear that when we look at the economy of this country, what we are seeing is lopsided growth; one-sided development. This is a one-legged economy. We are not standing on our two feet in this country. There is no transformation in any significant way in this economy. Limited diversification of this economy.

The evidence is showing every day that if something were to happen to oil internationally, and natural gas, Trinidad and Tobago would collapse, because on the one hand, we have an economy in terms of the energy sector growing at a rate of about 8 per cent, 9 per cent, but the internal economy, the domestic economy, the national economy of this society—manufacturing, agriculture and services—grew in the first nine months of 2003 by .8 per cent. This is the state of our economy today. And the Government continues to blow our resources. It continues to give away our natural gas.

We were told by the Minister of Finance in his budget speech of October 2003 that by January 01, 2004, a new natural gas price regime would have been introduced in this country. We are now coming to the end of January of 2004, and we still have not heard anything from the Minister of Finance in terms of a natural gas policy for this economy.

So, what is happening here, Madam President, you see it every day and the evidence we have before us would embellish what I am saying as I proceed. I do not agree with the honourable Minister that there was any great improved performance in this economy. I have not seen that. This is a do nothing government. This is a government that tells its supporters they must get a good feeling. Feeling about what? What is there good to feel about the PNM? How can people feel good about the PNM? What is the PNM doing for people to feel good?

When we disaggregate and strip this facade to its barest essentials, what do we see? We see a government that is visionless, directionless and clueless. They do not know where to turn. This is a regime that is dying whilst it is in office. It is collapsing every single day, Madam President. We look at, for instance, this sum

of money that has been reallocated or varied. We see where the Ministry of Health has gotten a large chunk of the reallocation. The Ministry of Health got a sum of about \$33 million and the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries got the balance.

When we look at, for instance, the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, we see where payments were made to National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited (NP) and United Independent Petroleum Company Limited (UNIPET) for shortfalls in subsidies to the sale of petroleum products for fiscal 2003, and a partial settlement of debt owed to Petrotrin by National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited, which was estimated at some \$686 million.

Madam President, I want to indicate very early that whilst there has been a substantial transfer of variation as it relates to the sum of money that was originally allocated to the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, I want to indicate to the hon. Minister of Finance here that if we are not careful with NP, as an example, that company, from all the evidence that has come to my attention, is half dead.

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** Who says?

**Sen. W. Mark:** Well I think that he wants to bury it. Madam President, what is happening is that National Petroleum at one time had about 80 to 90 per cent of the domestic market in terms of lubricants and fuel and other products. Today, as I understand it, it is close to about 55 per cent.

The Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA) has not come into force as yet in terms of competition, and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago owes that particular company close to \$600 million in terms of subsidy on fuel on petroleum products. The PNM regime seems to be tying the hands of NP behind its back. I believe that, for instance, it is an area that I believe the Minister of Finance needs to look at, because as Corporation Sole, that is an area that I suspect is crying out for some support, because if one looks at the level of transfers to these state enterprises—whether it is NP or Petrotrin or others—it is huge.

I think that, for instance, there is need to allow these companies, as far as is practically possible, to have some degree of viability so that they can have some degree of sustainability at the end of the process. We cannot hope to be part of the FTAA and not allow these corporations to exercise some degree of autonomy, but within a certain framework, otherwise if we do not provide them with that framework to exercise autonomy, then we are going to stifle and stymie and, ultimately, that would lead to the collapse of many of these enterprises.

The Government decreased the allocation to the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation by some \$80 million. At a time, Madam President, when you and I know that in the year 2003, murders were at a record high of 229, kidnappings were over 50 in this country, people are living in fear under the PNM regime, yet still, the Government was unable to complete its recruitment of policemen, policewomen, army personnel, coastguardsmen, coastguardswomen, firefighters and prison officers. They targeted 1,320 to be recruited. They ended up recruiting 850 persons and they got that money that they had allocated which was sent to either the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries or the Ministry of Health.

The time has come, just as how Justice David Meyers indicated that the Public Service Examinations Board that was appointed by the Government, the Cabinet of this country, to determine promotions in the police service, the prison service, the civil service and the fire service was unconstitutional, illegal, null and void and of no effect. That was taking place for 40 years in this country. The PNM arrogated unto itself an authority that it did not have under the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. That is why it explains to some extent the composition and configuration of the police service and the various arms of the State today.

Madam President, I am a Trinidadian and Tobagonian. I was born here. I did not come here. I was born here. Forty per cent of this population are Indians; 40 per cent are Africans; 18 per cent are mixed, and we have a little sprinkle of Creole, Caucasians, Syrians, Portuguese and Chinese.

When we look at the police service in Trinidad and Tobago, 95 per cent of the police are Africans. We go to the coast guard, 95 per cent are Africans. Go to the army, the regiment, 95 per cent of the army are Africans. Go to the fire service, 95 per cent are Africans. Go to the prison service, 95 per cent or thereabout are Africans. Why is this?

It is because the PNM, for 40 years, had the power to determine who will be promoted and who will not be promoted. The PNM determined recruitment policies in the police service. So, they were able to weed out persons who would like to join the police service of Indian descent and only accept people of African descent.

Madam President, at a recruitment exercise, HYPE, Helping Young People to find Employment, an African youth had to shout out at the Centre of Excellence a couple months ago, he wanted to know if he was in Trinidad, because all the



people the PNM brought there were Africans; 98 per cent. He asked the question, “Where am I”? Am I in Trinidad? Trinidad is a cosmopolitan society. A multiracial, multiethnic and multireligious society. How can we have a police service, an army, a coast guard, a fire service and a prison service that does not reflect the composition of this population? The PNM has allowed that for 40 years in this country.

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** What about your six?

**Sen. W. Mark:** My six? I need about 10 more to change it. We would have changed it. The people will change it because they will change them. I think their days are numbered. They are a do nothing Government. I did not say that. Read Selwyn Ryan’s article on Sunday. He is a supporter of the PNM. He has now said that their Government is a do nothing Government; only on public relations.

Madam President, what the UNC and I are advocating today is that we need to have a new recruitment approach in terms of the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation. I found it very strange that the honourable Prime Minister of this country—it is in the *Sunday Express*. An article entitled, “Will Aristide go to Jamaica for talks”.

Hear what we are told in this article: Caricom—of which our Prime Minister is a part, he is a member of Caricom—is proposing to President Aristide that first, President Aristide must respect freedom of the press. At the same time, Mr. Manning is telling President Aristide to have respect for the press, he engages in an onslaught and attack against the very press in the country. So, doublespeak, double standards, Madam President.

Hear the second one: Allowing peaceful protest. Imagine the Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, as part of Caricom, is telling President Aristide he must allow peaceful protest in Haiti. In Chaguanas, Mr. Prime Minister unleashed terror and brutality on Members of Parliament and ordinary citizens who were protesting peacefully against crime, which the PNM cannot control.

What kind of double standard is this? This Prime Minister is a hypocrite! He engaged in doublespeak. He says one thing to satisfy Caricom, but in Trinidad and Tobago it is brutality and terror against the ordinary people of this land. His mind is not only slipping; it seems to be sinking.

Madam President, I call on the PNM regime, as a citizen of this country, to stop the discrimination against half of the population. What explains what I have just asked? What explains the fact that after 40 years of independence, our

security forces do not reflect the composition of this society? Why is it after 40 years? The time has come for us to change that. We have to change it.

It is not to say they are not applying. They are applying but they are not getting through, because the people who comprise the team that recruits people into the army, the police and the various arms of the State, it seems to me that there is a policy, either active or otherwise, to keep people out of the State's security forces.

Madam President, crime is out of control in this country. Whilst crime is out of control, the Minister of National Security and Rehabilitation, all he does and all he has been doing—he is not here today—since he has been appointed is promoting himself in full page ads, colour to boot, costing tens of thousands of dollars, as if putting full page ads with army colonels, Captain This and Lieutenant That will stop crime in this country.

This Government is a Government of public relations. If you see how nice them pictures looking! Well coloured and thing! Nice pictures, boy! That will not stop crime. That is not going to stop crime. You are fooling yourself. The only Minister who has not yet engaged in that is the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He is more out of the country, so he is not here. There is no need. He is flying all over the world, so there is no need for people to see him. He is out, but everybody else, Madam President, is a public relation show.

I looked at the *Guardian* this morning, that is no less than \$25,000. The full page, open centre spread, you see Joseph laughing like if he is so nice. You see him laughing with the new Director of the Crime Suppression Unit and then the Chief of Defence Staff and the Commissioner of Police. Then there are separate pictures in the newspapers with the Chief of the Defence Staff.

What is going on here, Madam President, at a time where there are 300,000 citizens living below the poverty line and people are living on less than US \$2 a day? Go to Beetham, Sea Lots or John John and it will churn one's system, churn one's blood to see how ordinary people are living in this country. Women are bathing under standpipes in Beetham, John John and Sea Lots. Their children are living in some of the worst squalid conditions that one could think about, but Minister Joseph, every time one asks him a question, "he ain't ready yet"; "he ain't study nothing yet."

What is he doing there? He is worse than Chin Lee. Better they bring back Chin Lee! At least we used to see Chin Lee in road blocks and in the helicopter flying about so people would see that Chin Lee is somewhere! [*Laughter*] But

this man is doing nothing! All he does is put his picture in the newspapers every day, every week. Madam President, if the “fella” was good looking, I “ain’t” mind.

We have a problem when they transfer \$80 million out of the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation and crime is out of control. They take money out of the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation and instead, what is taking place, the same Minister of National Security and Rehabilitation, he nurtured criminals whilst he was at the Ministry of Housing. It is under his watch that they established the NHA refurbishment programme which started at \$45 million and ended up over \$100 million. That is why there are so many murders and gang warfare in Laventille today.

The PNM is promoting violence in this country! The greatest threat to our national security is the Prime Minister of this country. He sanctions illegality in this country. That is what he does. He pacifies terrorists who will one day come to burn him.

Madam President, we are saying that these variations do not make sense. We do not understand why the Government was so inefficient in carrying out its mandate to the people of this country. The Minister of National Security and Rehabilitation is not here. He cannot explain his position, but he will read my notes. Every time one asks him a question, Madam President, he has not read, but at least the Minister who was acting as Prime Minister, she was very frank. She reads. She defends “Cro Cro”, a disgraceful act I have never seen more.

**Sen. Yuille-Williams:** I do not know how relevant that is here, but he better quote me carefully, what I said. He is making a statement which I did not make. He is referring to something to which I did not refer. The inferences are totally incorrect. I did not defend anybody.

**Madam President:** Sen. Mark, be careful about imputing improper motives.

**Sen. W. Mark:** I am glad that she has said that she has condemned “Cro Cro”. [*Laughter*]

**Madam President:** Sen. Mark, you know that she did not use those words. There again you are imputing improper motives. Just get on with the matter at hand please.

**Sen. W. Mark:** Madam President, as I said, in terms of national security, we have a difficulty with this particular explanation that we have been offered. The nonpayment of arrears of increments owed to officers in police, prison, and fire

services who have either migrated, died, or are involved in disciplinary proceedings, and a number of other matters. They mentioned that a sum was allocated for the restructuring of the Strategic Services Agency. We have a situation in which the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation seemed to have been very inactive in carrying out its responsibilities in the year 2003, hence the reason for this large transfer of variation to their allocation.

We come to the Ministry of Education. What has happened in the Ministry of Education? Madam President, the reality is that we have never had so much crime, so much violence and delinquency as we are experiencing under the stewardship of the People's National Movement. Madam President, \$117 million was varied, reallocated.

Violence in schools, terror by school children, they are the products of the PNM. For over 40 years or less, we had the Common Entrance system in existence, and every year from 1963, an average of about 4,000 children would fail; or I should say pass, but they failed to get a school place in this country. That amounts to over half a million, maybe between 300,000 to 400,000 citizens in this country who were denied an education under the PNM, and the chickens are coming home to roost.

Violence did not come overnight. Sen. Manning has it wrong. When she said it is carnival time, Madam President, through you, the hon. Senator has it wrong. I try to be a little lenient with her, because she does not fight. If she was a fighter, I would have dealt with her differently. But she does not fight. She is a nice lady. I have to treat her nicely.

I would say that she has it wrong when she says to us and the nation, the reason there is violence today is it is a normal process. She says it is around carnival time, so that is a normal process. I have it here in quote. It does not make sense. I do not know who advises the hon. Minister, but certainly, she is out of touch with reality.

Things have become so bad that the priests have now stepped in. They say we have spiritual ghosts in the schools now, so we need exorcism. We have to bring "cocoyea" brooms to sweep out the school rooms because it is spiritual wickedness in those schools. I mean to say, Madam President, we are reaching a point that because of the incompetence of the PNM, their inability to find solutions, we now have to turn to the Gods for help because the PNM cannot help this country anymore. They have abdicated their responsibility to run this economy and this society, so we have to bring in the priest, the pundit and imam

to blow out these places of wickedness and evil and these children that they are saying are evil. These are the products of the PNM, Madam President.

As we speak today, 300,000 people live under the poverty line. It means that in Trinidad and Tobago today, people are living on less than TT \$900 a month. How can a family live in this country on that kind of meager—I am not talking about pensioners or people who are not working. A pensioner gets \$1,000; some get \$900. There are endless young people in this country who are not working. They are able-bodied, they can contribute to their society, but there is no leadership in this country. We have weak leadership in this country. A leader who panders to terrorists and insurgents should not be running Trinidad and Tobago because those insurgents will invade here again, if he continues to pander to them. That is what the hon. Prime Minister is doing. He is pandering to criminals!

My sister got shot in this Parliament by these terrorists, I recall, and this man who is the Prime Minister of this country continues to play hanky panky with these people. They have an army of about 25,000 youths in this country.

When we look at the school situation, we realize that education is in crisis. Education is in crisis. Madam President, just to give you a slight example of what is happening here, just last week in some of the daily newspapers, one would read as follows: Two pupils of Chaguanas Junior Secondary threatened to chop and shoot a teacher who caught them entering the Chaguanas Senior Comprehensive School. Two students, one from Barrackpore Senior Comprehensive School and the other from Cunupia High School hospitalized in a serious condition following fights with other students. A St. James Secondary student had to be hospitalized after he was sliced in the chest by another during a fight, and it goes on and on.

What is happening to our children? They are the leaders of tomorrow. They are the flowers of this nation, but they carry in their handbags today, not books, but guns, weed and cocaine. I do not blame the youths. I defend them. I blame the system and I blame the PNM for the plight of these young people today in Trinidad and Tobago. The PNM! They are responsible for it. They did nothing to bring about an economy that was robust, strong and sustainable, and they were in power for almost 40 years.

They have killed agriculture in this country. CEPEP is now burying agriculture in Trinidad and Tobago. They massacred, executed 10,000 workers at Caroni (1975) Limited without bringing a blueprint, a roadmap to this Parliament so we can see what their plans are for the restructuring of the sugar industry. That is a government without a vision, without planning. That is a government whose only duty is to sustain itself in power, regardless of the consequences. They have no

vision. They have power, but they have no knowledge. They do not have a vision for the country.

Our youths are dying every day. My heart goes out, and our hearts go out to the parent of Kevin Cato. I saw his picture on the *Newsday* yesterday. A young boy, 18 years old, having a nice time in a party, going right, going left, and an off-duty policeman with a gun slapped the youth, for what I do not know, and after slapping the youth, the youth obviously slapped him back because he did not know he was a policeman. Bullet after that! Young man dead at the age of 18 years. How do the police expect, how do some elements of the police service expect the population to have confidence in them when they can do that to my son?

**Madam President:** Hon. Senators, the speaking time of the Senator has expired.

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Sen. W. Mark:** Madam President, we are seeing where our young people are perishing in this country. A fellow called Kanhai went on a hunting trip and some special recruits were hiding behind trees and woods and it is bullet! Just so! Bullet! What did this young man do? Nothing. They killed him. What is going on here? Is this a police state? Is this part of this new anticrime unit to shoot people and ask questions later? Who are they killing? Innocent Africans and Indians. It is youths.

Madam President, I look at the whole issue of the transfer of another sum of \$30 million from the Ministry of Social Development and Gender Affairs. When an individual like Clive Pantin speaks, we must take note. He is not an ordinary citizen. He has made a great contribution to this civilization. He said at a meeting that he addressed, a Rotary Club function in Port of Spain on Monday, January 19, that NGOs are propping up this society. He said without NGOs this society would have collapsed.

When we see that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, in its reallocation or variation, suppressed moneys that ought to have gone to Community Mothers—social development, whose ministry is that? Is this Sen. Christine Kangaloo's Ministry or Sen. Abdul-Hamid's? I do not know.

Madam President, Community Mothers, an NGO project. Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. When people are killed or injured by criminals, they are supposed to be compensated under an Act that we passed. No money for them. The Children's Authority Board. What about our children? They do not care. They suppress. Money gone to where? Energy. Day care centres for older persons. NGOs again. No money for these people. The establishment of a parole system for prisoners, and halfway houses for children leaving institutions. These things have been suppressed. Money gone elsewhere.

Madam President, at a time when the cost of living is rising astronomically and uncontrollably, I would like to share with you a statement that was reproduced in the *Trinidad Business Guardian* of January 22, 2004, it says in part that consumers are paying more for basic food items compared to a year ago. That is in the year 2004. We are paying more as consumers for items when compared a year ago.

Overall, 15 items in a food basket cost 6.47 per cent more than they did in February 2003. Hear what has happened. The items surveyed now cost \$111.46. I will give an example. During the last year, nine out of the 15 went up, whilst only one item went down. Flour. This National Flour Mills that we have here, if it is not able to source cheaper wheat and go on the international market and reorganize its business, then the time has come for us to break the NFM monopoly in this country, because the NFM cannot be getting up every morning and telling this country, rice gone up.

They have brutalized the citizenry of this country and I understand that the hon. Sen. Christine Sahadeo is the Minister in the Ministry of Finance responsible for state enterprises. We own 51 per cent of the National Flour Mills. Madam President, they increased the price of rice. They came back and increased the price of flour. They always tell us, if things were to change, they will reduce the price. Madam President, have you ever seen that with the National Flour Mills? They have not changed the price of anything. We understand that when prices went down, the prices remained the same.

For ordinary poor people, that pensioner who is getting \$1,000 a month, that worker who is not working but living on US \$2 a day, flour gone up by 60 cents; onions by 10 cents; margarine, lentil peas and salted biscuits by 20 cents; macaroni and coconut oil went up by 40 cents; and rice and powdered milk jumped by a dollar.

So, ordinary people are finding it very difficult to make two ends meet in this country, but this is a country that is awash with wealth. This is a country of a GDP

of \$60 billion. We have a per capita income of close to US \$8,500 per head. *[Interruption]* The value of the gross domestic product total is \$60 billion. You want to argue with me? I can bring facts for you on that. We know that the transnational corporations leak out of this country over 15 per cent of that GDP, and that is why the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries said recently that we have to do something to close the gap between the GDP and the GNP, which is the gross national product.

Madam President, I am saying that when these things keep going up, and they keep bypassing the Minister of Legal Affairs and Consumer Affairs I feel sorry for him, but I must say, he has taken a strong stand. When they try to insult the Minister of Legal Affairs and Consumer Affairs by saying that is not his business, he made it his business, and I think he must be congratulated for that, but the Minister must not tell workers and ordinary people that when they increase the price of rice and flour, they must eat cassava. He does not even know the price of a pound cassava, but he tells people go and buy cassava. He does not understand, but I sympathize with him.

Madam President, I am very concerned. We are very concerned on this side with what is happening in this country. The Government is increasing its allocation towards social development, and whilst it is doing that, people are becoming poorer. The wealth of this country is not evenly distributed. The rich in this society are becoming richer, and the poor are becoming poorer because of the economic policy that is being pursued by this backward administration.

Giving people crumbs from the master's table will not bring about equality in the income distribution. We have to give people real opportunity. Do they think that those jobs they are offering these youths in this country are sustainable? They are not. URP, CEPEP, HYPE, OJT. Stupidness! Wasting money!

Madam President, once those moneys run out, because there is no more oil and gas, those youths will eat the PNM raw, because they would have given them false hope. They must give people productive, rewarding and sustainable employment. The PNM is in the '60s. They live in the '60s. Dinosaurs! They do not understand that we are now in an age of revolution in terms of how business is done. They are sleeping and the country is wide awake, but this is not going to go on for long. There will come a time when the masses will take to the streets and no police, as they did in Chaguanas, will be able to stop them.

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** You are inciting the population.

**Sen. W. Mark:** I incite them? Your acting Prime Minister, I understand, supported "Cro Cro", and "Cro Cro" is saying kidnap them. So who is inciting whom? Even though she says to us that she did not say it, she said so.



**Sen. Yuille-Williams:** Please, we are not going to allow you to go with these things over and over. You are a senior Member in this Parliament. Madam President, could you speak to the hon. Senator?

**Madam President:** Sen. Mark, I am surprised that you would get up again.

**Sen. W. Mark:** I know she did not mean it how she said it. She could not mean it how she said it, but by interpretation, I could interpret and she is now correcting me.

**Sen. Yuille-Williams:** Madam President, I do not know what the relevance is now. I will continue to stop him on this.

**Sen. R. Montano:** Condemn “Cro Cro”. Either condemn him or keep quiet!

**Sen. W. Mark:** Madam President, I will conclude. We on this side want to indicate, we have asked certain questions, we want the hon. Minister to provide us with some answers. We would like the hon. Minister to indicate to this Parliament, when we talk about the financial obligation to the International Monetary Fund, what he means by that.

We want to know why, for instance, the recruitment practices continue to be one-sided in the protective services. We want to know why the police, the army, fire service and prison service cannot reflect this society and its composition: We want the Minister to indicate that to us.

I was surprised, but this is a Bill that, as I said, is redundant. All we can do as an Opposition, as the alternative government to the PNM is to bring to the attention of the population some of the weaknesses and deficiencies that we have discerned when we examined these particular figures, and I have sought to do so to the best of my ability. I wish to thank you for allowing me this opportunity to at least share some thoughts with the Parliament on this very important matter.

Thank you very much.

**Sen. Dana Seetahal:** Madam President, this Bill, as I understand it, is brought before us under section 113(3) of the Constitution, which provides that:

“If in respect of any financial year it is found—

- (a) that the amount appropriated by the Appropriation Act for any purpose is insufficient or that a need has arisen for expenditure for a purpose for which no amount has been appropriated by the Act; or
- (b) that any moneys have been expended for any purpose in excess of the amount appropriated for the purpose by the Appropriation Act or for a purpose for which no amount has been appropriated by the Act,

a supplementary estimate showing the sums required or spent shall be laid before the House of Representatives and the heads of any such expenditure shall be included in a Supplementary Appropriation Bill.”

**3.00 p.m.**

Madam President, this means that as a money bill it must go before the House of Representatives, and then it would follow that it should come before the Senate. If, as happened in October 2002—I think it was at the end of October—that the Variation of Appropriation Act came into being with certain Heads of expenses, and before it came into being under the Constitution we had debated, at length, on what we thought of the expenditures proposed and so on—I think every single Senator here contributed, it certainly was my first budget debate—I would have thought that the prudent and sensible thing, not to mention the polite thing to do, would have been to bring this Bill at the same time, prior to or shortly thereafter the passing of the last budget. I made the point last year that we are legalizing what is illegitimate; it is illegal. The Act has been breached already. As Sen. Mark, the previous speaker said, we really cannot do anything about it except to talk about what has been spent, what has been changed and so on.

We talk about the three branches of the State, of which Parliament is one, more respect should be given to Parliament, and it is too often not done. This Government—and not only this one, but all governments—would sit and say, “We have spent the money; here, this is the Bill, pass it.” Why should we have to put up with that time and again? We speak about it, but it goes on. Maybe one day people might get so tired of it that we might just resort to taking action, in respect of other bills, to prove the fact that we are not just a rubber stamp. I hope that never comes, because we should not use any power that we may have for that fell purpose. Suffice it to say, these Variation and Supplementary Appropriation Bills should come much earlier than this.

My second point is in respect of the first part of the proposal, and that is the variation of the appropriation, where we are talking about moneys moving from one ministry to an entirely different ministry, and no sufficient reason has been given to us. The Minister of Finance, Sen. Enill, read through his briefing when he was explaining why certain funds were not spent. I make reference to page 4, which is the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation. He merely said that funds were provided to meet costs for the recruitment of 1,320 persons to increase the strength of the military and paramilitary forces. However, only 850 persons, or 64 per cent, were recruited. That is just an example. Why is it that we do not have any proper explanations? I really want to know that. This is not good enough.

A year and four months ago we debated all this; there were all these plans, and it was promised that all these things would happen. You come to us like a lame duck one year and so many months after and say, “This was not done.” Is that good enough?

More importantly, I come to the point about the schoolbook grant. If we look at the explanation for \$117.5 million not being spent in the Ministry of Education, one of the reasons given was that the secondary schoolbook grant credit card initiative was not completed during the fiscal year as returns were only finalized in the new school term.

Madam President, when this money was planned to be spent on the schoolbook grant, that would have been in October 2002, so it was known months before that this money was allocated. It is passing strange that at the end of October 2003 the moneys have not been spent. Reasons have been given through the media, but it would seem to me that since Parliament approved the allocation of this money for the purposes of the book grants and credit cards some more reasonable explanation should have been given. It may have been that it was touched upon during the last budget debate 2003, but I do not think we have had any real explanations as to why there was delay in putting things into place so that the children could have gotten their card prior to September 2003.

My major concern, however, is that in 2002 I sat here and looked through a budget booklet that had about 22 programmes for social developments. Some of them were under community development, but still you are talking about programmes that would assist all those people who would have been unemployable or found it difficult to get training. I told the Government that it was a very good plan. The Community-based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP) was one of those plans too, but I was looking at things like the Community Mothers programme or the Halfway House for Children Leaving Institutions. I even suggested that we have a list of all these projects where people could access them. Out of Parliament I was told that may come into being, but it never did.

What I find truly disappointing is that having talked at length a year and half ago about those children outside the orphanage, for instance, the St. Mary’s Orphanage—I remember talking about that; you were not here, Madam President. I talked about persons reaching the age of 16, the boys being flung out of the orphanage and “liming”, for want of another word, at that Tacarigua bridge. That is an easy movement to crime if they do not have anything to do, and they are all there. They have nowhere to go; their home was the orphanage, so they stay under

that bridge. The next step would be to do a “little” robbery, put your hands around somebody’s neck and get a chain or some jewelry. We have had a lot of crimes committed there.

The suggestion then was to do something about these boys, still children, because they are under 18—leaving those homes. There was a plan, a halfway house for children leaving institutions. We are told now that one of the reasons for the fact that there is \$30 million left back in the social development ministry is because this project was not executed. Why? Why the day care for older persons? What about the halfway house for ex-prisoners? We talked about prison reform and a whole lot of that in the last budget and subsequently, yet every day, as Sen. Mark said, we see a newspaper advertisement about what the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation is doing or what they plan to do. But according to what we have here, the transfer of funds within the social development ministry was away from the halfway house for ex-prisoners, away from the Adolescent Mothers Programme and the multi-disciplinary Committee of the family. In other words, savings resulted from the delays in implementation of these programmes a year or so after the big announcement as to all of these programmes.

Where are we going? Why are we talking about putting programmes in place, boasting about them in one budget and everybody is patting themselves on the shoulder, and then a year and a half afterwards we come to the Parliament and say, “You know, there was delay in implementation; there was delay in getting this off; there was delay in Children’s Authority, or there is delay in the parole system.” I remember somebody pointing out to me when I talked about the fact that in 1989 and 1990 there was a Cabinet-appointed committee by the then National Alliance For Reconstruction government, devolving eventually into the PNM Government, to look into the parole system. They said, “We are having it soon,” that was in October 2002; again, there is a delay. All these things are truly unacceptable.

If we are going to tolerate all of these delays by the Government—when I say “we” I am putting myself as a citizen of this country—we will never get anywhere. Things would just go on, and every year we would come here and say, “Slap on the wrist, slap on the wrist; you have a delay,” but no good reason. I want to hear some good reasons, if possible, as to why all these social development programmes, which are supposed to devolve to the improvement of the citizenry of this country, have been delayed; why there has been no implementation; why we still have people being thrown out of orphanages into the street.

For example, someone like Lincoln Guerra who came through the system from the St. Mary's Home. I am sure everyone knows about Lincoln Guerra; he was there, then graduated to the Youth Training Centre (YTC), then graduated to killing a mother and child at Wallerfield. He is an example of someone going through the system. There is nothing in place to stop that. There are too many of them. If you check the people who are in prison and in custody now, a lot of them do not have a father figure. I do not have the figures, but I know from people. A lot of them have been on the streets from 13 or 14 years. It shows how valuable these programmes are, and we take them lightly.

Madam President, when you provide a little job like the Community-based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP), or something like that, people start to depend on these things so much that their children start to depend on them as well, and if they do not get them it is easier, rather than working at plumbing or whatever trade, to go out there and put a gun to someone's head and say, "Gimme a chain!"

I really do think that if we are going to have these programmes, if we have talked about them, we have planned them, people have budgeted for them, and everybody says how good they are, well tell us why, when and what is happening. Let us get somewhere and move on. I think that the Government Bench should let us know what is happening, and do not say that you mentioned it in the 2003 budget. If you did, it must have been lost somewhere and we did not hear it, because it had not come to the fore. How many of these programmes have been delayed?

There is just one other issue. I have looked through all these papers here, but there is something I fail to understand: In the transfers that the Minister talked about at page 18, "Statement of Approved Transfers", under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education under Item 007, Sub-item 02, there is an item "Retraining for Displaced Workers", \$2 million. When we turn to the other side where it says "Transferred From 02", we see "Retraining for Displaced Workers", \$2 million, the same amount. Where is the transfer? I have tried to understand that. I am not an accountant, clearly, but I think one could understand the figures.

If you have \$2 million in one place and then \$2 million on the other side, it seems to me that is not a transfer. I do not know what it is. I have read the purported explanation on page 34 and it does not explain that, so that is another matter the Minister could enlighten me on in case I have missed something; I would appreciate it.

Thank you, Madam President.

**Sen. Basharat Ali:** Madam President, my intervention would be a very short one on this Bill before us. It relates, primarily, to some spending or transfers from the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries to two entities, and one transfer from the Ministry of Finance to another State enterprise. I understand the \$23 million for the transfer to National Petroleum Marketing Company (NP) and Unipet as a result of a shortfall in subsidy, because we know that with increased prices, the subsidy level was not high enough to make these marketing companies whole.

What I do not understand is the \$200 million which has been transferred from the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries to a commercial company, a state enterprise, NP, and it is stated at the bottom:

“Partial settlement of debt owed to Petrotrin by National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited”

The debt is estimated at \$686 million excluding interest at May 2003. I am astounded with the fact that this company, NP, owes another company, which is a supplier company, such a large amount. This was at the end of May, so I wonder where we are now, notwithstanding the fact that \$200 million was transferred from the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries to the National Petroleum Marketing Company. I still do not understand the mechanism for the transfer by the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries to NP, except that the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries is the administrator of the Levy and Subsidy Act, so it receives and divests to other people.

I would like to know from the Minister how NP plans to pay the balance of its debt which would now be much higher than the \$686 million, it might be \$900 million by now, if you take into account the interest. How do they plan to make good that debt and to whom?

The second item that I looked at was one under Head 18, Ministry of Finance, and that was a payment to Petrotrin of \$47,157,096 listed as a transfer for modernization of the Pointe-a-Pierre refinery. The Minister of Finance is, in fact, the shareholder. I am wondering: Is this amount an advance, a loan, or is it an equity injection? I would like very much if the hon. Minister in the Ministry of Finance could provide an explanation for this amount.

During the budget presentation by the hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, there was announced an increase in the cap of the levy from producing companies being increased from 3 per cent to 4 per cent of the gross income. The figure that was given in the budget speech was that this 1 per cent represented

\$249 million. I queried it later on during the Excise and Petroleum Products Order debate, and I did not get a satisfactory answer from the Minister. I still want to know how they arrived at that figure.

I also queried from the budget speech how this amount was going to be distributed. It said: reforestation, \$50 million; the Unemployment Relief Programme (URP), \$54 million; infrastructure, which is drainage and community works in specific areas, \$50 million, and an increase in the Community-based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP), to \$225 million. By my arithmetic, the balance of that \$249 million would have been \$85 million, so I question that also; whether we can take that money, which is from the increase on the cap on the levy on producing companies and allocate it to these various programmes.

It concerns me because I still have not got an answer. When I see that the marketing company cannot even pay its bills to the supplier company, which is the Petrotrin refinery, I wonder where we are going. I am concerned whether we are, indeed, practising prudent fiscal management, particularly where we are made to understand that the petroleum sector is a rich sector. In fact, Petrotrin is both a producer and a refiner. Crude prices are up, so they should be okay. It buys crude, of course, so that is on the other side, but yet they do not seem to be keeping in too healthy a cash position.

I am hoping that the Minister would give some explanation as to how the National Petroleum Marketing Company is going to handle the big deficit it has, albeit to another State company, and how is the increase in levy going to affect the payments or the books of NP. These are just some brief items which I would like to have an explanation of before the Minister winds up.

Thank you.

**The Minister of Social Development and Gender Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Mustapha Abdul-Hamid):** Madam President, I rise to make a few comments in response to some of those made, in particular, by Sen. Seetahal and also to one or two made by Sen. Mark.

Madam President, under the Westminster system of government, any Prime Minister has the authority to configure his cabinet or his individual ministries as he pleases—in fact, I recall that on a visit to one of the islands of the Caribbean there was a ministry called the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Carnival and Coconuts. I made that point to say that the sense of the configuration has to take place in the Prime Minister's mind. How he connects foreign affairs to coconuts,

in that particular country, is really up to him. Members of the public, his advisors and so on may advise him and may have a different opinion, but in the end it is how he sees the proper arrangements that would inform the final configuration.

There was a period between 1995 and 2001 where we had a Prime Minister who configured his government and ministries to his liking. We had a ministry that was called the “Ministry of Community Empowerment, Sport”, and I think it was “Gender Affairs”, there were a number of ministries configured likewise: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Enterprise and Development, Infrastructural Development. I do not recall them all, but they were, generally, mega ministries, as they came to be known.

Madam President, that was the case with the ministry for which I am now responsible, which is now called the Ministry of Social Development and Gender Affairs. Previously, it was a mega ministry, and when our party came to government there was a decision taken by the Prime Minister, because he had a different understanding as to how the government should operate, so there was a ministry configured and called the Ministry of Social Development. There was good reason for that.

Madam President, what this meant was that the social services delivery aspect was separated from the research and development and policy design component. That was a good thing, because, generally, when you have both functions together it tends to be at the expense of the research and development component. History has shown that ministers tend to pay more attention to the delivery programmes, so that you would have your public assistance, the old age pensions and so forth. All these programmes: urgent, temporary assistance, the SHARE programme, because they have significant impact on the ground, ministers tend to respond to that, and you sometimes have a situation where research, policy design, programme design, monitoring and evaluation of programmes, for example, are left unattended.

So the Ministry of Social Development in 2002 was configured and given very specific responsibilities. Those responsibilities are to design programmes, to do the research, first of all, which will inform the designing of programmes, to monitor and evaluate all the social sector programmes across various ministries. This means that ours is a newly configured ministry. You must understand that we have had to build the ministry almost from scratch.

When the old mega ministries were separated, we suffered a loss of staff, in the sense that there was staff responsible for performing a number of functions



who now found themselves assigned to the office of the Prime Minister (Social Services Delivery) to continue to perform those functions that they were performing before. The research and design component in the former mega ministry was, indeed, suffering. So the newly configured Ministry of Social Development and Gender Affairs was established.

We had a capacity problem to start with. We had to build the ministry from scratch. We went to Cabinet and continued, but even now we find ourselves in a situation where, at present, we are reviewing our staffing arrangements to determine exactly what our needs are, after two years of existence, to see if we have, in fact, calculated properly. That exercise is being undergone at present. We also had an accommodation problem.

Madam President, when you were in secondary school or primary school and you were doing a sum, as we used to call it, and you got the first part wrong, everything else that came after was wrong. There was a single problem that tied our hands that really suppressed our progress in a very significant way, and that was the accommodation of our ministry.

In spite of objections from members of that former Ministry of Community Empowerment and Sport and whatever else it was, the ministry was housed in the Autorama building. When we came to occupy that building, we found that there was absolutely no space for expansion whatsoever. In fact, there were times when we were supposed to bring on staff, and we had to delay it simply because I had no place to put them. We could not even bring in an on-the-job trainee to provide some assistance because there simply was no space to put anybody.

Madam President, that was a major hurdle which we had to overcome. It was an albatross around the neck of the ministry, and we could not move outside of that, because that building was a block to our progress. It provided, not only limited space, but we also had problems with the quality of accommodation.  
[*Interruption*]

**Sen. Prof. Deosaran:** I am very interested in the part outlined by the Minister and the implications for public service. Could you tell us how was that building acquired, at what cost and who made the decision, with such severe restrictions upon the expected service by the Government?

**Sen. The Hon. M. Abdul-Hamid:** Madam President, through you, Sen. Prof. Deosaran, I would love to provide all the details. I can better provide all the details at a future date. Perhaps, if a question is filed, I would be happy to answer it, but for the time being—[*Interruption*]

**Sen. Prof. Deosaran:** I mean, with due respect—

**Sen. The Hon. M. Abdul-Hamid:** For the time being, I am going to say the following to you from the information I have in my head: It was rented by the former regime. As I understand it, there were no proper approvals for that building. The proper arrangements were not gone into, and that building was being rented at a cost of approximately \$120,000 per month. It was deplorable accommodation.

I was embarrassed whenever people had to come there to see me. On one occasion we invited a number of persons from various social international institutions: the United Nations, the European Union and various ambassadors to countries, and we had to hold a meeting at the building, and it was an embarrassment for me. The accommodation provided a serious restriction to our ability to expand our staff, so we were forced to try to do as much work as possible with the very limited staff that we had. The capacity problem could not be addressed.

There were other problems that I might refer to: the Children's Authority, for example, and the CICU, similar arguments can be made for both. We are now finding out, as well, about the Home for Older Persons Act of 2000. Hon. Senators would be aware that those Acts were passed in the year 2000, and we have been faced with the very challenging exercise of trying to make regulations to operationalize the Acts. The problem has to do with the fact that those Acts, perhaps drafted over the weekend, were so faulty that when we were trying to make regulations, because there was minimal or no consultation between the persons who operated the social sector, they found themselves in a situation where, for the first time, they were being given an opportunity to comment on the Acts. I speak about the Children's Authority Act, the CICU and the Homes for Older Persons Act.

As we tried to formulate the regulations, we discovered fundamental flaws with the Acts themselves, and we now have to come back to the Parliament and propose amendments. In addition to that, we are having difficulty in getting the best regulations simply because we have so many obstacles to negotiate which exist in the Acts. That is why the Children's Authority is not yet fully functional; it is as a result of fundamental flaws in the Act of 2000.

One might say that it was 2000, 2003 and 2004, but if there were proper consultations between the Office of the Attorney General, those involved in social welfare and care for children, we may have found that the Act, in the first place,

would have been reasonable without the flaws that we have today and without the obstacles that we now find ourselves trying to negotiate.

We all know that there is no shortage of government programmes in the social sector. Before I go into what we have actually done with the limited staff that we have had, I take the opportunity to respond to something said by Sen. Mark as he spoke about the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Most people in Trinidad and Tobago, perhaps, are not aware of the extent to which Government funds the work of various NGOs. In some cases, it really is as a result of the fact that, perhaps, our not advertising it enough, perhaps because we are criticized when we go to the newspapers and say what we are doing. But it is important that we do so, so that people could have confidence in us and know that the Government is, in fact, delivering as we said and continue to say we would.

Sen. Wade Mark said that non-governmental organizations hold up the society. I would argue that the Government holds up the NGOs as they hold up the society. It is important to take note of that. This Government, and the previous government too, held the position that we would deliver our services through the NGOs. The Government is getting out of arrangements where it would be directly involved in delivering services, and is taking a position that we would use NGOs to deliver these services because we felt that the NGOs have the capacity, familiarity and expertise, and the services would be more efficiently delivered through NGOs. *[Interruption]*

I am glad that the Senator has come back. I would read from the Social Sector Investment Programme 2004 document so that he would get an idea of the extent to which this Government supports NGOs. It is so nice and long, I can take quite a while and fill up this hour.

“Organization	Grant Payable at 2003
Ministry of Education	
SERVOL	\$9,702,000.00”

These are annual contributions:

“SERVOL – Junior Life Centre	\$100,000.00
Special Education (Lady Hochoy Home)	\$753,000.00”

That is the same SERVOL to which Mr. Pantin is attached:

“Office of the Prime Minister

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Ecclesiastical Grants	
Roman Catholic Church	\$115,724.00
Anglican Church	\$51,576.00
Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha	\$43,428.00
Shiva Dharma Sabha	\$14,050.80”

I am taking the opportunity to practise my pronunciation. [*Laughter*] Let me try a few more.

“Anjuman Sunnatul Jamaat Association	\$11,292.00
Arya Pratinidhi Sabha	\$4,256.00

Just to show balance:

“Pentecostal Assemblies of the West Indies	\$25,080.00”
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Those are ecclesiastical grants, but let me get more specifically to NGOs:

“Services to Persons with Disabilities:	
International Chapter for the Disabled Persons	\$50,000.00
Goodwill Industries	\$450,000.00
National Centre for Persons with Disabilities	\$520,000.00
T&T Association for Hearing Impaired	\$4,063,151.00
T&T Blind Welfare Association	\$5,800,000.00
The Princess Elizabeth Home for Handicapped Children	\$3,741,152.00
Swantson Home for Blind lads	\$500.00
Children’s Homes	
Jalakshmi Home	\$60,000.00
Ferndean’s Children’s Home	\$40,000.00
Islamic Home for Children	\$40,000.00
St. Dominic’s Children’s Home	\$1,391,194.00
St. Mary’s Children’s Home	\$799,500.00

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Philip's Children's Home	\$149,650.00
The Cyril Ross Nursery	\$120,000.00
CREDO Foundation	\$259,711.36
Child Welfare League	\$698,548.00
Socially Displaced	
St. Vincent De Paul Society	\$1,590,100.00
Nazareth Halfway House	\$147,600.00
The Committee for the Socially Displaced in San Fernando	\$250,000.00
Halfway House for Homeless Psychiatric Females	\$363,069.00
Family Life and Counselling Service	
Families in Action	\$100,000.00
Lifeline	\$46,000.00
Rape Crisis Centre	\$66,000.00
National Family Home for Reconciliation	\$75,000.00
Coterie of Social Workers—South Social	\$20,900.00
Workers Task Force	\$40,000.00
Family Planning Association	\$1,000,000.00"
We even care about animals: [ <i>Laughter</i> ]	
“Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals	\$35,000.00
St. John's Council Association & Brigade	\$20,000.00
T&T Red Cross Society Emergency	\$20,000.00”

Madam President, I can go on, but I made the point that I wanted to make in response to Sen. Mark's point: This Government has and continues to give enormous support to all the NGOs.

I take the opportunity to account for a few of the projects identified, in spite of the enormous constraints that I have already spoken about. There are some specific things I could say about those projects identified in the document from which Sen. Seetahal read. There are some along the way, and some slight

variations in terms of how we would proceed. For example, when you decide to lend assistance to halfway houses for ex-prisoners—I have come to this Parliament and spoken about it already. We recognize that there is a 56 per cent recidivism rate, as outlined by Sen. Prof. Deosaran in his report.

What we have done in reaction to that is put together a committee to develop a comprehensive programme. We have on that committee representation from the Centre for Criminology, the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Commerce and various ministries. The Ministry of Social Development and Gender Affairs chairs the project. We also have the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation, social services delivery and so on. The Chamber of Commerce would represent the private sector. *[Interruption]* We had to draw the line somewhere. *[Laughter]*

That committee is to design a comprehensive proposal simply because we felt that halfway houses may provide some of the services. For example, they may provide shelter and meals, but they do not provide rehabilitation, counselling, or jobs skills training. We needed to develop a very comprehensive programme so that once we have X number of prisoners coming out of prison, we can put them in at one end and get completely reformed citizens at the end of the exercise. That is what we are hoping to do, but in the meantime we recognize that we could lend some assistance to some of the halfway houses already in place, but we cannot just give money like that.

The idea that somebody could have a meeting with a minister, and he could dip in a bucket under his desk and take out \$30,000 or \$50,000 and give to that person is preposterous. Although it may have seemed reasonable to some who may have gone before, I have found that is not something with which I feel comfortable. Evaluations have to be undertaken, and they take time. We have done evaluations on a number of NGOs involved in the care of ex-prisoners, and we have recommendations now being put forward as to what extent we can lend some assistance to these various NGOs.

**Sen. Seetahal:** Hon. Minister, you are talking about aiding people who are already there, but from my reading of the plans it appears that the Government would establish a halfway house for ex-prisoners and a halfway house for children leaving institutions; that is what I thought. I would like some clarification of this, please. Thank you.

**Sen. The Hon. M. Abdul-Hamid:** The decision was taken that we would use some of the funds, consistent with the policies I outlined earlier, to provide assistance to NGOs, because they were crying out for assistance. We are saying

that we are going to adjust our position, and provide assistance to them while we develop a comprehensive plan. That plan is what will inform us whether we need to construct facilities for ourselves, or whether we need to strengthen those already in existence and so on.

Since I became minister, we have been looking at the possibility of providing assistance to those NGOs already in existence, and to waiting until such time as the report is submitted by the committee that is to design the comprehensive proposal. Assistance is going to be granted to strengthen those NGOs already functioning in the field. You may find it a better plan that the Government build its own facility, and that may very well be recommended by the committee. I want to underline that we are, in fact, addressing the issue of providing assistance to NGOs involved in the field.

Concerning the Adolescent Mothers Programme, which was mentioned, I think the first cheque for approximately \$450,000 was given to the Child Welfare League, which is the NGO with responsibility for administering that programme. As you would recall, they had three centres and we were proposing to fund them so that they could expand to 10. Unfortunately, one of the delays there is that the Child Welfare League, itself, has to identify buildings and so on, and if they have not as yet identified the buildings then we cannot fund them, because they are not in a state of readiness to proceed.

Madam President, we have been working with them closely, so they can, in fact, do the exercise of identifying the buildings, and we are prepared to provide all the funding necessary for them to move forward with this particular project. The money we have already submitted to them was intended to help them to do what they now call "institutional strengthening", to give them the capacity to expand, and that is where we are. We have given them all the moneys they have asked for thus far, consistent with their capacity, and they are in the process of identifying the buildings. Once they have done so, we stand ready to move forward with them as originally agreed.

Multidisciplinary Committee on the Family: This is very dear to me. We have established the committee. As you would recall, Madam President, this committee was established to analyze the status of the family in Trinidad and Tobago, and to make very specific recommendations as to what the Government could do to provide assistance in the rehabilitation of the institution of the family.

The project was undertaken in a historical and sociological context which was that during the period of slavery the institution of the family was deliberately

decimated by the State. It was the colonial State that destroyed the institution and forbade it from existing. Those of us who would have studied history would know that the average lifespan of a slave at the height of slavery was two years. The biggest, strongest men were taken with the biggest, strongest women and bred to create the biggest, strongest children to work the plantation. All sense of family was removed.

The institution was removed as part of the civilization or the culture. People had no cultural reference framework to look at the family. The State being the most powerful, with the most authority and resources, destroyed the institution of the family at that particular point in time. That is connected with something I have said before, and I feel comfortable to say it again: One of the great advantages that East Indians in Trinidad and Tobago and other parts of the new world have had in their history, is that indentureship did not do to Indians what slavery did to Africans. That is something that must inform how we understand our history.

Granted that over the many years, there were other factors that would have impacted very negatively on the institution of the family: alcoholism, poverty, unemployment and so on; all those are factors which cause us to be in a situation today where across ethnic, class and economic lines, whatever groupings you may have, we have problems with the family. So we want to take a position: What can the State do?

Going back in history, looking at the fact that the State was responsible for the decimation of the institution of the family, we ask ourselves: Has the State since then—you see, after slavery the State left it to the churches and later on to NGOs and so on, to repair the damage. But I ask the question: How can the most powerful institution destroy another institution and then ask weaker institutions to repair it? We have taken the position within our ministry that the State must be advised, specifically, on what we can do now. Rather than lending some financial support to various NGOs, what can the State do to repair the institution of the family?

We are very well aware that it matters not whether race, ethnicity or class; wherever the institution of the family is dysfunctional, we have problems in our society. Wherever the institution of the family is functional, we find that the children go to school, access education and grow up to be constructive citizens. That family, as has often been said, being the bedrock of our civilization. We are working hard on that.

In fact, over the last few weeks we have expanded the project. We have to go back to Cabinet to ask for an extension, because the life of the project was six



months. We have discovered that there is need for greater consultation. We have also discovered that the issues in the urban centres are different from rural centres, so we have to treat all these issues and situations differently. We have been doing a number of focus group meetings and sector consultations. We have had all these meetings in various parts of the country trying to get information from the citizens as to what their specific problems are, and to help us conduct a proper analysis. We ask the various citizens to make various recommendations as to what role the State, itself, can play. I have asked for very specific recommendations. I do not want general and generic information. I want very specific things that the Government can do to contribute to the rehabilitation of the institution of the family.

As you know, Madam President, if you get the family wrong, we certainly will get the society wrong. Even so, no number of programmes that we have will be able to address or compensate for the failure or collapse of the institution of the family. All the programmes that we have are relief programmes to provide immediate relief.

Let me take this opportunity to call on our citizens to be more responsible with our sexual conduct, in particular. [*Desk thumping*] Very often when we speak about responsible/irresponsible sexual conduct, we speak about sexually transmitted diseases, and that is valid and applicable, but citizens in our country must think carefully in terms of their capacity to take care of children before they decide to conceive children [*Desk thumping*] or before they decide to engage in sexual activity that would lead to the conception of a child.

It is extremely important, because we have children in this country growing up in very difficult circumstances, abusive social circumstances and so on, and getting to age 13 or 14, they, themselves, then reflect the kind of treatment that would have been meted out to them while they were growing up.

**Sen. Seetahal:** From what I am gathering here this Carnival season, I just wanted to know if the Minister is advocating abstinence or safe sex. If he is advocating safe sex, does that include young people? If it includes young people, is he talking about a necessary step of giving condoms or some kind of protection to youths, making them available?

**Sen. The Hon. M. Abdul-Hamid:** I am advocating intelligence. I do not want to go get drawn into an argument between the church and the Family Planning Association. I am advocating that however you decide to prevent your conception, whether it be by abstinence or through the use of some protective paraphernalia—

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[*Laughter*] you choose a better word—or some protective gear, I will leave that up to the intelligence of our citizenry and their own moral values or whatever they want to apply. [*Laughter*] [*Crosstalk*]

I want our citizens to focus on their decision to engage in an activity which can cause them to find themselves in a situation for which they are not prepared. Citizens have been, and continue to be, engaged in certain kinds of activities, our sexual conduct, in particular, without a clear understanding of the behaviour and consequence. I ask our citizens to make the connection between your behaviour and the consequences. It is an intellectual exercise, and I have every confidence that our citizens are intelligent, and can, in fact, do what is right and intelligent.

That does not only apply to Carnival time. I make the appeal at this time; it does not mean that it applies only to the Carnival season. It is something that is characteristic of our culture, an aspect of our culture that we must address.

Madam President, I have a lot to say about a lot of other things that we have actually been doing. I would love to have the time to do it, but I do not really. I want to give way to my colleague so he could make his contribution as well. But there are quite a few things I want to go through which we have managed to achieve, so I would run through them very quickly, so that the impression will not be given that we were supposed to do these things, we did not do them, and we were lying down for the entire year.

**Hon. Senator:** Liming.

**Sen. The Hon. M. Abdul-Hamid:** We ran an anger management programme in Laventille for which we got no coverage. God alone knows, “ah shoulda” put a middle page ad in the newspaper so that people would know about it. That anger management programme was extremely successful. It was a pilot project which gave our citizens some skills that they would not necessarily have had. It taught them how to manage their emotions, interpersonal/intra-personal management, how to resolve conflicts and so on; those are things that we have been trying to do.

We are nearing the completion of a system for the decentralization of the delivery of social services; that is an extremely complicated and important exercise, because it would revolutionize the way social services are delivered.

I have on my desk right now a proposal which is to go to Cabinet for addressing the situation with deportees. That has been at the end of a number of very important consultations, even with deportees. I, myself, met a few deportees who gave me some very good ideas as to how we could treat with and adjust the various problems that we have.

The Division of Aging is a division that we had to establish, and we did. It is a division which will now take responsibility for all these projects that are relevant to older persons in our society. We sourced the services of a monitoring and evaluation consultant from Ghana, through the United Nations. He is with us now, helping us to develop our monitoring and evaluation capacity and in various ministries as well. So whereas we could act, somewhat, as a kind of external auditor, ministries would have their internal capacity so they could do their monitoring functions at that particular level.

We have also undertaken to review and redesign the mediation programme to correct some of the problems that existed before, and to put greater emphasis on some of the areas where we see greater need. *[Interruption]*

**Sen. R. Montano:** On a point of clarification. Would the Minister clarify something for me, because I was not certain that I heard correctly. Did I hear the Minister say that he had met with deportees in order to help them with their problems, and that he was taking the problems of the deportees, amongst others, but I am zeroing in on the deportees, to the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago? Is that what I heard?

**Sen. The Hon. M. Abdul-Hamid:** Let me tell you what you heard. *[Laughter]* You heard that the Minister had a meeting with a deportee. No one can prevent a citizen of Trinidad and Tobago from having a meeting with a minister. If a deportee writes to me or calls my office and asks for a meeting with me—he is a citizen of this country. I am very humble and very open, and I agreed. He came into my office and had a meeting in my office with a deportee. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that.

The deportee explained to me some of the problems he was having. For example, he said that he did not have an identification card, which alerted me to the fact that these deportees, when they were outside there for 20 years or so, have no idea how to access identification cards and so on. As a result of that, that idea was included in a proposal to treat with deportees.

The Cabinet has a decision to make as to how we are going to treat with deportees. Cabinet may or may not decide. I cannot speak for the entire Cabinet before the matter gets there, but I can speak for the proposal.

**Sen. R. Montano:** What is the proposal? This is the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago. What is the proposal?

**Sen. The Hon. M. Abdul-Hamid:** I just wanted to give an idea of some of the things we have been doing. I wish to wind up. I thank you for the opportunity to respond. I thank Sen. Seetahal and Sen. Mark for the contributions they would have made, which gave me that opportunity.

**4.00 p.m.**

**Sen. R. Montano:** Madam President, before the Minister closes, I wonder if I could ask him, through you—because he did not tell the Senate of Trinidad and Tobago what the proposals were and I am certain that all of us are most curious to know, and this is the Parliament, this is where it should come out. So may I, through you Madam President, ask the Minister—and if he needs extra time I will gladly vote for it—what are these extra proposals.

**Madam President:** If I may intervene, my understanding is that the proposals are being formulated and, therefore, I expect the Minister would bring them to Parliament. Is that correct?

**Sen. The Hon. M. Abdul-Hamid:** You can tune into the post Cabinet press conference, I am sure we would advertise it.

**Sen. R. Montano:** Madam President, with the greatest of respect, this is a problem we are having here. This is Parliament, and the Minister's answer to the nation in Parliament— [*Interruption*] Please be quiet!

**Madam President:** Sen. Montano, you do not tell anybody in here to be quiet. If you want an answer from the Minister: Mr. Minister, will you give an answer? But that is not the way you address another Member of this Senate.

**Sen. The Hon. M. Abdul-Hamid:** Madam President, you were absolutely right when you said that we are in fact developing the proposals. They are not ready. We are developing the proposals, after which there is a procedure. We would take them to Cabinet which will decide how exactly we are going to treat with deportees; the support services we are going to afford if necessary; how we are going to deal with them and at that stage they would be made public. It is only at that stage they can be made public.

**Sen. Mark:** Madam President, I honestly thought I heard my hon. friend telling the Senate that the proposal on the deportees is currently before Cabinet and that he is awaiting a response and he will inform us afterwards. Now he is saying that the proposal is being formulated to be sent to Cabinet. If you go to the *Hansard* now, you will see what he said. He does not know what he is saying, Madam President. He is misleading the Senate.

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** Madam President, please, we are not in question time. The Senator has made a contribution. Sen. Mark, more than anybody else, knows how policy is formulated and how decisions are taken and it is not the way he is suggesting that we should take it here. Can we move on with the debate? [*Crosstalk*]

**The Ministry of Legal Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Danny Montano):** Thank you very much. Madam President, I intend to make a very brief contribution this afternoon. I wanted to deal with a particular mischief that was caused when Sen. Wade Mark made his contribution. I chose at the time not to entertain his statement, I thought I would deal with it a little later and I thank you for the opportunity.

Sen. Mark, in his contribution, indicated and implied that somehow there was something improper and irregular in the hiring practices of the Government and all the different agencies and services, in particular he spoke about the protective services.

Madam President, it is most unfortunate when we come at a time like this and an Opposition party which finds itself withering on the vine—their support is falling away from them and they find themselves having to retreat to the more baser instincts of mankind in order to try to raise passions of those of our citizens who feel that there may be some truth to the argument.

We are now in the year 2004 and all of us are trying to move the country forward, and trying to bring arguments back to base issues such as racialism, I say this is not the place and certainly not the occasion or time for that. [*Desk thumping*] We have gone way past that. The Senator knows—

**Sen. Mark:** On a point of order. I think the Senator is misleading the Senate. I never raised matters on a racial basis; I said equality of opportunity within the framework of the State. I never attempted to raise the ante as he is trying to do. So he is misleading the Senate as to what I said. [*Crosstalk*]

**Madam President:** I am hearing a discussion going on while I am trying to listen to what Sen. Mark is saying. [*Interruption*]

**Sen. R. Montano:** It is not just me, Madam President; you must deal with everybody—

**Madam President:** I know. It is on both sides, but—

**Sen. R. Montano:** You must talk to Sen. Dumas as well.

**Madam President:** I was hearing your voice Sen. R. Montano.

**Sen. R. Montano:** Then call his name too.

**Madam President:** Then both of you will please stop now, Sen. Dumas also.

May I say that I will not tolerate this kind of behaviour for the rest of the day Sen. R. Montano, Sen. D. Dumas, whoever. If it happens again I would have to act.

Sen. Mark, you were saying?

**Sen. Mark:** On a point of order, Madam President. The Senator is implying that I was on a racial head and I am indicating to you I was not on a racial head, I was indicating that in our society there is inequality of opportunity as a whole.

**Madam President:** Sen. D. Montano, I think he is correct. He did not use the word race at any time. He was just trying to—as he said—point out that there might be inequality in the services.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Thank you very much. I will be guided, but I did say that there was the implication of racialism and it does—if you read the *Hansard* it is clearly implied and while it is not stated, it is implied when he says that 95 per cent of the policemen are afro-Trinidadians. In the first instance, he pulls statistics that he had made up; he quoted no source. What is the implication? What do the students in our public schools who look at television, listen to the radio and read the newspapers think? They will believe the statement to be true when in fact it is completely made up.

Madam President, we are here to represent the people, we are here to lead and we must do so with responsibility. We must be responsible; we must not make wild statements that have no basis in fact. It may be true that there is a different rate in the races in terms of the different services. That may be so, but Madam President, unless you look at the rate of applications—

**Sen. Mark:** Madam President, on a point of clarification. I do not know if he will allow me.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** I am not finished, and I am not giving way.

**Madam President:** Both of you cannot be standing; one has to sit. The Senator says he is not giving way, Sen. Mark.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Unless you look at the profile of applications as compared with that of those who are accepted, you are talking absolute nonsense. [*Desk thumping*] To give you an example—

[*Sen. Mark stands*]

**Madam President:** Will both of you sit?

Sen. Montano, do not impute that he was speaking utter nonsense, maybe you can put it in other words.

**Sen. Mark:** He should withdraw it.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** I will use the word that he has used, “piffle”.  
[*Laughter*]

**Sen. Mark:** I have never used that word and I would ask him to withdraw.

**Madam President:** Gentlemen, what is going on?

**Sen. Mark:** Madam President, on a point of order. You just implied and indicated to the hon. Senator that he cannot impute improper motives. He has to withdraw his statement, but instead of doing so, he goes on to counteract what you have asked. You have directed him to deal with it, so let him withdraw the statement.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Madam President, with the greatest of respect, I was sitting on that side—

**Sen. Mark:** Madam President, on a point of order. I have asked you to rule on this matter.

**Madam President:** Sen. D. Montano, please do not use those words again.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** I would not, but I would like to inform you, Madam President, that when I was sitting on that side, that expression was used and it was not withdrawn and, therefore, it is part of the parliamentary language. However, I will let the public judge for themselves what kind of statement it is, whether or not it belongs to the dung pile or whether it belongs to a Chamber like this.

When, some months ago, there were some issues raised about the profile of the students at the Trinidad and Tobago Institute of Technology (TTIT) and the University of the West Indies, what was being said by others—not necessarily those in the Chamber—was that there was an over-balance of Indo-Trinidadians in TTIT and the University of the West Indies. We were in office then and there never was or will be any need for this administration to retreat into base racial issues.

We looked at the situation and found that the profile of applicants resembled fairly closely the profile of those who had been accepted at the university and TTIT and I said so. It became an issue for the Government to investigate why it

was happening and why there was that kind of imbalance. We must make sure that everything is in fact fair and open. There was no charge from anybody on this side that the TTIT which was set up by that administration was done to have some ulterior racial objectives. There were those who said that, but we did not say that, and we were not going to associate ourselves with anything like that at all. That is the major difference between that side and this side. [*Desk thumping*]

The good Senator also knows that in all the agencies to which he referred, the Government does not do the hiring and the firing. He very well knows that part of the problem with the police service is the way it is structured and the Government can do nothing. It was a problem for them when they were in office, and after prodding from the PNM when it was in Opposition, they drafted some legislation that would change the management structure. They failed to bring it to Parliament and up to this time, although we have laid it, they have not yet indicated whether or not they would support that legislation if we bring it.

Madam President, what the Senator is trying to say I do not think I can find parliamentary language to describe the foolishness of it.

**Sen. Mark:** Madam President, on a point of order. I think that the decorum demands that the Senator is applying the language to me and I take objection. He is imputing improper motives and I ask him, through you, to withdraw.

**Madam President:** Sen. Mark, I honestly cannot see— [*Interruption*]

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Madam President, what we have witnessed from Sen. Mark, is a display of ignorance that does not belong in the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago. He went on to talk about crime, and part of the problem that the country faces is one of discipline: in the home, the street, the playground, and in the Parliament. We have a very simple book of rules which is not more than 50 pages, but those simple rules seem to be followed more in the breach by Senators on the opposite side.

We have had displays up to today of flagrant breaches of the Standing Orders. What kind of example are we setting for the children of the country? [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. Mark:** Are you attacking your brother?

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** What kind of example are we setting when we tolerate that kind of foolish behaviour, that kind of indiscipline? The rules are here.



**Sen. Mark:** Okay master. The master is preaching. So the word “foolish” is accepted, okay.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Madam President, the rules are there so that we can govern ourselves and if we cannot govern ourselves effectively, decently, and properly in this Chamber, then how can we expect to govern outside? How can someone over there mumbling utterances like that—again in breach of the Standing Orders—as I speak. [*Interruption*]

**Sen. Mark:** “Massa cassava”.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** What is in fact insulting language, or what he may think is insulting language. Insulting and inflammatory language and yet he thinks—

**Madam President:** Sen. Mark, usually when you are making your contribution, you are very rarely disturbed, even though there may be many opportunities when you could be disturbed. I think you should allow others to make their contribution.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Madam President, you know it relates to the situation of crime in the country. How can we ask our youngsters to obey the law when we do not obey it ourselves? What kind of example are we setting? It is broadcast on the television, it is on the front page of the newspapers, it is on all the airwaves. What example are we setting when we do that? And they want to chastise this side for not looking at crime? I say help us do so; help us set an example, help us make sure that things are run decently and properly, let us try to elevate, not denigrate and bring down. Surely, this is the Chamber where all the lofty ideals, ambitions and goals of the people can come into one place so we can go upwards. We should not be dragged down into the mud of racialism and things of that sort. We must lift ourselves up and go forward.

Madam President, contributions such as we have heard this afternoon have no place in this Chamber, they do nothing to further the cause of any citizen in the country. What we look forward to on this side are contributions that will help; it may chastise, it may analyze, it may criticize and all that is fair game, that is fair opposition, but what we have heard has no place in this Chamber, it does not belong here. I urge all Senators to raise the level and standard of debate in the Chamber and let us talk about the business of the people.

Thank you very much.

**Sen. Dr. Eastlyn McKenzie:** Madam President, I just have two brief points to make. I want to draw the Minister’s attention to one of the reasons money was

taken from the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation. It says, the non-payment of arrears of increment owed to officers, migrated, died, or are involved in disciplinary proceedings.

I want to draw to the attention of Ministers in various ministries that we have a practice of putting people on suspension from duty and they are suspended for years whether on full pay, no pay or half pay. I have known people who have been on suspension for three or four years, it is as though they are fired and they are being paid. I think it is terrible and it is time we stop it. I would not like to see a reason like this cropping up. It is all over.

I know of cases where teachers have been suspended for five years and they actually did so much for themselves out of it and drew all their salaries. They had to be paid. And I think it is inefficiency on the part of those who are suspending them. I think that the investigations should take under six months and the matters should be cleared up. If you are going to fire them, fire them; if you are going to exonerate them, exonerate them.

Madam President, the hon. Minister of Social Development and Gender Affairs sort of elaborated on it, but I want to say that we are four months in the new financial year and a year before these proposals for the setting up of these day centres for older persons were brought to Parliament. I want to give the hon. Minister a little advice from experience. You cannot wait until you have everything in place to start and I think that you can bring the programme on stream in stages. I know that you said that some of them have actually started and you have been doing so in stages, but when I looked at the special report in the *Sunday Guardian* on the experiences of the elderly in homes and in the geriatric wards, it burned my heart to know that we have provisions for day care for older persons which is just on paper.

Late last year, I spoke with Sen. Kangaloo on the matter and we looked at the Bill of 2000 on older persons, and she did indicate that there were certain flaws in the legislation and I am saying let us do something. We have passed bills with flaws in the legislation just two weeks ago, so let us set up something. If we do not have the resources and the space as he said, let us get the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or somebody who is capable to do it, but I would advise the Minister to set a deadline and say by so and so month, we must have this going.

Madam President, believe me, if the Minister or anybody should return here in another six months or a year with this programme on the agenda and it is not started, I cannot guarantee that I can be as cool as I am. It is really terrible. I say to contract people. Throw out a contract just as you throw out contracts for CEPEP.

It does not have to be a CEPEP in road building or what have you, throw it out in these areas, get some people contracted to set up two senior citizens' homes and let them train people to run them.

It is disheartening to NGOs like ours where we are trying to assist in making the life of our people; whether they are special people, handicapped, blind, whoever they are, and we feel that Government is trying to do everything for itself. You do not have the resources. If you have the financial resources and you do not have the human resource or the physical resource then farm it out to those who have the experience. Let them expand and go into it and assist them.

I think this is where we have to go, but I am very peeved about these rules in the social sector that have not come on stream and our people are languishing and perishing. In fact they have reached the stage where they feel they have nobody to fend for them, nobody to help them. You actually heard this from one old person who said: "Now ah ole I is no use to them, dey doh care about me." I think this is really terrible.

Sen. D. Montano talked about giving ideas. I want to throw out an idea. Here we have some of these people who would prefer to remain at home and I know you have the geriatric programme, but you need to go further than that. I go to homes for the elderly; I also visit some of them in their own homes and I visit some of them in the State-run homes. Once they can stay in their homes—some you definitely have to put in these special homes because you cannot take care of them. But if these people, as we say in Tobago, have their right senses and are collective—that is just a local saying—they would prefer to stay in their own environment. They could live longer as long as they can have people who would go and help them. I know this exists in the geriatric homes, but I do not think the training is enough and I will give you an example.

I went to see an old lady who is 83 years and in a wheelchair—and you do all sorts of small errands for them. She told me her blood sugar machine—just to divert a little, Madam President. I listened to Sen. Abdul-Hamid a while ago when he was fishing for the right word for contraceptives and I said if you were not in the Chair, with your medical experience, you would have assisted him. Back to my point now. She said her blood sugar machine was not working. I went and I cleaned it because that was all it wanted you know. I took it back to her and I asked the trained young lady who is helping her, to take the blood sugar. She said: "I cyar use it, I doh know how to use it."

What I want to say is that in the training of these people you need to do a little extra, and probably if they know a little extra it will encourage people to stay in

their homes. What you can consider is that in your disbursements of funds, not only for old age pension and disability and so on, some sort of incentive or allowance could be given to these people so that they would be encouraged to stay in their homes and receive treatment at home. It helps children who want to take care of their parents and are working. That is why many are put in homes because they have nobody at home to take care of them; but if I know I have somebody reliable who will come when I go to work and the State will help me, or I can claim an allowance for them or whatever have you, I could have my mother certified by a doctor saying yes, she is 90 years, she needs home help, and constant care and attention. These are things I think we need to look at. Probably it is too late for this budget, but there is another budget coming in September/October.

I know we in Tobago objected strongly years ago to having homes for older people because we thought that we were alienating them from the family and we were making family members feel that they were not responsible for their family when they got old. And rather than putting them in a home, which we call dumping them, we said that if you kept them at home and took care of them, they would be happy. I have a minute and I am going to wind up now.

Madam President, I want to say to the Government that all those persons on disciplinary suspension or whatever you want to call it should not be there by September. All the backlog cases should be cleared up. I cannot understand for the life of me—if you charge them, you must know why. If you put them on suspension, there must be a reason; you would have done an investigation. After you put them on suspension, why does it take so long to decide and finalize the case? Some of them are on suspension for six months, three years, and four years, as the case may be. That is my first point.

My second point is—

**Sen. Yuille-Williams:** I just want to make the point before the hon. Senator winds up. It is about the placement centre, which is within the ministry. There is a placement centre for the graduates from the Geriatric Adolescent/Partnership Programme (GAPP). Those who can afford will pay, and those who cannot afford and can be treated at home, the Government pays the caregiver for them, and there is an advanced programme. So we are not using those who came through the first programme which is the basic programme. There is an advanced programme and those are the people whom we wish to pay as caregivers for the same set of persons that you have identified. I thought I should just share that with you.

**Sen. Dr. E. McKenzie:** Thank you very much. You see you must share more. Those are the things you must talk about in the newspapers.

Madam President, those are my two main points. Let us try to get these proposals for the social development of our people, get them going and get them on stream.

Madam President, I thank you.

**Madam President:** Hon. Senators, this Senate will now be suspended for tea and we will return at 5.10 p.m.

**4.32 p.m.:** *Senate suspended.*

**5.10 p.m.:** *Sitting resumed.*

**Sen. Mary King:** Madam President, given this is a money Bill, we really have no vote on the issues and I hope that this would change as we develop our new Constitution which, I believe, is something that we would be doing shortly. However, in spite of this, I have a few comments that I would like to make on the Supplemental and Variation of Appropriation 2003.

Item one on my list of comments is the International Monetary Fund (IMF) payment. I think like some of my colleagues before me, I also need to ask the question: Is this among our normal obligations to the IMF? If it is, why was this not within our planning framework for 2002/2003? If it is not within our normal obligation to the IMF, what exactly is it? I would like the Minister of Finance to give us some details on this and perhaps at that time he would also tell us when did we actually make this payment of \$474 million.

The Minister also states that this would not affect our fiscal balance, but I think it certainly would have an effect on our cash flow. Did this increase our borrowing in 2003, as we already had within our budget that year a borrowing of \$2 billion? I wonder, first of all, why it is only now coming to the Parliament. As the budget was presented late last year we should have heard about it at that time. Also, did we now borrow \$2.5 billion instead of \$2 billion in 2003?

I would also challenge the Minister to explain to me his so-called surplus when we have actually borrowed either at least \$2 billion or maybe \$2.5 billion. So we cannot have both a large borrowing and a surplus.

The second item I would like to just touch on is the decrease of \$80 million within the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation. It is actually giving up \$80 million. I ask the same question as my colleague, Sen. Seetahal: Can we afford not to have this spending and not to employ the kinds of people that we need within the national security service and the ministry? I do not think we can

continue delays in implementing the recruitment in this very critical area. I think, looking through some of the figures, we have to ask some questions: Where really are our managers within the ministries and where are the controls so that we can ensure that we do progress year by year? Because I am seeing that we have budgeted large amounts; we do not spend them and yet we proceed.

Looking at this particular item under the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation, it also can be linked back to the Ministry of Social Services, and it has been mentioned by Sen. Seetahal that we need to put in place institutions such as halfway houses for the children who reach a certain age and are no longer allowed to stay within the orphanages. We are not talking about leaving them in NGOs to assist in their development, we are talking about real life halfway houses so that these people can be trained and led back into society as contributing people within our society. Being an orphan is not a shame and we should be trying to do what we can do to ensure that they reach their potential.

The third item I would just like to touch on is the decreases of expenditure within the Ministry of Education. On one item alone we have \$82.5 million not being spent on the settlement of arrears to the public servants. I would really like to know what are the real reasons for this decrease—this lack of expenditure—because it appears that 38 per cent of the budgeted arrears have not been paid and I find this very hard to fathom if we are really managing our budget with controlled processes within each Ministry.

We then come to the next item on that listing from the Ministry of Education: Primary Teacher Training. There was a decrease in spending therefore it meant that our budgeted planned primary teacher training was not completed, and we all know the importance of primary teaching and primary teacher training. It is of utmost concern because that is really the primary training that our children get before they get to the secondary school level and we see the state of the secondary schools these days. So there may be a link between the lack of proper training at the primary level.

We also have an item under the book grants, and I think we need to examine the book grant budget. I really have to ask the question: Who was actually managing the book grants? Who was involved in the planning process, given that we did not spend two-thirds of what we had budgeted to spend on that item? All of these people who were involved in that process and the planning of this item, are they still employed within the ministry? Do we have any performance systems in place so that we can monitor their performance and find out why these things are happening? Perhaps they need to be removed and replaced with people who

are competent and who can be trained to manage the support systems within the ministry, because that ministry is having a budget this year, I think, of \$2.6 billion. Therefore, I think that is a very important item that needs to be addressed quickly because we know that our secondary education system is certainly not at the optimum or at the level at which we would like it to be.

We have an item: The Provision of Library and Textbooks. I am sure schools are depending on receiving these books. I think we heard that certain books were not printed. Was this because a local printery did not supply them? Was this an overseas printery which was unable to supply them? Was there a tendering process to decide who the printers are, or were? If so, is there a penalty for not having supplied these books? Is there a clause like that in our contracts? So I really have to ask, how can we improve this most important sector of our education system if we have the lack of supply of critical materials, particularly books?

Then we have \$3.3 million which was also not spent on refurbishing or extensions, again to primary schools. I do not think the performance within the Ministry of Education shows that there is really substantial progress and effective administration of the budget. I think we need better management systems; we need better control systems in the ministry, especially as I said just now, we are spending \$2.6 billion on it.

I had some comments on the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries but I realize that as the National Petroleum (NP) is before the Public Accounts (Enterprises) Committee, it would probably not be right—as a matter of fact, it would be wrong—to make any comment at this stage and the comments would be contained within the report that would come before the Parliament soon, we hope.

So I really would like to say that if we look at total figures which had been vired from two ministries across to four other ministries, we see a total of \$256 million-plus and I have to ask the question: Had the ministries been very efficient and spent their \$256 million and these other ministries needed an additional \$256 million, would this money have also added to our borrowings which we already had at a level of \$2 billion?

I would like to close by saying that our management systems need improvements, otherwise we would continue to borrow and borrow and not get the items effected that are in the budget and which have been approved by the Parliament to be effected. I would like to suggest to the Government that when we come back to the Parliament and to the public with a discussion on constitutional

reform, perhaps we should also be establishing a joint select committee of Parliament to be involved in real budgeting, controlling and monitoring the expenditure. I think if we set up systems like this, then we would get real democratic united systems with proper controls on the country's finances.

Thank you very much, Madam President.

**The Minister of Education (Sen. The Hon. Hazel Manning):** Madam President, I stand to explain the issues on the Supplementation and Variation on the Education appropriation for fiscal year 2003 and to respond to Senators Mark, Seetahal and King.

Early in January 2003 and continuing until September 2003, the Ministry of Education sent out approximately 13,000 statements to teachers to settle fully the arrears of increments. Approximately 10,000 teachers were sent letters of statements of arrears of increments, while 3,000 teachers were identified as not qualifying. However, a large number of teachers took the option as provided by the Ministry of Education to query the statements. The Ministry of Education paused to entertain the queries and I want to say here today that over 7,000 teachers have accepted their statements of arrears to date and a remaining 3,000 teachers are now in the final stages of being processed. So whereas we did not meet the September deadline, by December 2003 but by January 2004, over 7,000 teachers have been processed.

I want to move on to the second point and that is the computerization of primary schools which began in 1999 by the last government, but it was not until 2002/2003 that the implementation of that programme began. Of a total of 81 primary schools to be computerized, by September of that year 43 schools were computerized. There were labs installed in 43 primary schools. During the vacation period of 2002—2003, approximately 200 schools were repaired and upgraded so that installation of hardware could continue. This year the ministry has placed emphasis on the computerization of approximately 200 primary schools, so that the programme is continuing. We are, as you notice, clearing up problem after problem which the Ministry of Education inherited from the previous administration.

I speak now about secondary schools' book grants and credit card initiative, this initiative which caused so many problems in understanding what it is all about. The fiscal year ended in September 2003 and, as we all know, the academic year started in the same month that the fiscal year ended. School is closed in July and August and opens in September, so by the time the school



books, credit cards and the book grants were delivered in September and early October, the fiscal year had ended. This Government only pays contractors after goods are delivered and we paid at the end of October.

So I want again to inform this Senate that payment has been made for the delivery of textbooks, book grants and of credit cards in keeping with the terms negotiated. Contractors have delivered their books relating to the new national curriculum that was put in place in September 2003. This is an important point because that new curriculum is a broad-based one, which incorporates academic as well as what we call the non-academic subjects, such as physical education, visual and performing arts and technology education. These subjects have become compulsory. Not every child can cope with a total academic curriculum, so these children have to be supported in a school system that looks at, what is called, multiple intelligences. We now have children in the schools in Form 1 involved in drama, music, sport, technology education and enjoying school. We have also hired over 400 remedial teachers to support these special children.

You see, we have to make sure that these teachers are paid; that computers are in schools; that books are available to support these children who were placed in schools in the year 2000 without any support or help from the Ministry of Education and who are now in a lot of trouble, becoming involved in indiscipline and violence in a system that was not caring.

I want to tell Sen. Mark that we are very much aware of the realities outside there. Therefore, we are ensuring that in this fiscal year the systems that were not put in place in the year 2000 to look after our special children, are going to be in place. We have started in the year 2003. I am sure in a short time that the violence and the indiscipline that we are now witnessing would disappear.

Thank you very much, Madam President.

**Sen. Brother Noble S. A. Khan:** Thank you, Madam President, for allowing me this opportunity to share some thoughts on a matter which is before us: A Bill to supplement and vary the appropriation of the sum the issue of which was authorized by the Appropriation Act, 2003.

Indeed, one could look at these five pages as having a sort of inverse relationship towards the scarcity of the number of pages to the weight that they carry. But before I proceed I would like also to pay tribute to my former erstwhile colleagues in the budget division, Ministry of Finance, for what is before us. I would be making a few comments on the system as I see it.

What is before us here, basically, besides the transfers in-between which we could look at as a mechanism of shifting money within two parameters, one being a fixed sum and when that total sum has shifted but still remain total, and also an amount that brings an increase, which is the supplementary. If my memory serves me correct, what the system demands or provides for is that when there is need for increase in expenditure, the authority of the House reigns supreme, and this is what should be done first. There is a mechanism within the system too, where you have, what has been referred to as a contingency fund, which is a subset of the Consolidated Fund and where you can spend money pending the passing in the House of that increased expenditure which has been identified.

What is before us, it seems to me, has more or less curtailed that system, because, again, if my memory serves me correctly, the contingency fund might be about either \$20 million or \$25 million. I do not know if it has been increased, but I know it has been that for quite some time. But in any event, I do not think it would have been increased to any magnificent amount from what is before us.

This brings into being the whole concept of parliamentary control and authority. Obviously then, what may have taken place—and one would think in terms of creative accounting, creative financing being instituted to have what is before us, because basically money has been spent and we are seeking to give validation to that money.

The very basis of the question of democracy as we know it and what we have inherited, originated out of the whole concept of money and its spending, if we were to even look back at the old systems that obtained out of the UK experience. So again it seems to be the adoption of a system which may have served well in another country and has been more or less used to influence our system. Even when we have put it into being there are still questions of its relevancy, if we are to curtail, as we have said, the very authority upon which the whole edifice of our Parliament rests.

So this is a very important point that I would like to bring to bear. One would think in terms of some of the mechanisms that might be taking place in meeting the funding pending the coming into being of this—is that money coming from outside? And again, within recent times I would think that the element of creative funding and financing have emerged where satellite bodies of the central government which is under tight control within the Consolidated Fund, are used as a mechanism where the Minister of Finance could definitely authorize and give, what has been referred to as, letters of comfort or a sort of shade of protection by these satellite bodies. Substantial moneys could be used by these

satellite bodies. Obviously, the people whom they might be getting the funding from would be mainly the banking community and a heavy cost would be carried.

So you have on the one hand, a mechanism being used but carry a high cost that back-feeds into the system and by extension to the taxpayer, in meeting certain contingencies and in meeting the continuity of Government, so to speak, and against the background of flexibility, accountability and transparency, the relevancy of that type of mechanism could be questioned. The system has been around for quite some time. Again, if my memory serves me right, it was called Ordinance No. 20 of 1959, the Exchequer and Audit Act, and then it was revised with the coming of the Constitution. But basically it has remained the same.

What occupies my mind—and I know it has been repeated over the period of time—is the question of how we could bring an element of change within the financial system that would make it relevant to what a present, modern-day society on the brink of 2020 could achieve. Our colleague, Sen. Mary King mentioned the question of managerial emphases which has been around for quite some time.

Some of the techniques of budgetary processes—I recall one that President Johnson, I think was his name—in America, this phenomenon is being looked at by all countries, even those more advanced, when a concept of performance budgeting was brought in, and subsequently you would have heard terms of zero-based budgeting and different techniques where management is the emphasis. So far even—one would take it that any young person in managerial studies now—and you know there is a surfeit of that all over the place and even in our country—how has that influenced our system that we have?

Government in the Caribbean—and let us restrict it to our own country—is the biggest spender, the biggest operator, the biggest everything as far as projects are concerned, and one would think that the efficiency and the operations of that system would have been a high priority. Obviously, it seems to me, that has been very elusive, because here we are with something that goes back to even the foundation of our very nation. Obviously, the mechanism for bringing it into play is one that we would have considered. Since I have been here, for the last two budgets I have made mention of it, and even before that, even at academia, one would think that would have been a high priority too. But again, we see no evidence of any of those matters coming to bear.

We have heard from Members of the Government who have spoken on the questions of management, of making a system responsive to achieving goals in a

more effective and efficient manner, but here, again, we have this system—plenty talk; talk cheap. Even in our Standing Orders of the Senate, and I refer to the Joint Parliamentary Committees, 72(1) on page 71 which states:

“At the commencement of each Parliament, the Senate (with the concurrence of the House of Representatives) shall appoint the following Joint Parliamentary Committees:

(a) Banking, Finance and Estimates...”

**5.40 p.m.**

One would think that if this is functioning and operating in a certain way, much of the control that could be instituted by this joint parliamentary committee, there would be salutary effects in trying to bring to bear some element of efficiency to what each of us desires. I am sure that both here and in the other place efficiency and effectiveness are desirable. We see no action such as that before us. As far as the system is concerned, I appeal that we give some particular and a more incisive look with a view to change the system to bring more managerial effects into play, where we would think of clear-cut goals.

Some attempt has been made in the structure of the budget. Previously, where it was pure line item, it has now emerged into a functional line item. This is geared towards a legalistic approach and when it reaches here we have five pages. As I said before, it is meant to deliver goods and it is the instrument by which the people whom we are supposed to serve would realize what is desirable for them as far as goods, services, peace, tranquility and a good police system. Law and order being the first order of the day go back to colonial times, but it still obtains. This seems to be elusive as far as the delivery of law and order in our country is concerned. We touched on that the last time.

Other laws are before us with regard to the question of getting things done. Laws for tendering are coming. With all this we have been unable to bring to bear—and we can see the urgency of this matter. As recent as last week, we saw what took place on the Motion on the Adjournment. My humble opinion was that the request of one side for certain requirements was not made with respect to certain work that was done. Regrettably, the other side was pointing out that that took place when they were there. That is the sort of interplay. It seems to me that we were dealing with something like both parties are of the same ilk with regard to getting things done. To my mind that was shocking. These things reach out to our people. They may not be sophisticated as some of us. When that confidence is destroyed there would be negative feedback in the society that touches our soul. We should give this higher priority.

We are speaking about a Bill that deals with the civil service. I would try to bring some of the thoughts which I think are very critical if we are to make any meaning of this exercise. For many years in other fora, this has been referred to as the cleaning-up exercise, in other words, crossing the t's and dotting the i's to ensure some form of arithmetical accountability is achieved. While that might be good for some audits, we are a nation that is behind as far as demands for our people are concerned. It is necessary to evolve a system that would be relevant and responsive to those demands and the changes. The question of the management of uncertainty would be very critical in this area. There must be a need to bring the latest as far as what has been discovered. Though our number may be small, we have a very high percentage or rate of sophistication in academics and ability to meet challenges. It is a question of getting it moving.

Some mention has been made about the solution of the criminal activities that seem to permeate all aspects of our society. One gets the feeling that this could be solved by movement of funds. In every other area one would think that if we want to meet any challenge or risk, we should try to see where those things lie. If we think that dollars and cents could solve it, we are off track. There is need to look in other areas. Some response is being made within the law and order system and the social and community departments. All these help. Nobody can do for you what you should do for yourself.

The family has been the building block of civilization and in all the faith based traditions, this is so. Some mention has been made of where it went off. It is my understanding and experience that people from the African and South Asian continents are family-based people within their soul. To say that some experience in the past may have triggered that, so there is destruction of the family structure, I never accepted that argument. This was just a passing phase that has been referred to here. Trinidad and Tobago was never a slave society where those heinous practices that have been mentioned took place. It is very small.

Under Head 56, Ministry of Social Development and Gender Affairs some reference has been made. It is very important that I mention this. Some of the most stable and responsible families that have derived and continue to be derived are from African heritage. I still think that it is so. I was born and grew up in East Dry River, in Laventille which is hard core African country. If you want to meet stable family life you can meet it there. Perhaps, within recent times, there has been some aberration in that area, but I would attach that to the present day swing of possibly the North Atlantic influence and our deficiency in forging a society within the last 40 years. This is one area we have to address. If we do not have it correctly, the solution that would be applied may be totally irrelevant.

This brings me to another area in social development. The challenge of HIV/AIDS is big not only in our country or the Caribbean, but also on the international scene. I was fortunate to attend a consultation in which the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education took part. It was important that the Minister of Health and the Minister of Education attend. There were over 400 persons from all aspects of our society. The message that came out in dealing with it was the whole question of abstinence among our young people. My formulation of it is that, he who has it must not spread it and he who does not have it must not get it. If we were to apply that while meeting the challenge of addressing those in the curative area—I know that the Government is committed and systems are in place for it. I would like to see that we extend that to the rest of the country. The question of abstinence, purity, chastity and care for your virginity, even those who may have passed that stage but taking a mark forward, are all increasing in our society, which is good. Bad as the government statistics may be, we are aware of that. If you would bear with me my lady.

As far as our economy is concerned we are still in the area of the slave economy which this Bill seems to address. The monoculture thing we hear about; sugar and cocoa might have gone but were replaced by gas and oil. The structures still remained although we have tried to diversify. Senators have made mention of that before. The gas that comes and the funds we are getting out of it, I would like to see—I would continue to say it as repetition in the ear may cause some action to take place—the putting aside. The Minister in the Ministry of Finance has made reference to the putting aside of \$494 million in the Stabilization Fund. That has a specific purpose. I would like to see the putting away of funds in such a way that access to it is not easy. Those funds would have a bearing on generations to come.

When we build infrastructure and capital we can say that is an investment for the population to come. Here we are monitoring gas and oil. Definitely, that is a wasting asset as we know. We hope that by the grace of God when that peters out, we would have discovered some other mechanism to replace what they are doing at the moment. The putting aside of those funds would address questions of intergenerational equity. The bottom line is to put aside for those to come. Our views may vary on that. The years 1973—1980 are not so far away. Nearly all of us here were around at that time. I am making reference to when the first and second oil booms were pumping.

I go to the financial system where with one sheet of paper, what has been referred to as a warrant, hundreds of millions of dollars could have been accessed, under the signature of the Minister of Finance. The question of the controls for

that and how it went about is within the system, but to which this Parliament never had any proper control even in the spending. It has been argued that the Westminster system which many of us do agree with, but some hybrid is before us, makes provision for some form of control. The amount of control that the Parliament has over it, not only in saying how it would be spent, but also in the direction of accountability and transparency is an important aspect, if we are to give some meaning to what is before us today.

I know the question of Constitution reform has been mentioned and fundamental to that must be financial reform. The change of government has rested on funds. That is and in my humble view, still substantially so. The urgency for change in the Constitution is more so now.

In closing my lady—Madam President, forgive me, but I always look and think of you and your conduct and how you manage everything as a lady. Madam President, let me express my thanks for allowing me to share these thoughts with the Senate.

I extend congratulations to the Minister in the Ministry of Finance, his able staff and the rest of the public service.

Thank you. May God bless us.

**Sen. Carolyn Seepersad-Bachan:** Madam President, I rise to make a short contribution to the Finance (Supplementation and Variation of Appropriation) (2003) Bill. I want to summarize quickly what the Minister said. In his speech he indicated that in the fiscal out-turn for 2003, there was a surplus of \$461 million. A fiscal deficit was originally projected as we would recall when we debated in October 2002. That deficit was projected as \$618 million. The budget statement for 2004, that was in October stated a small surplus of \$28.9 million. The variation between \$28.9 million and \$461 million leaves us with \$432 million. The Minister indicated that the \$432 million surplus is as a result of increase in revenue of \$0.5 million and a decrease in the expenditure of \$431.6 million. We also note that there is a supplementation of \$474,620,300, but because of the way we are allowed to treat with that, it does not negatively affect our fiscal balance.

I want to bring to the attention of the Senate to joggle the memory of Senators, that we have had two such Bills for this particular fiscal year. On July 01, before this Senate we had a supplementation and variation bill and we were projecting a deficit of \$618 million. At that time, the Minister projected a deficit of \$568 million because the position had changed. There was an actual increase in revenue and as a result of that, the expenditure went up because of increase in revenues

from SPT and PPT of \$155 million, royalties of \$194 million and in the Unemployment Levy Fund, \$23.4 million. We had an increase in revenue and based on the supplemental Bill that came, we were looking at \$568 million projected deficit. At that time, I raised the issue as to how we were adding back the figures because we noted that there were some increases in the expenditure and some off-balanced items.

In that particular debate the issues of debt and the revenue stream were also raised by several Senators. I endorse all the other Senators who went before me and have emphasized the importance of having to treat with an appropriation and supplementation at this point in time, when the fiscal year ended in September and we debated this as a budget in October 2002, more than a year and three months ago. This is why it is so difficult when we try to put these things back together. One of the things I had hoped and probably the Minister could comment, is that even in July we had asked: What were the revenue streams that were allowing you to project these improved deficit positions? You improved the deficit position in the case of July and now in the case before us with this Bill, we are talking about a surplus position. Are we talking about the LNG prices that the Government has been able to derive increased revenue? What percentage of that? Are we talking about that because of increased oil prices? Were there savings and more contributions in corporation taxes that may have resulted in these improved revenue streams? I am very interested in this aspect of the revenue stream.

I know several other Senators have made this particular point. We know how you budget. We can say that you budgeted on "X" dollars for oil, but what is happening to the natural gas price? What do you estimate in your revenue streams based on the Henry Hub price? What average Henry Hub price do you use in your budgeting process? There is an issue with your production sharing contracts, in terms of the natural gas price which will vary depending on the Henry Hub price and what scheme you are using to budget or estimate the prices of natural gas sold, in terms of million cubic foot. I say this because I know that you would be getting into more production sharing contracts. We have just seen an exploration round even with Repsol saying now that they want to do certain things for the country, because they are very interested in these two off-shore blocks and increasing their production rate. That is their barrel of oil per day equivalent to over 120,000.

I do not want to be too repetitive. I want to endorse some of the points the other Senators have made. A number of Senators mentioned the movement of funds, the variation. The first was the Ministry of National Security and



Rehabilitation and the second was the Ministry of Education. In the case of the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation, you were unable to meet your projected number of recruits and only able to do 80 or 84 per cent. If it was so easy to have an excess of \$80 million, we have a situation in this country where crime is acting as a deterrent to investment in this country. As a result of that, crime must be a high priority. If you had \$80 million excess, could this not have been used to deal with some of the dilapidated buildings to bring temporary relief to those officers who had to abandon them. I know that they would tell me it is because it belonged to this Head or that Head and for that particular project. You have to address the problem. Once the citizens of this country are aware that the funds were available they would ask: Why could it not have been used for this purpose?

What has happened in the Ministry of Education? Time and time again we have heard here what the UNC did and what they did not do and how much they accomplished. I do not know if that is an excuse for those on the opposite Benches to say that is why they would not achieve anything. If you look at the computerization project, even under the UNC tenure, there was a programme with the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries distributing computers to primary schools. That went on successfully. The students started using them and there was no big song and dance as to why those computers could not be installed and a computerization training programme could not start. The problem is when you have lost one year—

**Sen. Manning:** I do not know if the Senator was here when I said that we have started. In that particular project 81 schools were assigned. Over 50 per cent of the schools have been computerized and the programme is going on.

**Sen. C. Seepersad-Bachan:** Thank you. If you look at the original estimate of this project, you have completed 50 per cent. When you look at that, in this day and age—yes Sen. Dr. Saith—the very same Ministry you are talking about knowledge-based economy, starts in the primary school and that is why it has to get focus. That is why we have to start downstairs and bring it up if we want to become a knowledge-based economy. We cannot keep talking about blitz and these nice PR programmes and there is no implementation or anything to back them. We must look at the action.

I would take those two examples, the Ministry of National Security and Rehabilitation and the Ministry of Education and leave the other examples because I know that other Senators have mentioned the other examples. There is a trend that continues with this particular administration. When there is a

variation—this happened and I am counting from the experience of last year January around the same time, when we dealt with a similar Bill for fiscal 2002—you would note that many of the projects that were not implemented are infrastructural ones that can stimulate economic activity. They are projects to develop the knowledge-based economy of Trinidad and Tobago which we tout so many times. We keep referring to this. When you look at the levels in your budget you would see funds being moved from projects that are development oriented and infrastructural to projects that are more consumerism-based. The level of consumerism continues to rise in this particular administration compared to when we look at the development of the nation. When we look at funds and how they are appropriated, in all the variation Bills we see this particular trend developing. I made this point last year when we debated this Bill for the previous fiscal year. We call on the Government to look more at appropriating funds that will stimulate economic activities in this country. Look at appropriating funds that will continue infrastructural development which in turn would redound to the benefit of citizens of this country and develop activity.

There are one or two things that I want to highlight and others have done so. There is a case of the funds going towards the subsidy. In this case we are talking about the appropriation of funds for the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, that is the shortfall in subsidy of \$23 million for 2003. It goes to Unipet and National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited. There is a sum of \$200 million to settle that outstanding debt. By the way, as I was discussing with the Minister of Finance, that debt is from 1991 to now and is the shortfall in subsidy over those years. I made this point before, but I think it is worth repeating. When we look at figures like this in subsidy shortfall and talk about liberalizing the domestic retail marketing sector of this country, we must take into account what sums like this do, when we have to withhold \$23 million.

I do not know the percentage. It may be about 20 per cent of that which was withheld from Unipet. This means that Unipet had to fund that during the time and pay Petrotrin its sum, while the Government takes its time to repay that shortfall in subsidy. In a situation like that, a private sector company that is attempting to participate in the market, this would put that company under pressure in cash flow terms. This issue was brought up before and it was in the plan. This is why I said during the budget debate that it was time to get rid of the subsidy legislation. We cannot be dealing with a liberalized sector and have to look at this complex transaction which deals with how you pay back the shortfall in subsidy, when and however the Government is able to find the funds to make up that shortfall.

I know that the cap was increased from 3 to 4 per cent. I would like to know if the Minister has any of those figures available to tell us how that has been performing over the last four months, since that has been put in effect. Has the subsidy shortfall been greatly reduced? I remember Sen. Sahadeo making that point when we were doing the amendment to the excise duty. She had hoped that that would bring down the subsidy shortfall considerably. If it is not reducing that shortfall considerably, companies like Unipet would start to face cash flow problems. A company like that cannot be without \$10 million to fund its operation.

The issue with the \$200 million, I remember, came forward from 1991, because of the shortfall in the subsidy arrangement. In some cases some of the same producing companies like Petrotrin were not paying into the production levy. There was a surplus that was countering that. During the years 1991 to now, there would have been times when the oil prices were very low. Once the prices were low you would have had a surplus. The Ministry of Finance budgets at a revenue stream. It is line items that come in at a surplus and we have been saying an amendment needs to go into the legislation. When you see \$200 million shortfall in subsidy, there would be a surplus to counter that shortfall. I do not think the Minister can answer those areas.

In the case of National Petroleum, I support Sen. Mark in what he said. When you look at a company like this and see that one of its major functions now is to repay Petrotrin and be the conduit—for several years there has been discussion and debate between the Ministry of Finance, NP and Petrotrin about how to deal with the shortfall in subsidy. Could you use the excise tax which the company collects to pay for that shortfall? Several different proposals were put forward. Finally, it sounds as though the Government would pay for that shortfall. When you look at the administration staff of a company like NP that is allocated to solve this particular issue and reconcile these figures, you wonder if they are adding any value.

When you look at the recent developments in this particular sector, there has been no move to modernize the service station network; to continue liberalizing the sector and there seems to be added pressure on the only other competitor to NPMC. If you look at that sort of pressure, I can see that acting as a deterrent to anyone entering that particular sector to become a player in the domestic retail marketing sector. If you look at the latest development where NPMC has started giving out its operation, meaning that it no longer wants to be in the business of convenience stores, then, what is the value of NPMC? There is none. That is why

there was always the intention of NPMC not to become dependent on the revenues from the fuel, but to look for additional revenue streams, be it the convenience store or expanding the service station networks beyond the shores of Trinidad and Tobago.

In a case like this, I think that Sen. Ali's point is well taken when you look at the debt situation that is being incurred in terms of fuel. There is no other revenue stream or new business activity to counter this. What is the value of NPMC? The Government needs to determine that. Is there a need for NP anymore? If you are no longer in the convenience store operation, Petrotrin can sell directly to the distributors who can then distribute to the service station network.

The other issue that I wanted to deal with very quickly is the \$47 million. Sen. Ali also raised the issue of the \$47 million which is stated under the Ministry of Finance towards the refinery modernization project. I am not sure if it was the last completed refinery upgrade project or the much talked about project by the chairman of the Petrotrin Board who has indicated publicly, that they may be looking at a second refinery upgrade. I wondered if that sum of money was allocated to that second refinery upgrade. I am interested to hear from the Minister of Finance if that was advanced in this particular fiscal year, given that it was announced in the budget speech 2004, that the Government is thinking seriously of a second refinery upgrade.

#### PROCEDURAL MOTION

**The Minister of Public Administration and Information (Sen. The Hon. Dr. Lenny Saith):** Madam President, I beg to move that the Senate continues sitting until the completion of the debate on this Bill.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### FINANCE (SUPPLEMENTATION AND VARIATION OF APPROPRIATION) (2003) BILL

**Sen. C. Seepersad-Bachan:** Madam President, the modernization is on page 11 of this document. You would see \$47,157,000 that is being allocated to the modernization of the Pointe-a-Pierre refinery. In the 2004 budget debate, it was indicated either by the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries or the Prime Minister, that the Government was looking at a second refinery upgrade to make Petrotrin more competitive and to improve the quality of the products. I am saying this because I am not sure if this sum of money has been allocated for the second project. I do not know if it was the project conceptualization or design phase. I am not sure if the Government or the Petrotrin Board was aware that there was an issue with the feasibility of the refinery upgrade.

Any second refinery upgrade project, given in recent times the number of cheap refining capacity that has emerged especially in the Asian countries was giving much competition. As a result of that, could any further upgrade in this particular refinery allow it to compete with that cheap refining capacity that now exists?

I want to respond to Sen. The Hon. D. Montano. He went on at length and spoke about the behaviour of parliamentarians. The citizens of this country are beginning to become very agitated about what happens in Parliament. Unlike Sen. Montano, what I hear from citizens on the ground is that they feel that Parliament is not responding and they are not getting enough answers. Parliament is the place where we must have accountability. Today is a good demonstration of that. We are dealing with a Bill that can vary as Sen. Noble Khan indicated, one sheet of paper, one very thin Bill that deals with millions and millions of dollars. These things are being dealt with one year after. We have had so many announcements by this Government, but yet we do not have any meaningful debates or reports in this Parliament.

I hope that Sen. The Hon. Danny Montano understands that when he talks about behaviour it must be on both sides and not just on one side. We want answers. Our role as the Opposition in this Parliament is to get the Government to account. That is our role. If you go to any CPA conference that is what they would tell you. Your first job is that Parliament must get the Executive to account. That is the role we must play. As long I sit here on this side, I intend to carry out that role.

**Sen. D. Montano:** Madam President, on a point of order. I think that the Senator has misunderstood. The point that I was making is that we should conform to the Standing Orders. The Standing Orders make it clear that Senators should be referred to as Senator, but Ministers be referred to by their title. The title of the person that sits in this chair is the Minister of Legal Affairs. It is out of order to call me Sen. Danny Montano in the Chamber. The title is Minister of Legal Affairs. That is the point I was trying to make. You do not know what the rules are and you do not abide by the rules.

**Madam President:** Sen. Seepersad-Bachan, continue. I am not going to get into that.

**Sen. C. Seepersad-Bachan:** Be that as it may, I could not remember whether it was the Minister of Science and Technology. In order not to keep back the Parliament I referred to him as Senator. There have been so many shifts on that side that I cannot remember which is which. In order not to be rude, I decided to

stick with what is on the nameplate. I would keep my list in front of me the next time. This is why I endorse what my colleague in the other place, the Member for St. Augustine, Mr. Winston Dookeran said.

**Madam President:** I am not sure if you can bring to this House what was said in the other House. You cannot.

**Sen. C. Seepersad-Bachan:** Madam President, I would abide by your ruling. He made it a public statement and it is in the newspaper. He talked about the disconnect of Parliament. I endorse that. On both sides we need to re-establish the confidence of the people of Trinidad and Tobago. My view is that we try to show that Parliament can bring accountability to the people of Trinidad and Tobago. We are here to ensure transparency and openness. I have always maintained this.

If we go back to my first statement standing in this Parliament, more than one year and three months ago, at our first budget debate, I made the point. I am here about the people's business. I am paid by the taxpayer to do so and to perform that role as Opposition Senator and I intend to continue to do that.

To make one other point about what the Minister of Legal Affairs said. He also mentioned the issue of, I do not want to get into the issue of race. Let us stay focused. He talked about the Trinidad and Tobago Institute of Technology (TTIT). He mentioned the profile of the students that are registered. I wanted to ask the Minister a very important question. In all your investigations since all these issues have arisen, have you been able to evaluate whether the students who have been granted places in this institution were based on merit? You did not say that.

Let me tell you my understanding and you can clarify it. My understanding is that during a particular administration there was a particular composition in terms of race or ethnicity in the applications. There was an enrolment and a particular profile in terms of ethnicity. This is what should count because this is what we know under the United National Congress. Meritocracy is what prevails. Nothing else.

**Sen. D. Montano:** I do not think that you understood me. The profile of the applications mirrored the profile of those who were accepted. There was no particular difference between those who applied and those who were accepted. The ratio at both levels were more or less the same. I was not saying that there was any bias. We could see that there was no bias. The point I was making in terms of the wider public service was the same thing. Unless you look at the profile of the applications, you cannot draw a conclusion unless you compare that with the profile of the acceptances.

**Sen. C. Seepersad-Bachan:** I want to generalize what you are saying. If I had to look at it I would see it in a different way. It could be possible that when you look at the enrolment and the profile of the applicants, it may vary. What should matter at the end of the day is merit. Did they fill the evaluation criteria? It may not necessarily match. I have been a lecturer at university and I have seen that. What has to happen at the end of the day is whether or not they were able to pass the evaluation and whether they were able to exceed. Meritocracy should prevail over everything else. That is what I had to say. I did not intend to stay this long on these issues. I know that we would have another opportunity on Thursday with the Finance Bill. The Minister does not normally respond, but I hope that this time he responds.

Thank you.

**Madam President:** I just want to make one thing clear to Sen. Seepersad-Bachan and other Senators. Everybody is allowed to say what they have to say and to do their duty here, which is to speak on any matter as long as you stay within the Standing Orders.

**The Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Sen. The Hon. Conrad Enill):** Madam President, I find myself in a strange position because during the course of this particular debate, there were matters of principle and law that I heard certain Senators argued against. I asked myself: What am I supposed to do? We are attempting to close the accounts for the year ending September 30, 2003. That is to say that Government for the purposes of its financial year has determined a particular period in which all the matters that needed to be dealt with are dealt with. When that date comes to a close we account.

The 25 ministries take an accounting of their books; reconcile the bank accounts and take all the entries that would not have been dealt with in the normal course of activity. That process takes a very long time. We have a constitutional responsibility to come here before the end of this particular month to do a couple of things. The first thing that we must do is to account to Parliament and say within the context of the budget that was approved, whether or not we had over spent. We cannot spend money for which we have no approval and is not available to us. We operate within the law.

You would recall that we passed a budget one year ago for \$20 billion including borrowings. We have come at the end of the period after we closed the year, done our reconciliation and got all the books in order, to say to you that in the context of that \$20 billion package, we have found it necessary based on the time of some of these projects to utilize \$256 million to shift in priorities. You

would have heard the Minister of Education say that in the period ending first quarter, most of the things that we did not complete were in fact completed.

The question is not about performance; it is about timing and reporting as required by the law. We can say in a sense that the success rate of the Government, if you define that to be what you said that you were going to do and what you did without amendment was 99 point something, something, something per cent.

The requirement for closing the accounts is based on all ministries coming together and providing us with actual accounting. Let me tell you something else that happens. In government, when you do not use the money it has to come back. In many instances that is not known until you close the accounts because everybody expects bills would come and payments would be made. We are seeking to report to you what transactions occurred on that particular date. This is required and is done at this time because it cannot be done any earlier.

There are 60,000 employees, 25 ministries and all kinds of things happen. The enormity of the transactions, the exercises that are done and the number of people involved such as the Treasury and comptrollers, cannot be done before now because you just do not know. To say that it is some form of disrespect to anybody—I am using my words; this is the sense that I got—for the Government to be doing it at this time, I do not agree. It is just not possible based on how government works. It does not matter which government is in power. I do not want any Senator in this House to feel there is any disrespect. We are working within a system that whether it is we or you, it is the same issue. The system works in a particular way.

I have heard many private sector applications to management. It does not operate the same way in the system we operate within. We cannot move anybody. We are unable to do that. If we issue an instruction to somebody and they say no, the remedy available to them is that they go and stay home for a week. Guess what?

There is an independent group called the Public Service Commission that deals with all these issues. They are outside of us; we have no control over them. Even when we talk about implementation issues, one has to factor that we implement not within the private sector management system as you know it—and I know it well—but within the public service. That is based on rules and regulations that are not something that we have control over as much as we would like to. There are some limited things that can happen. It has to be within the context of the system.



The system is operated by individuals who, for want of a better word, are “properly trained” within a system that does not operate with incentives or sanctions. You would see that because most Senators here sit on the committees of Parliament. When you have committees and you spend much time trying to understand implementation issues for State enterprises, statutory bodies and government, that is reflective of the management of that particular system.

As we debate issues, I think we need to understand that is the system under which we operate. There is need to change and for us to seriously look at whether or not the change that is required would improve our implementation. The one experiment that we have had which we have not been able to test is the Police Service Bill which in a sense, is an opportunity to see whether an additional or different system would work.

Having said that, let me thank all those who contributed. As I said on the last occasion, Trinidad and Tobago is a place where we have decided to live and therefore I think it is in our interest that this country moves in a particular direction.

Let me deal with some of the issues that Sen. Mark raised. On the question of the economy, in a media release dated January 05, the Governor of the Central Bank reviewed the economy 2003 and prospects for 2004. This is what the Central Bank said:

“For the first nine months of 2003, real gross domestic product grew by 3.4 per cent compared with 3.1 per cent in the corresponding period in 2002.”

Madam President, that suggests to me that there was an improvement.

**6.40 p.m.**

In the non-energy sector, which is a sector with which most commentators have problems, we have found that distribution grew by 6.9 per cent. Transportation, storage and communication grew by 6.3 per cent, and the construction sector grew at a lower rate than was anticipated, but that was because the Government’s housing programmes proceeded at a slower pace. So that there is, in fact, evidence to suggest that there is growth taking place, albeit, within the context of the global economy. Madam President, I just wanted to put that on the Table.

There are some individuals who say to us that the surplus is not a surplus. When the Government comes with a budget it talks about a few things: revenue, expenditure and borrowings. The Parliament is required only to approve certain

heads of expenditures, and in that sense, not all of the expenditures because there are charges that go directly to the Consolidated Fund, which do not require parliamentary approval. What we, in government, find ourselves having to report on is that element of the activity for which parliamentary approval, by law, has been given and is required. Therefore, what we attempt to do in many instances is create an entire picture, and to deal with all the issues that arise from it. But, quite frankly, the legal requirement insofar as the strict letter of the law is concerned is simply to deal with the heads of expenditures.

We do not narrowly define what we have to do in that context. We provide all the information, in a sense, in the manner in which we have it, but we also narrow it to the pieces that are required by law. That is the reason why, in looking at the Appropriation Bill, or the piece that we are doing now, it is five or six pages. That is really a legal requirement and if we have to fix that—and I think we should at some time—then we would follow that particular requirement.

The system that we operate under is called a cash system. The system that we should be operating under is accrual based accounting system, but that requires a total reform process. In fact, it is one of the things we are looking at now within the context of the public sector reform programme that is also looking at value for money issues. So we are saying we need to go there but it is part of the total public sector reform. Part of that as well has to do with value for money, and you will see some of that thinking reflected when we do the Finance Bill in some changes to the Central Tenders Board pieces, to try to make it a little more flexible.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF): We have an arrangement with the IMF, and on an ongoing basis the IMF determines what Trinidad and Tobago's obligation is under the Fund arrangement. There are two types of transactions; they could either call for cash or promissory notes. Whenever the determination is made, we basically enter into a promissory note activity. At any point in time we know what our obligations are. All these transactions are with the Central Bank as part of their total reserves.

Whenever the IMF requires a drawdown, it goes to the Central Bank and says: I require this. Under those arrangements the Central Bank retires the portion that is required from treasury deposits. Then, because it is a requirement for us to disclose and to ensure that we get parliamentary approval for any disbursements, we bring it to the Parliament to say that under these terms and conditions this is the amount that was drawn down. However, it simply reduces the cash balances at the Central Bank. It does not interfere with the surplus because that is how the

international agencies have identified that particular transaction should be dealt with. Therefore it is difficult for us to now know what would be the requirements for the year because it is all part of that monetary arrangement.

**Sen. Mark:** Madam President, on a point of clarification, could the hon. Minister indicate to us whether this is an annual allocation? For instance, for 2003 what was the sum we contributed to the IMF?

**Sen. The Hon. C. Enill:** I do not have that information now but every time we do the close off there is an amount. I could provide that at some other time. It is an annual activity because the Fund is always reviewing the allocations based on special drawing rights, based on loan conditionalities, based on the basket of currencies. So that is basically how that transaction is handled, and that is the basis for it. I do not have the details of the formula with me but I could provide that at some future date.

In Sen. Mark's contribution he recognized, and he made the point on a number of occasions, that there are a significant number of people in this country who are poor, yet when the Government embarks on a programme of social and economic policy that addresses the imbalance, there does not seem to be a commitment to support those initiatives. The only point I wish to make is that particular number of 300,000 people is something we have had for a very long time. While there are going to be long term strategies to deal with this, in the short term these individuals need to be dealt with. The only point I would make on this particular matter is the Government, in seeking to deal with this issue, has chosen a particular short-term method to deal with it, while we provide individuals with the skills required. We have recognized that with the coming into being of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME), and with the free movement of labour throughout Caricom, if we do not equip our people and train them quickly, we are going to find ourselves in a situation where there are going to be jobs available, but they are not going to be able to deal with them. Therefore, that is another piece of the strategy that is currently engaging the attention of those of us on this side.

The closing of the accounts based on Sen. Seetahal's concerns: I would wish to be able to have this the next day but, unfortunately in many instances we still operate on manual systems. At this time the capacity of the system to deliver is based on what is available. Until such time as we update that, maybe through the fast forward and the communication backbone and so on, we are simply operating at optimal speed, given the fact that we have a constitutional deadline where it must happen by January 30.

In terms of Sen. Ali's question on the \$47 million, I am not sure what it is, but I think it has to do with payment of some portion of the IADB loan. I do not have the details, but I do know that we have not entered into any payment for this Petrotrin activity.

The question of how the increase in levy is going to affect the payments on the books of National Petroleum (NP) and the accumulation of debt, I do not have the details on that but I would get it to you. I have asked our people to look at it for me and at the next opportunity I will provide you with a full account.

Sen. Dr. McKenzie, I agree with you 100 per cent, however, given the constitutional arrangements we have now it is just not possible. Quite frankly, I think that the next item that we must put on the public agenda is the question of how we get our human resources to account in such a way that we could deliver. Right now, based on the system that exists, it is challenging. *[Interruption]* Yes, the debate that needs to happen.

Madam President, this feeds right into Sen. Mary King's issue about coordinating, monitoring and so on. Sen. King is asking for another layer of accountability within the system, but unless we change the current relationships in which those individuals who are charged with the responsibility for delivering—when they do not deliver there is some sanction—then there is no incentive to deliver. The institutions and the independent commissions that we have, I have had to deal with them on some occasions, and basically they tell you that you have no right getting involved in this particular activity; you keep quiet and stay where you are and we will deal with our issues. It is unfortunate because that is creating for us some issues as it relates to getting things done. That is certainly one issue that you would hear us talking about from time to time.

Sen. Bro. Khan talked about changing the system. Yes, we recognize that we need to go from cash based to accrual and if we do that then the timing differences inherent in surpluses and deficits would not occur, because then we would account for revenue within the time frame and would account for expenditure within the same time frame. That is not currently available to us, Madam President.

The Revenue Stabilization Fund legislation is coming and I hear you, but one of the things we are grappling with is this. Currently, in the budget process, we would go to a government ministry and say: on the basis of your projects; on the basis of the needs that you have; on the basis of the priorities available to you; on the basis of what you see happening, exactly what do you plan to do within this

particular time frame? When they have identified that we would say to them: Can you cost it for us? They would come up with a cost.

The difficulty we would find from time to time is this. We know what the revenues are going to be based on our projections and therefore we know that for the macroeconomic fundamentals to stay, roughly, in balance so that your international agencies do not put you in trouble and your rating stays, there is a tolerance within which you could go with a surplus or a deficit—1 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). If we add that to revenues then we know what our expenditure level is. When you take personal cost and debt servicing, which are fixed, the rest is what is available to you for public sector investment programmes as well as goods and services. Those are the constraints that you have in coming up with the programmes, and that is what is available to ministries. The question that arises therefore is that in circumstances where there is a need for more resources, what do you do? Do you take the resources and put it aside with the hope that something would happen in the future, or do you deal with immediate needs? Sometimes we believe that we must balance the two, and that is, basically, the issues that we face on an ongoing basis.

Some of the issues that Sen. Seepersad-Bachan raised are policy issues, which are currently the subject of some discussion with the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries. I hope that she would get some of her answers from the appropriate ministry. The Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries at this time is addressing some of the issues she has talked about and therefore I would prefer not to deal with them at this time for fear of creating a situation where I may say one thing and the Ministry says something else. I assure you, however, that I will send the comments to the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries and I will address those as well.

**Sen. Mark:** Madam President, on a point of clarification.

**Madam President:** Would the Minister give way?

**Sen. The Hon. C. Enill:** Sure, it is my good friend.

**Sen. Mark:** Hon. Minister, I would like you to clear the air for me on a particular matter. I have learnt that the Ministry of Finance has written off some \$48 million from the National Insurance Board (NIB) books, arising out of the inability of hundreds of mortgagees to meet their commitments. I would like to find out if that is a fact. It is circulating very far, that the Government has written off \$48 million that is owed to the people of this country by hundreds of mortgagees.

**Sen. The Hon. C. Enill:** Sen. Mark, I will answer you in this way. The National Insurance Board is basically made up of three stakeholders: the Government, the unions and the business stake-holding community. The investment portfolio of that organization, as well, is based on the tripartite arrangements. I am aware that the board requested the permission of the Ministry of Finance to take off its books an amount of loans that were non-performing for a number of years. In fact, the recommendation from the NIB came after an exhaustive and significant amount of investigations.

In fact, when I looked at the report—I think it is going to come up in the NIB debate—a lot of it had to do with migrations, deaths and uncollectables, which is a normal part of that business. Therefore, all I want to say at this time is, yes, a request was made for write-offs and in accordance with policy and the law—because it is driven by the law as well—approval was given for it to happen. It is coming to Parliament, as a matter of discussion, I think, when we do the National Insurance (Amdt.) Bill.

Madam President, this is an exercise that we must do every year, and I think we have done it again, very painfully. Once more, I thank all the Senators for providing us with some insight into what we might expect in future deliberations. We have taken note of it.

Madam President, I beg to move.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a second time.*

**Sen. The Hon. C. Enill:** Madam President, in accordance with Standing Order No. 63, I beg to move that the Bill not be committed to a committee of the whole Senate.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Question put and agreed to, That the Bill be now read a third time and passed*

*Bill accordingly read the third time and passed.*

#### **FINANCE BILL**

**The Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Sen. The Hon. Conrad Enill):** Madam President, earlier in today's proceeding the Bill entitled the "Finance Bill 2004" was read a first time. In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 48(2), I seek leave of the Senate for the next stage of the Bill to be taken on Thursday, January 29, 2004.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Motion made and question proposed, That the Senate do now adjourn to Thursday, January 29, 2004 at 2.00 p.m. [Sen. The Hon. Dr. L. Saith]*

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Senate adjourned accordingly.*

*Adjourned at 7.03 p.m.*

#### WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*The following question was asked by Sen. Robin Montano:*

#### **State Enterprises (Advertising Budget Details)**

5. A. Could the hon. Minister of Finance give for the year 2002 and up to the current month in the year 2003, the amount of monies spent by all state enterprises:
- (i) for advertising in the print media;
  - (ii) to CCN TV6 and Trinidad and Tobago Television (TTT) for advertising?
- B. Could the Minister state the names of the newspapers in which the advertisements were placed and the amount of monies paid to each newspaper for the said period?

**The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance (Hon. Patrick Manning):** In response to the Senate Question No. 5 of the 2003-2004 Session of Parliament concerning (a) the amount of monies spent for the year 2002 and up to the current month by all the state enterprises for advertising in the print media; and CCN TV6 and Trinidad and Tobago Television and (b) the names of the newspapers in which advertisements were placed and the amount of monies paid to each newspaper for the said period, the hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance advises as follows:

During the period January 2002 to November 2003, the state enterprises spent \$19,268,699.59 for advertising in the print and electronic media. A summary of the expenditure is at Appendix 1.

During 2002, Trinidad and Tobago National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited (NP) utilized the services of an advertising agency. The company has

advised that the agency is at present unable to provide a disaggregation of the advertising expenditure for 2002. The breakdown was provided in respect of 2003.

State enterprises spent \$14,745,658.70 (excluding NP's 2002 expenditure) for advertising in the print media over the period January 2002 to November 2003. Of this amount, \$5,590,610.10 was spent for advertising in the *Express* newspaper, \$4,875,279.30 for advertising in the *Guardian* newspaper and \$4,074,424.31 for advertising in the *Newsday* newspaper. The amount of \$205,344.99 was spent with other media houses such as *Trinidad and Tobago Mirror*, *The Wire*, *The Probe*, *Trinidad and Tobago Review* and *Tobago News*. Details of the expenditure are at Appendices 2 to 5.

#### APPENDIX 1

#### Ministry of Finance

#### Investments Division

#### Advertising Expenditure by State Enterprises

<b><i>Print Media</i></b>			
<b><i>Media House</i></b>	<b><i>Jan - Dec 2002</i></b>	<b><i>Jan - Nov 2003</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>
Express	2,632,324.26	2,958,285.84	5,590,610.10
Guardian	2,353,007.77	2,522,271.53	4,875,279.30
Newsday	1,800,357.08	2,274,067.23	4,074,424.31
Others: Tnt Mirror, Wire etc.	102,368.15	102,976.84	205,344.99
<b><i>Total: Print Media</i></b>	<b><i>6,888,057.26</i></b>	<b><i>7,857,601.44</i></b>	<b><i>14,745,658.70</i></b>

<b><i>Electronic Media</i></b>			
<b><i>Media House</i></b>	<b><i>Jan - Dec 2002</i></b>	<b><i>Jan - Nov 2003</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>
TV6	1,016,831.25	1,226,811.16	2,243,642.41
TTT	561,414.20	597,580.28	1,158,994.48
<b><i>Total - Electronic Media</i></b>	<b><i>1,578,245.45</i></b>	<b><i>1,824,391.44</i></b>	<b><i>3,402,636.89</i></b>
<b><i>Running total - Print and Electronic</i></b>	<b><i>8,466,302.71</i></b>	<b><i>9,681,992.88</i></b>	<b><i>18,148,295.59</i></b>



Unallocated exp.: NP (note 1)	1,120,404.00	-	1,120,404.00
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>9,586,706.71</b>	<b>9,681,992.88</b>	<b>19,268,699.59</b>

## NOTE:

- 1: An allocation schedule of NP's advertising expenditure in respect of print and electronic media for 2002 is currently unavailable. However, a breakdown was provided by the company in respect of 2003.

**APPENDIX 2**

Ministry of Finance

Investments Division

Advertising Expenditure by State Enterprises

	STATE ENTERPRISES	EXPRESS	GUARDIAN NEWSDAY	OTHER	TOTAL	
1	Agricultural Development Bank of T&T	40,624.16	35,424.06	41,082.26	2121,962.15	<b>139,092.63</b>
2	Business Development Company Limited	71,310.00	70,050.00	68,780.00	0.00	<b>210,140.00</b>
3	Caroni (1975) Limited	20,000.00	20,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	<b>50,000.00</b>
4	Estate Management & Business Development Co Limited	4,724.78	4,650.26	0.00	0.00	<b>9,375.04</b>
5	Export Centres Company Limited	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
6	Export-Import Bank of T&T Limited	4,371.18	2,247.05	0.00	0.00	<b>6,618.23</b>
7	First Citizens Holdings Limited	1,314,000.00	1,219,000.00	817,000.00	0.00	<b>3,350,000.00</b>
8	Lake Asphalt of Trinidad and Tobago (1978) Limited	4,610.13	15,459.11	0.00	0.00	<b>20,069.24</b>
9	National Agricultural Marketing & Development Corporation	5,690.78	4,665.67	27,526.55	0.00	<b>37,883.00</b>
10	National Broadcasting Network Limited	3,380.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>3,380.05</b>

	STATE ENTERPRISES	EXPRESS	GUARDIAN	NEWSDAY	OTHER	TOTAL
11	National Commission for Self Help Limited	2,198.80	3,444.48	2,972.75	0.00	<b>8,616.03</b>
12	National Enterprises Limited	26,815.47	21,438.12	36,857.84	0.00	<b>85,111.43</b>
13	National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited	66,385.80	0.00	51,747.24	0.00	<b>118,133.04</b>
14	National Gas Company of T&T	246,736.40	321,861.70	197,494.25	12,887.80	<b>778,980.15</b>
15	National Helicopter Services Limited	1,814.01	1,380.00	0.00	0.00	<b>3,194.01</b>
16	National Maintenance Training and Security Co. Ltd	59,463.93	58,211.46	69,584.58	3,000.00	<b>190,259.97</b>
17	National Quarries Company Limited	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
18	National Schools Dietary Services Limited	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
19	Point Lisas Industrial Port Development Corporation Limited	35,024.47	55,663.00	23,304.74	0.00	<b>113,992.21</b>
20	Property and Industrial Development Company of T&T Ltd	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
21	Rum Distillers of T&T Limited	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
22	Sugar Manufacturing Company Limited	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
23	Taurus Services Limited	81,844.60	69,073.15	64,233.83	0.00	<b>215,151.58</b>
24	The Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago	188,679.07	179,633.83	125,242.00	39,772.44	<b>533,327.34</b>
25	The Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Co Ltd	40,620.52	4,431.55	58,356.02	22,190.00	<b>125,598.09</b>

	STATE ENTERPRISES	EXPRESS	GUARDIAN NEWSDAY	OTHER	TOTAL	
26	The Vehicle Maintenance Corporation of T&T Limited	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
27	Tourism and Industrial Development Company of T&T Ltd	63,454.80	104,725.36	40,637.55	0.00	<b>208,817.71</b>
28	Trinidad and Tobago Forest Products Company Limited	6,951.05	3,659.75	5,661.73	0.00	<b>16,272.53</b>
29	Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Company Limited	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
30	Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance Company Limited	96,717.09	122,728.80	85,438.87	0.00	<b>304,884.76</b>
31	Trinidad and Tobago National Petroleum Marketing Co. Ltd <sup>2</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>N/A</b>
32	Urban Development Corporation of T&T Ltd	155,954.85	22,122.81	32,111.96	0.00	<b>210,189.62</b>
33	Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (Ytepp)	90,952.32	13,137.61	42,324.91	2,555.76	<b>148,970.60</b>
		<u>2,632,324.26</u>	<u>2,353,007.77</u>	<u>1,800,357.08</u>	<u>102,368.15</u>	<u>6,888,057.26</u>

## NOTE:

- 1: OTHER refers to advertising expenditure in TnT Mirror, The Wire, The Probe, T&T Review, Tobago News. See Appendix 3.
- 2: A breakdown of National Petroleum Marketing Co. Ltd advertising expenditure according to print and electronic media for the year 2002 is currently unavailable. A total of \$1,120,404 was spent by the company for advertising in the print and electronic media during 2002.







	STATE ENTERPRISES	TNT MIRROR	THE WIRE	THE PROBE	T&T REVIEW	TOBAGO NEWS	TOTAL
Marketing Co. Ltd							
32 Urban Development Corporation of T&T Ltd	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
33 Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (Ytepp)	2,125.20	430.56	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>2,555.76</b>
	<b><u>82,345.63</u></b>	<b><u>7,742.72</u></b>	<b><u>500.00</u></b>	<b><u>4,106.00</u></b>	<b><u>7,673.80</u></b>		<b><u>102,368.15</u></b>

## NOTE:

- 1: A breakdown of National Petroleum Marketing Co. Ltd advertising expenditure according to print and electronic media for the year 2002 is currently unavailable. A total of \$1,120.404 was spent by the company for advertising in the print and electronic media during 2002.

## APPENDIX 4

Ministry of Finance  
Investments Division

## Advertising Expenditure by State Enterprises

	STATE ENTERPRISES	EXPRESS	GUARDIAN NEWSDAY	OTHER	TOTAL	
1 Agricultural Development Bank of T&T		147,975.27	145,946.37	137,370.60	60,192.94	<b>491,485.18</b>
2 Business Development Company Limited		102,998.00	99,800.00	52,477.00	0.00	<b>255,275.00</b>
3 Caroni (1975) Limited		379,214.68	285,687.80	355,510.78	315.00	<b>1,020,728.26</b>
4 Estate Management & Business Development Co Limited		11,985.65	4,147.25	0.00	0.00	<b>16,132.90</b>
5 Export Centres Company Limited		11,995.94	10,839.20	4,004.43	0.00	<b>26,839.57</b>

	<b>STATE ENTERPRISES</b>	<b>EXPRESS</b>	<b>GUARDIAN</b>	<b>NEWSDAY</b>	<b>OTHER</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
6	Export-Import Bank of T&T Limited	2,299.08	19,008.99	14,850.00	0.00	<b>36,158.07</b>
7	First Citizens Holdings Limited	1,186,000.00	1,131,000.00	783,000.00	0.00	<b>3,100,000.00</b>
8	Lake Asphalt of Trinidad and Tobago (1978) Limited	14,650.23	9,100.88	0.00	0.00	<b>23,751.11</b>
9	National Agricultural Marketing & Development Corporation	29,009.37	34,942.35	43,645.81	0.00	<b>107,597.53</b>
10	National Broadcasting Network Limited	14,303.31	6,435.00	11,349.05	0.00	<b>32,087.36</b>
11	National Commission for Self Help Limited	20,755.20	13,051.35	20,051.65	0.00	<b>53,858.20</b>
12	National Enterprises Limited	16,227.30	16,581.04	14,491.34	0.00	<b>47,299.68</b>
13	National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited	136,019.32	16,844.52	105,639.74	0.00	<b>258,503.58</b>
14	National Gas Company of T&T	224,223.67	242,580.66	182,739.61	7,160.50	<b>656,704.44</b>
15	National Helicopter Services Limited	5,799.11	12,002.81	0.00	0.00	<b>17,801.92</b>
16	National Maintenance Training and Security Co. Ltd	13,770.69	21,864.41	18,399.98	1,150.00	<b>55,185.08</b>
17	National Quarries Company Limited	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
18	National Schools Dietary Services Limited	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
19	Point Lisas Industrial Port Development Corporation Limited	74,651.58	54,461.69	61,343.55	0.00	<b>190,456.82</b>
20	Property and Industrial Development Company of T&T Ltd	23,192.98	24,819.20	17,105.85	0.00	<b>65,118.03</b>



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	<b>STATE ENTERPRISES</b>	<b>EXPRESS</b>	<b>GUARDIAN NEWSDAY</b>	<b>OTHER</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	
21	Rum Distillers of T&T Limited	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
22	Sugar Manufacturing Company Limited	6,680.50	5,954.00	5,250.54	0.00	<b>17,885.04</b>
23	Taurus Services Limited	58,036.09	51,779.47	46,443.10	0.00	<b>156,258.66</b>
24	The Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago	92,072.14	60,966.59	77,855.86	480.00	<b>231,374.59</b>
25	The Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Co Ltd	48,728.85	3,446.00	50,212.01	31,372.00	<b>133,758.86</b>
26	The Vehicle Maintenance Corporation of T&T Limited	10,701.68	5,149.80	4,232.56	0.00	<b>20,084.04</b>
27	Tourism and Industrial Development Company of T&T Ltd	111,316.43	87,371.52	75,750.64	0.00	<b>274,438.59</b>
28	Trinidad and Tobago Forest Products Company Limited	1,642.20	1,443.82	2,310.98	0.00	<b>5,397.00</b>
29	Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Company Limited	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
30	Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance Company Limited	31,150.64	35,982.56	18,211.68	0.00	<b>85,344.88</b>
31	Trinidad and Tobago National Petroleum Marketing Co. Ltd	102,658.30	71,962.20	99,724.70	2,306.40	<b>276,651.60</b>
32	Urban Development Corporation of T&T Ltd	37,032.23	20,766.70	10,722.03	0.00	<b>68,520.96</b>
33	Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (Ytepp)	43,195.40	28,335.35	61,373.74	0.00	<b>132,904.49</b>
		<b><u>2,958,285.84</u></b>	<b><u>2,522,271.53</u></b>	<b><u>2,274,067.23</u></b>	<b><u>102,976.84</u></b>	<b><u>7,857,601.44</u></b>







Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday, January 27, 2004

	STATE ENTERPRISES	TNT MIRROR	THE WIRE	THE PROBE	T&T REVIEW	TOBAGO NEWS	TOTAL
30	Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance Company Limited	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
31	Trinidad and Tobago National Petroleum Marketing Co. Ltd	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,306.40	<b>2,306.40</b>
32	Urban Development Corporation of T&T Ltd	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
33	Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (Ytepp)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
		<b><u>75,207.02</u></b>	<b><u>0.00</u></b>	<b><u>1,315.00</u></b>	<b><u>0.00</u></b>	<b><u>26,454.82</u></b>	<b><u>102,976.84</u></b>

## APPENDIX 6

Ministry of Finance  
Investments Division  
Advertising Expenditure by State Enterprises

## ADVERTISING EXPENDITURE ON TTT AND TV6 FOR 2002

	STATE ENTERPRISES	TTT	TOTAL
1	Agricultural Development Bank of T&T	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
2	Business Development Company Limited	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
3	Caroni (1975) Limited	0.00	<b>0.00</b>

	<b>STATE ENTERPRISES</b>	<b>TTT</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>
4	Estate Management & Business Development Co Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
5	Export Centres Company Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
6	Export-Import Bank of T&T Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
7	First Citizens Holdings Limited	485,000.00	968,000.00	<b>1,453,000.00</b>
8	Lake Asphalt of Trinidad and Tobago (1978) Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
9	National Agricultural Marketing & Development Corporation	3,965.20	5,175.00	<b>9,140.20</b>
10	National Broadcasting Network Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
11	National Commission for Self Help Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
12	National Enterprises Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
13	National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited	0.00	30,000.00	<b>30,000.00</b>
14	National Gas Company of T&T	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
15	National Helicopter Services Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
16	National Maintenance Training and Security Co. Ltd	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
17	National Quarries Company Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
18	National Schools Dietary Services Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
19	Point Lisas Industrial Port Development Corporation Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
20	Property and Industrial Development Company of T&T Ltd	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>

	<b>STATE ENTERPRISES</b>	<b>TTT</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>
21	Rum Distillers of T&T Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
22	Sugar Manufacturing Company Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
23	Taurus Services Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
24	The Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago	72,449.00	0.00	<b>72,449.00</b>
25	The Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Co Ltd	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
26	The Vehicle Maintenance Corporation of T&T Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
27	Tourism and Industrial Development Company of T&T Ltd	0.00	13,656.25	<b>13,656.25</b>
28	Trinidad and Tobago Forest Products Company Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
29	Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Company Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
30	Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance Company Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
31	Trinidad and Tobago National Petroleum Marketing Co. Ltd <sup>1</sup>	N/A	N/A	<b>N/A</b>
32	Urban Development Corporation of T&T Ltd	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
33	Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (Ytepp)	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
		<b><u>561,414.20</u></b>	<b><u>1,016,831.25</u></b>	<b><u>1,578,245.45</u></b>

## NOTE:

- 1: A breakdown of National Petroleum Marketing Co. Ltd advertising expenditure according to print and electronic media for the year 2002 is currently unavailable. A total of \$1,120,404 was spent by the company for advertising in the print and electronic media during 2002.

**APPENDIX 7**

Ministry of Finance  
Investments Division  
Advertising Expenditure by State Enterprises

**ADVERTISING EXPENDITURE ON TTT AND TV6 FOR JAN-NOV 2003**

	<b>STATE ENTERPRISES</b>	<b>TTT</b>	<b>TV6</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1	Agricultural Development Bank of T&T	0.00	11,500.00	<b>11,500.00</b>
2	Business Development Company Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
3	Caroni (1975) Limited	37,055.50	138,530.00	<b>175,585.50</b>
4	Estate Management & Business Development Co Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
5	Export Centres Company Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
6	Export-Import Bank of T&T Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
7	First Citizens Holdings Limited	444,000.00	888,000.00	<b>1,332,000.00</b>
8	Lake Asphalt of Trinidad and Tobago (1978) Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
9	National Agricultural Marketing & Development Corporation	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
10	National Broadcasting Network Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
11	National Commission for Self Help Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
12	National Enterprises Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
13	National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited	5,750.00	5,749.91	<b>11,499.91</b>
14	National Gas Company of T&T	67,624.78	0.00	<b>67,624.78</b>
15	National Helicopter Services Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
16	National Maintenance Training and Security Co. Ltd	3,450.00	5,800.00	<b>9,250.00</b>



	<b>STATE ENTERPRISES</b>	<b>TTT</b>	<b>TV6</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
17	National Quarries Company Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
18	National Schools Dietary Services Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
19	Point Lisas Industrial Port Development Corporation Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
20	Property and Industrial Development Company of T&T Ltd	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
21	Rum Distillers of T&T Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
22	Sugar Manufacturing Company Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
23	Taurus Services Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
24	The Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago	27,700.00	9,600.00	<b>37,300.00</b>
25	The Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Co Ltd	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
26	The Vehicle Maintenance Corporation of T&T Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
27	Tourism and Industrial Development Company of T&T Ltd	0.00	115,575.00	<b>115,575.00</b>
28	Trinidad and Tobago Forest Products Company Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
29	Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Company Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
30	Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance Company Limited	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
31	Trinidad and Tobago National Petroleum Marketing Co. Ltd	12,000.00	34,691.25	<b>46,691.25</b>
32	Urban Development Corporation of T&T Ltd	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
33	Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (Ytepp)	0.00	17,365.00	<b>17,365.00</b>
		<b><u>597,580.28</u></b>	<b><u>1,226,811.16</u></b>	<b><u>1,824,391.44</u></b>

*The following question was asked by Sen. Wade Mark:*

**National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited  
(Details of Loans Recipients)**

7. Could the hon. Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development provide the Senate with the:

- (i) names;
- (ii) addresses; and
- (iii) occupations of all recipients of loans transactions issued by the National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited since its launch in August 2002 to November 30, 2003?

**The Minister of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development (Hon. Lawrence Achong):** The Freedom of Information Exemption Order 2003 published in Legal Notice No. 21 of February 20, 2003 exempts certain public authorities listed in the schedule from the application of the Freedom of Information Act. The National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited (NEDCO) is included among the public authorities listed in the schedule. In those circumstances, the information requested by the hon. Sen. Wade Mark cannot be provided to this Senate.