

**THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

OFFICIAL REPORT

IN THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD
AND TOBAGO WHICH OPENED ON OCTOBER 17, 2002

SESSION 2005—2006

VOLUME 13

SENATE

Tuesday, April 04, 2006

The Senate met at 1.30 p.m.

PRAYERS

[MADAM PRESIDENT *in the Chair*]

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Madam President: Hon. Senators, I have granted leave of absence to Sen. Angela Cropper who is out of the country.

SENATOR'S APPOINTMENT

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

“THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

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

/s/ G. Richards
President.

TO: MR. WALTON FRANCIS JAMES

WHEREAS Senator Angela Cropper is incapable of performing her duties as a Senator by reason of her absence from Trinidad and Tobago:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS, President as aforesaid, in exercise of the power vested in me by section 40(2) and section 44 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, do hereby appoint you, WALTON FRANCIS JAMES, to be temporarily a member of the Senate, with effect from 3rd April, 2006 and continuing during the absence from Trinidad and Tobago of the said Senator Angela Cropper.

Senator's Appointment
[MADAM PRESIDENT]

Tuesday, April 04, 2006

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 28th day of March, 2006."

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

Sen. Walton Francis James took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance as required by law.

PAPER LAID

The annual report of the Trinidad and Tobago Securities and Exchange Commission for the financial year ended September 30, 2005. [*The Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Sen. The Hon. Conrad Enill)*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

**Integrity Commission
(Declarations—Exemption of Judges and Magistrates)**

51. Sen. Wade Mark asked the hon. Attorney General:

- A. Is the Attorney General aware that the Integrity Commission has taken a decision to exempt judges and magistrates from filing declarations with the Commission in accordance with the law?
- B. If the answer to A is in the affirmative, could the Attorney General inform this House:
 - (i) when was this decision taken;
 - (ii) when and how was this decision communicated to judges and magistrates; and
 - (iii) what is the rationale for such a decision?

The Attorney General (Sen. The Hon. John Jeremie): Madam President, the answers to questions Nos. 51 and 52 are not yet ready. The Attorney General is waiting on some information from the Integrity Commission. I had asked for a two-week deferral two weeks ago, and I am asking for a one week deferral this time. The answer should be ready by next Tuesday.

Question, by leave, deferred.

The following question stood on the Order paper in the name of Sen. Wade Mark:

**Integrity Commission
Legal Advice on Exemption of Judges and Magistrates**

52. A. Could the hon. Attorney General inform the Senate who provided the legal advice to the Integrity Commission which resulted in the decision to exempt judges and magistrates from the provisions prescribed in the Integrity in Public Life Act, 2000?
- B. What was the cost of the legal advice referred to above?
- C. Could the Attorney General inform the Senate what action, if any, has been taken by the Integrity Commission against anyone who failed to file a declaration prior to the date of the exemption of judges and magistrates?

Question, by leave, deferred.

GOVERNMENT'S PERFORMANCE IN HANDLING CRIME

[Second Day]

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question [November 22, 2005]:

Be it resolved that this Senate:

- (i) express its concern over Government's performance in handling crime;
- (ii) call on the Government to explain to the Senate why the actions of the relevant agencies have so far consistently failed to produce the desired results; and
- (iii) agree that the Government outline, with specific performance targets and mechanisms for accountability, what concrete measures it intends to take to deal effectively with the serious crime situation now facing the country so as to facilitate the pathway to national consensus and civic mobilization. [*Sen. Prof. R. Deosaran*]

Question again proposed.

Madam President: The following Senators have already spoken on the Motion: Sen. Prof. Ramesh Deosaran, mover of the Motion, Sen. Roy Augustus, Sen. Mary King and Sen. Angela Cropper.

The Minister of National Security (Sen. The Hon. Martin Joseph): Madam President, thank you very much. I am pleased to be able to participate in this

Government's Performance in Crime
[SEN. THE. HON. M. JOSEPH]

Tuesday, April 04, 2006

Private Members' Motion debate. Since I am the first speaker on this side, I would start off by indicating that this side and, by extension the Government, does not support the Motion as drafted. At some point in time, I would indicate adjustments to the Motion.

Madam President, I think the Motion needs to be put in its context. While you focused on the "*Be it resolved*", permit me to go further and start with:

Whereas the fears and concerns of law-abiding citizens have increased over the worsening crime situation in Trinidad and Tobago, resulting in severe psychological, social and economic consequences;

And whereas the Government has expended vast sums of money on resources for fighting crime and on foreign expertise and assistance with no visible effect on the spiralling crime situation;

Be it resolved that this Senate:

- (i) express its concern over Government's performance in handling crime;
- (ii) call on the Government to explain to the Senate why the actions of the relevant agencies have so far consistently failed to produce the desired results; and
- (iii) agree that the Government outline, with specific performance targets and mechanisms for accountability, what concrete measures it intends to take to deal effectively with the serious crime situation now facing the country so as to facilitate the pathway to national consensus and civic mobilization.

Madam President, this Motion came before us on Tuesday, November 22, 2005 and a number of activities have taken place. So, we have a little problem with the premise on which aspects of the Motion are based. At some time, we would indicate the amendments we want to make.

The last time I addressed this Senate—last week Tuesday when I piloted the three Bills but, prior to that—I indicated the Government's concern with three major aspects of crime that were causing serious consternation to the citizens of this country: firstly, there was the question of kidnapping; secondly, we had a situation where there were bombings; and thirdly there was the question of homicides.

Madam President, I think it is appropriate, without sounding our trumpets, because we are not yet satisfied that kidnappings have been completely removed from our landscape, I think that we can say—the same way that it has been

reported, and we know that the bloodiest first quarter in our history occurred with respect to homicides—we are going to talk about that—it is the first time, for a number of years, for the first quarter, there has only been one kidnapping for ransom and that matter was resolved within 24 hours. [*Desk thumping*] Credit must go to the law enforcement agencies that have been responsible for bringing about this turnaround.

We are going to talk about what is the role of the Government. The Government would continue to indicate what it has done; what it is doing; and what it would continue to do to make sure that law enforcement agencies—the ones that are primarily responsible for providing our citizens with a level of security and safety—are up to scratch; what is expected of them in this modern environment; and in this modern and changing environment where if an organization fails to respond to the circumstances of its environment it finds itself out of alignment.

Madam President, as we all know—I am not here to lecture to anybody this afternoon—successful organizations not only understand their relationship between the organization and the environment, but some of them are good enough, the real good ones, to shape the environment; to determine the environment. Now, those that are unable to do that must be able to respond quickly to the changes that are occurring in the environment, so that they could continue to remain relevant. I talk about this as alignment.

Madam President, our law enforcement agencies became out of alignment with its environment for a number of reasons. As a result of that, persons who were bent on capitalizing on weaknesses in law enforcement, were able to do that both locally and internationally. I would come to that matter later on. So our responsibility is to beef up law enforcement.

When the director of the FBI was here last year when we had kidnappings—the director came and provided assistance and made the point that at the end of the day it is our law enforcement that is responsible for providing the level of law enforcement. I am saying this in anticipation because later on we are going to talk about the police officers from the United Kingdom and other persons who would be coming to provide assistance in order to make sure that the troops are on the ground. The transformation of the police that I am going to treat with is taking some time. There are those on the other side, not currently here, who believe that the police service cannot be transformed.

As the Minister of National Security, I remember my first encounter with a particular stakeholder group—I would not call the name—who told me that I would be a good Minister of National Security if I disband the police service in the quickest time possible. How, how could you disband the police service? This is an institution that has been here for 100 and something years. That was one group. There was another group we met with and they said that the police service cannot be transformed. I challenge them that we are going to transform the police service. We cannot tell the criminals to wait while we transform; hold your criminal activities for a little while because we are having a little challenge transforming the police. It does not happen that way. As an interim arrangement to help provide the level of security and safety that this country is crying out for, there is need for us to do certain things and when we do certain things we are criticized.

Madam President, let me again indicate that if we have to bring law enforcement people from abroad, we cannot compensate them in TT dollars. We cannot. We have to pay them the rates they would have gotten in the United Kingdom. If we want the best, and it is the best that we are getting, then we have to pay. Security is costly, not just for Trinidad and Tobago, but it is costly all over the world because of the sophisticated nature of crimes. Some of the criminal elements are more sophisticated than the law enforcement. The challenge that we are faced with is to provide the resources that are necessary to ensure that security and crime are at an acceptable level, and then we are being criticized. You would hear people saying to deal with crime now; deal with crime tomorrow; and to fix it now. Do you know what is amazing? These remarks come from right-thinking persons; persons who know better—

Sen. Mark: Go ahead.

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph:—including the one who just made a comment across there. He is smiling this afternoon, so I guess that he is in a good mood. They want it done now, as if you could wave some magic wand and you are going to get the improvement.

When I did economics, I was told by my professors that if you want good widgets—do not ask me what a widget is; perhaps, a professor may be able to tell me—you must have good widget makers. So, if you want good law enforcement and good policing, you have to get good police officers. I am going to tell you about the measures that this Government is taking to ensure that we do that.

Let me deal with the challenge that we are facing presently. We were the first to admit that we have an unacceptable level of homicides, for the first quarter of this year, as newspapers slashed across their front pages, was the bloodiest. We have done some things with respect to homicides. When I came here in October, I indicated that most of the homicides were gang related and drug related. On the basis of the information I had, I think I mentioned the number of gangs that were operating at the time, and I gave an average number of gang members, et cetera. I heard people say that the Minister said that there were so many gangs, about 60 gangs and 500 members and why the Government did not get them off the streets and get rid of them.

Madam President, we are putting things in place to make sure that the agencies responsible for treating specifically with homicides that are drug related and gang related could be addressed. Notice that I am emphasizing “drug-related” and “gang-related” homicides. As it stands now, there are levels of homicides which we cannot take control over at this time—let me be careful—and those are the domestic related ones, where somebody may get home tonight and encounter a situation that is unacceptable and decide to take a particular course of action, et cetera. We cannot control that now.

In developed countries, there was a time when there was a belief that such crimes could not have been controlled, but with community policing and certain types of things, you are able to see some improvements. So, you know Martin is abusive to his wife, et cetera—*[Interruption]* I am just using this hypothetically. I think I might be wrong to say that. *[Interruption]* Madam President, because of the level of law enforcement that would be in place, for example, where there is geographical accountability, which Sen. Dr. Eastlyn Mc Kenzie talked about in her contribution, when it gets to that—if you have a divisional commander who has a particular area and he or she knows his area, he or she would be responsible for making sure that crime in that particular area is at a certain level. So the question about domestic violence that could easily lead to other kinds of things would be addressed. What we are focusing on now are the ones that are gang related and drug related and the extent to which we are going to be able to deal with that.

What have we done with respect to homicides? The Homicide Bureau is basically the unit in the police service that is responsible for dealing with homicides.

Sen. Mark: You are waffling.

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: I am waffling. [*Interruption*] When we came here in October 2005, we indicated, at the time, the number of homicides that occurred in some of the crime spot areas and the detection rates. We also indicated that there were some recommendations that were made to improve the ability to deal with homicides and the recommendations were as follows:

- (a) to create a full service Homicide Unit, done;
- (b) establish a new organizational structure for the Homicide Unit, done;
- (c) increase the number of homicide investigators.

We have increased the number of homicide investigators. At the time, when I came to the Parliament, there were 48 persons assigned to the Homicide Bureau. We have now increased that number to 150 persons. We have also made sure that the Homicide Bureau is provided with the necessary leadership.

- (d) assign homicide investigators to time periods when they are needed most;
- (e) careful attention to the selection and assignment of homicide investigators;
- (f) establish a Cold Case Squad;
- (g) increase accountability; and
- (h) employ performance standards.

Madam President, those were the first recommendations. I am going to give a report in terms of where we are.

We also talked about moving from a detection rate—as I indicated, when I came to the Parliament, the detection rate was 23.9 per cent. The proposal was that from November 2005 to January 2006, the detection rate was supposed to go up to 30 per cent and that was not accomplished. On the contrary, the detection rate has gone down. Now, what is the contributing factor to that detection rate going down? There are a number of issues like the question of witness intimidation that has been on the increase in the worst way; there is also the question about witnesses being killed. This has created a problem for the detection rate. The homicide people are aware of that and, as a result, we are going to see efforts—I cannot provide all of the specific details—to make sure

that the unacceptable homicides that we have experienced in the first quarter, especially during the month of March, are not going to be repeated. *[Interruption]* I could say that on the basis of law enforcement.

Madam President, just before coming to the Senate, I was able to go through the newspaper quickly and something happened today in terms of our Judiciary. We have been fighting desperately to get that person to remain behind bars and that has happened. Yesterday, the High Court judge has either reversed or denied that person bail and you would not believe the significance of that in a particular community. That was as a result of a different effort, a different approach and the bringing together of the various players doing investigative things and getting sufficient information to present to the court. Now, this fellow really thought that he was going to walk out on some \$800,000 bail. I do not want to provide the details, in terms of the crime for which he was brought to the court, but the other things that he was doing in the community that have brought about a whole new breath of fresh air in the particular community.

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: That matter is sub judice.

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: Did I call any name? Madam President, I did not call any name. We are seeing some developments that are taking place that would bring about some of the issues that exist as they relate to the unacceptable levels of homicides.

Madam President, let me just remind hon. Senators of what the Government has done, is doing and will continue to do with respect to improving law enforcement, notwithstanding the fact that some persons have said that the police service cannot be transformed. The transformation of the police service:

- (a) improve crime fighting operations;
- (b) improve intelligence gathering;
- (c) improve coordination and cooperation among law enforcement agencies;
- (d) improve facilities;
- (e) procurement of requisite resources; and
- (f) improve forensic support.

In terms of the transformation, we are focusing on a new curriculum and training for recruits. There is professional development and training of officers within the ranks; the introduction of a modern merit-based performance appraisal

system; and the strengthening of the Police Complaints Division. Soon events would overtake even the whole question of the Police Complaints Division, on the basis of what we did last week Tuesday with respect to the Police Complaints Authority Bill.

New recruits have been subjected to more focused background checks. This has included extensive background checks and interviews, polygraphing, psychometric assessment and interviews with psychologists to make sure that the 175 recruits that are currently training were properly vetted.

The new curriculum and training programme for the 175 recruits who are currently completing the third month of training, after reading and lectured on how to handle situations, students are placed in simulated, but realistic settings, and given an opportunity to apply what they have learnt.

Skill instructors critique the exercise with the entire class so that all the recruits could learn from the experience. Instructors at the training college are using up-to-date teaching technologies like PowerPoint slides, videos, handouts and textbooks to assist in the learning experience. New instructors have been added to the training college. These instructors are fresh from line duties and are aware of the realities on the streets.

Within the new curriculum, instructors emphasize the following principles:

- (a) training is linked to critical job task;
- (b) theory is taught and applied to real situations;
- (c) recruits are exposed to different academic disciplines, criminal justice, social sciences, humanities, public health, et cetera;
- (d) instructors use adult learning methods including role playing and scenario-based instruction that is interactive and allow students to learn by participating in activities;
- (e) courses include the most recent research findings;
- (f) up-to-date description of criminal codes; and
- (g) rules and regulations and policies and procedures.

There are 792 hours of instruction and standards for graduation have been raised. There are more tests and exams that students must pass. Every recruit is required to pass a physical agility test.

In terms of professional development and training of officers within the ranks is a central facet of officer development. Twenty-one middle management officers completed a six-month strategic crime control course and are today employing the modern problem-oriented policing techniques in the execution of their duties.

Twelve Trinidad and Tobago Police Service officers have returned from a three-month attachment in the United Kingdom, where they worked and learnt modern crime fighting techniques and methodologies from various United Kingdom departments. Today, these officers are implementing these techniques in Trinidad and Tobago.

Six officers from the police service and SAUTT recently completed a seminar conducted by the United Nations Office on drugs and crime. The course focused on counter kidnapping measures.

To further increase the effectiveness of police officers, the Government, in collaboration with the United States Embassy and the FBI, has introduced specialized in-country training in crisis negotiations in kidnapping; crime scene investigation and law enforcement safety and survival training for first respondents to crimes. Additionally, 25 officers attended a two-week leadership conference on intelligence gathering.

The staff of the Police Complaints Division have been strengthened from 16 officers to 50 officers and 14 civilians. Officers have processed for the year 298 cases, which is a tremendous improvement from previous performance.

Tribunals are being held by the service commission and at the divisional level. A merit base performance appraisal system is being implemented; manuals and forms have been completed and a pilot programme would be launched on the 10th of this month.

The Commissioner of Police is evaluating the formation of a legal unit within the police service that would utilize police officers who are already trained as lawyers in the role of police prosecutors and simultaneously improve the training of existing police prosecutors.

I indicated that the Homicide Unit has been expanded from 47 to 135 officers—not 150 as stated earlier—to address the unacceptable high level of homicides. To date, 100 officers have received specialized training in crime scene investigation. The Ministry has also supported the formation of a Homicide Prevention Working Group which brings together all aspects of law enforcement, forensic, prisons and intelligence. The collaboration and coordination fostered within this working group, and the detailed intelligence developed by this group feeds directly into the operations of the Homicide Unit and several other units of the police service.

A Cold Case Squad, as I indicated, has started and there has already been success on these matters. Incidentally, there are some recommendations from some interesting parties—I am not going to say from where and who—that some matters be referred to the Cold Case Unit. Those recommendations are being given priority.

The Government has procured several intelligence capabilities for law enforcement: helicopters, airships, various electronic equipment and the 360 degree radar system. The Government continues to invest in the development of human intelligence. All agencies continue to work closely with their regional and international law enforcement partners.

In terms of improved coordination and cooperation, an Intelligence Coordinating Centre has been established to increase the effectiveness of law enforcement: efforts in dealing with kidnappings. There has been improved cooperation and coordination among members of law enforcement. The military, SAUTT and the intelligence agencies, though not perfect, information sharing among agencies is improving.

Specifically, let me say something with respect to the Forensic Science Centre. The Ministry of National Security with the assistance of the British High Commission, entered into an agreement with the United Kingdom base Forensic Science Services for the training of staff and the institutional strengthening of the Forensic Science Centre. The intent is to increase the staff at the Forensic Science Centre and to strengthen the staff capabilities and competencies, to ensure that they can support law enforcement agencies in a timely and professional manner. The main areas of focus are: firearm examiners, DNA testing and preparation is on the way to ensure, in the first instance, a temporary DNA mobile facility is in place when the new legislation is enacted. In my presentation last week Tuesday, we indicated that the next piece of legislation coming would be the DNA Bill—document examiners and complete computerization of the centre's operations.

To further improve the performance of the Forensic Science Centre, the following initiatives are being implemented:

- (a) Two trainee firearm examiners will complete their training with an attachment to a US firearm laboratory from March to May 2006.
- (b) Two nationals are at present pursuing a Master of Science in document examination at a university in England. The completion date is September 2006.
- (c) One additional forensic pathologist has been recruited.
- (d) A human resource specialist and a financial officer are being recruited on contract.

What obtains now is that there are Forensic Science Officers who are involved in human resource management and financial issues, so that by bringing in these two persons, we could then free them up to focus more on the scientific aspect of their work.

- (e) Additional firearm examiners are being sought to assist with the backlog of firearm cases.

Madam President, these are some of the things the Government is presently putting in place to deal with what is currently taking place in this country.

I want to turn now to what I should refer to as the closest report on this Government's performance to date. I do not want to be the one to be talking about the Government's performance, because that would be self-serving.

Sen. Mark: Is it the MORI poll?

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: It is not the MORI poll. Madam President, permit me to use a document referred to as the *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report 2006*. It was released in March 2006. Let me just put it in a context so that we could understand what it is. The Department of State *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report 2006* has been prepared in accordance with section 489 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended.

What this does is that the President submits to the Congress a report on the performance of countries, as those countries put measures in place to deal with narcotics, in the first instance, and the question of crime in their country, in the second instance. That is the document from which I am going to be quoting. You could say that you do not like the country that is doing the assessment, but it is the United States Government assessment of Trinidad and Tobago's activities for 2005. Madam President, permit me to read from the report.

"Trinidad and Tobago is a transit country for drugs from South America to the U.S. and Europe. Marijuana is grown..."

I am putting that in context. I am saying that what is fuelling our unacceptable levels of crimes and homicides are drug-related crimes and guns.

"...in Trinidad and Tobago, but it is not a major drug-producing country. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago (GOTT) continued to cooperate with the U.S. on counternarcotics issues and allocated significant resources to the fight against illegal drugs. U.S. bilateral efforts in 2005 focused on the provision of technical assistance, training, and material to help the GOTT strengthen all facets of its counternarcotics efforts. The GOTT is party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention.

Trinidad and Tobago does not produce coca or opium poppy. Marijuana is grown, but not on a scale to make Trinidad and Tobago a major drug-producing country as defined in the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act. Trinidad and Tobago has an advanced petrochemical sector, which requires the import and export of chemicals that can be diverted for the manufacturing of cocaine hydrochloride. Precursor chemicals originating from Trinidad and Tobago have been found in illegal drug labs in Colombia. U.S.-donated computers now give the GOTT Ministry of Health the capability to track chemical shipments through the country, with the aim of preventing future diversion to narcotics producers.”

Madam President, just as an aside, presently, we have visiting Trinidad and Tobago, the Foreign Minister of Colombia. This morning we had some bilateral talks. What they are saying is that they are not only seeing chemicals from Trinidad and Tobago in Colombia assisting in the manufacturing of cocaine, but they are also seeing chemicals from Colombia also getting to Trinidad and Tobago in terms of that relationship.

“Policy Initiatives. In 2005, the GOTT National Drug Council implemented elements of the country’s...”

Sen. Ali: On the question of toxic chemicals and you are talking about precursors, I want to ask: Why is it taking so long to get the regulations which list all of these toxic chemicals which include industrial chemicals?

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: I am going to find out. I always listen and make note.

Sen. Ali: I have asked this question already.

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: Senator, well I am now hearing you asking the question.

“...This plan addresses both supply and demand reduction. In addition, the GOTT supported the Special Anti-Crime Unit (SAUTT), commissioned in 2004, and enhanced its capabilities. The SAUTT has responsibility for both counternarcotics and antikidnapping operations. During 2005, the GOTT hired an American criminal justice specialist to evaluate Trinidad and Tobago’s law enforcement structures. His report recommended changes in the structure, training regime and culture of the police service. To implement the recommendations, the GOTT sent its elite officers to numerous drug and crime training courses in the U.S. and the UK.

In 2005, the GOTT upgraded its coastal radar assets, and acquired two armed helicopters, an aerial surveillance system outfitted with radar and imaging systems, a forward-looking infrared camera, twenty-four mobile police units, and...sky watch units.”

We are making fun of it here.

“Anticrime legislation under discussion as a result of negotiations between the two major parties at the end of November 2005 aims at enhancing counternarcotics enforcement.”

Of course, you know that we have passed the laws and we are now putting things in place to make sure that we implement these pieces of legislation.

“Accomplishments. The GOTT funds a three-person U.S. Customs Advisory Team that provides technical assistance to the Customs and Excise Division. This unit focuses on improving the effectiveness of the GOTT’s passenger and cargo processing and enhancing enforcement of the customs law. The GOTT also funds an IRS Tax Assistance and Advisory Team that is working with the Board of Inland Revenue...to detect and prosecute financial crimes. The GOTT provided support for the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF), which has its secretariat in Port of Spain, and began to implement several of its recommendations to combat money laundering.

The Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard’s (TTCG) Air Guard (Formerly the TTCG Air Wing) conducts drug interdiction operations using two C-26 sensor aircraft it purchased from the U.S. These aircraft have maritime surveillance and drug interdiction capabilities. The GOTT has financially supported the maintenance of these aircraft since May 2005.

Law Enforcement Efforts. In 2005, the GOTT seized 3,000 kilograms of cocaine, including liquid cocaine, 15.58 kilograms of heroin, and over 100,000 kilograms of cannabis in various forms. The GOTT also eradicated 1,116,500 cannabis plants and seedlings during the year. One particularly noteworthy seizure occurred on Monos Island, located off the northwest coast of Trinidad. This joint exercise by the SAUTT, the police and the TTCG netted 1,750 kilograms of cocaine. Reports speculate that the drugs originated in Colombia and transited Venezuela, indicating involvement by a major organized crime operation. Eight persons were charged: five Venezuelans, one Antiguan and two Trinidadians.

Government's Performance in Crime
[SEN. THE. HON. M. JOSEPH]

Tuesday, April 04, 2006

The GOTT purchased an additional five drug detection dogs for use by the TTPS. The U.S. and UK are assisting the GOTT with the purchase of a "drugloo," a device that facilitates recovery of contraband items concealed in a smuggler's gastrointestinal tract. In...2005, four people were extradited to the U.S.; three were extradited on drug-related charges...

At GOTT request, the USG has polygraphed police, and mid-and high-level officials going for training or entering elite units to ensure that reputable and reliable personnel are chosen."

This is not us saying this, but this is a United States Government report.

"Drug Flow/Transit. Illicit drugs arrive from the South American mainland, particularly Venezuela, on fishing boats, pleasure craft and commercial aircraft. Sizeable quantities of drugs also transit the country through commodities shipments from South America. Drugs are then smuggled out on yachts, in air cargo, and by couriers. Smuggling through the use of drug swallows is also on the rise. Cocaine has been found on airline flights from Guyana transiting Trinidad and Tobago en route to North America.

Drug seizures reported by U.S. law enforcement officials at JFK International Airport in New York and other intelligence indicate that Guyanese-based smuggling organizations and other South American operations, are increasingly using Trinidad and Tobago as a transshipment point for cocaine."

Madam President, listen to this:

"In addition, the DEA believes there has been an increase in the amount of heroin transiting the country. Reportedly, some shipments are bypassing Trinidad and Tobago in favor of other islands because of the counternarcotics efforts of GOTT security forces.

Policy Initiatives. Joint U.S./GOTT efforts focus on strengthening the GOTT's ability to detect and interdict drug shipments, bring traffickers and other criminals to trial, attack money laundering, and counternarcotics-related corruption. The U.S. also seeks to strengthen the administration of justice by helping to streamline Trinidad and Tobago's judicial process, reduce court backlogs, and protect witnesses from intimidation and murder."

Madam President, I am saying all of this because the major challenge that we are faced with in this country is the unacceptable crime that is drug related and gang related. In the first instance, we are focusing on protecting the borders; reducing the inflow of drugs and guns that are coming into this country. We have to do that. We have to attack this on two fronts. People want to know how would

protecting the borders help somebody in Laventille or in other places. That is for the guns not to reach to them and, as a result, the unacceptable levels of homicides that are taking place could be reduced. So this is a two-front attack: preventing the drugs from coming in and taking the guns off the streets.

We are having a challenge in terms of getting the guns off the streets. The Government is going to be initiating certain actions designed to sensitize persons who are for whatever reason holding guns and ammunition, et cetera, on behalf of other persons. We have to go after the guns and we are going to be going after the guns. We are going to reduce the level of homicides the same way that we have been able to deal with the two other major categories of crimes: kidnappings and bombings. We are going to deal with the homicides.

Madam President: You have four more minutes and then an extension of 15 minutes. [*Interruption*]

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: In these circumstances, we would want to make an adjustment to the Motion. The adjustment to the Motion is as follows:

“Whereas the fears and concerns of law-abiding citizens have increased over the worsening crime situation in Trinidad and Tobago, resulting in severe psychological, social and economic consequences;

And whereas the Government has expended considerable sums of money on resources for fighting crime and on foreign expertise and assistance.”

We are extracting “with no visible effect on the spiralling crime situation”.

“Be it resolved that this Senate:

(i) express its concern over crime;”

Madam President: You would have to circulate the amendment. You are amending the Motion, so you would have to circulate the amended Motion so that Senators who would be talking could also refer to the amended Motion. In the meantime, you could say what your amendments are going to be. We do not have any problem with that. So, go ahead, and then circulate the amendment.

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: Madam President, thank you very much. That is what I am doing. [*Interruption*] Instead of “(i), (ii) and (iii)” I would just have “(i) and (ii)” I am going to circulate it. It should read:

“(i) express its concern over crime;”

I am removing “(ii)” completely and then “(iii)” would now become “(ii)”.

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

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

Question put and agreed to.

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: Madam President, I welcome the opportunity to inform hon. Senators as to what we have been doing, in terms of ensuring that our law enforcement agencies are provided with the means to provide the security and safety that this country desperately needs. The Prime Minister has been on record, on numerous occasions, saying that the only dark cloud that is hanging over this country, in terms of its economic prosperity, et cetera, is crime.

Sen. Mark: Is the PNM. PNM is crime. [*Interruption*]

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: Madam President, we are satisfied that the resources that are being provided to law enforcement—it is not our resources, but taxpayers' dollars—to make sure that the level of security that we are entitled to enjoy, we would enjoy. As I have indicated, the measures that are being put in place can be considered to be immediate, can be considered to be short term and can be considered to be long term.

I want to give the assurance to hon. Senators of this Senate and, by extension, the national population—[*Interruption*]

Madam President: Hon. Senators, maybe you are not finding this contribution important, but I am. I would really like to listen. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Prof. Deosaran: Madam President, I am finding this contribution very important to the extent if the Minister could just explain to the honourable Senate—I am quite sure that he has the information—to what extent has the acquisition and performance of the blimp been in terms of dealing with crime?

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: It is an airship. In the interest of national security, I cannot tell you specifically what it is contributing.

Sen. Mark: You are spying on people. [*Interruption*]

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: Madam President, as I indicated earlier, we have an environment that is an ever-changing environment. We have agencies that are responsible for dealing with the environment. The key is to make sure that we are constantly aligned with the environment.

Madam President, the cost associated with ensuring that law enforcement is up to scratch, is a cost that has to be borne. We have reached to this stage for whatever reason—

Sen. Mark: Because of Abu Bakr.

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: Madam President, I am talking in terms of making sure that we have law enforcement that is adequate to the task; and I am talking in terms of making sure that the resources needed for law enforcement would be on the cutting-edge of technology. Not only do we need to provide the technology, but the persons must also have the mindset to make use of the technology. This is the reason there is a specific strategy that is being used, in terms of where things are in the first instance. This is not by guess or vaps. It is not. It is deliberate.

Again, I want to give the assurance to this Senate, and by extension the national community—they are hearing about recolonializing and all kinds of comments about the British forces coming in and recolonializing and all kinds of different comments. Madam President, it is going to be one of the most cost-effective ways of making sure that our law enforcement has the injection of modern crime fighting capabilities. We are going to continue to train persons and send people abroad, et cetera, but their presence here with the kind of competence—I have heard people saying if they are going to be walking on the Beetham and send them to walk in Laventille, et cetera. They are going to be used in the most strategic and a way in which they would be able to contribute directly to a reduction in crime and criminal activity in this country.

Madam President, I thank you very much. [*Desk thumping*]

2.30 p.m.

Sen. Ato Boldon: Madam President, I am very pleased to be able to join this debate further to the Motion put forth by Sen. Prof. Deosaran.

March 2006, in this country, I think was arguably one of our darkest, and as someone who has spoken to young people in this country for the past decade, I feel a sense of real remorse and failure, primarily because when we look at the statistics that face us in the papers every morning, they indicate that young people in this country are the ones who are carrying out so many of the gruesome acts that are taking place on a daily basis.

I am encouraged to hear the hon. Senator say that the police service is going through a transformation, because one of the things that have been expressed to

Government's Performance in Crime
[SEN. BOLDEN]

Tuesday, April 04, 2006

me, on a very consistent basis by young people, is that they have a very keen distrust, right now, of the police service. They feel that the fox cannot possibly guard the hen house. So I am encouraged greatly to hear that we should be looking for transformation in our police service.

The image of this country, globally, in my experience and in my travels, is probably at its lowest. We talk about our tourism dollar, particularly in Tobago, and I do not really know if we have a true sense of how close we are right now to being outcasts in terms of international visitors. We are right on the brink of it being a case where we would no longer see any more international visitors. The reason for that is, more and more we are having foreign lands describe our country as a place where you visit at your own risk.

I am encouraged this afternoon also to hear the hon. Senator speak about the glowing reviews put forth by the United States in terms of the many things that the Government is doing to facilitate a reduction in crime. However—and you would permit me, Madam President, this may be because of my previous employment—the judge of performance at the end of the day is the bottom line. [*Desk thumping*] I am well aware and I have seen for myself, our airship, our helicopters, many of the things that the hon. Senator referred to, however, at the end of the day, is this reflected in the bottom line, in terms of the crime situation now going on in our country? And I would venture that it absolutely is not.

I would ask if perhaps, this is the storm before the calm, and if it is that things would get worse before they get better? Because the citizens of this country, I think, deserve to live in a country—after paying their hard-earned tax dollars—where they do not have to look over their shoulders on a daily basis. They deserve to live in a country where despite glowing reviews and money which we read about being spent on prevention and the improvement of many, many facets of our law enforcement, that at some point, we would see some results. And I beg the question: At what point are we going to see these results?

At the same time I do not, for a second, believe that the Government is totally at fault. The recent event, the horrible tragedy which befell young master Sean Luke, I believe is a mirror for us, and as a young man in this country, I am extremely disturbed and extremely appalled at this gruesome murder. However, I understand very clearly that as a society, we have our role to play as well. The family unit in this country is probably in its worst state ever. It is not an accident, therefore, that so many young people are turning to crime, because the question becomes: “What is their alternative?”

Heads of households simply are not there. I understand the direct result and my research has shown me that a child that is growing up in a household where there simply is no, not just father figure, but an exemplar, someone to whom he or she can look up to, is already on the wrong path. But while conceding that Government is not totally responsible for the crime situation, I understand very clearly that it is an awesome task to be in Government. However, they knew the job was tough when they accepted it.

I am encouraged by the foreign help which is being sought. The clinical definition of insanity is to do the same things and expect a different result. But on the subject of results, I would again say that bringing in foreign help would generate headlines; it would look very good on a report. The people of this country are going to demand results. If the foreign help is brought in and they work, all would be well, and we would applaud. My concern is, is there a further plan if the foreign help comes and in six months to a year, we are again throwing up our hands and saying, "what now, this has not worked?" Does this Government have in place a plan whereby there is an alternative to this foreign help? Or is this a case of this is the absolute last thing that we are going to attempt? I believe, in fact, there should be more than that one option available to us.

On a daily basis we hear about a nation losing its soul and I would like to add to this debate by saying that we have to be extremely honest with ourselves, in terms of how have we arrived at this point. We have not arrived at this point because of television. As a young person I can bravely say that I was exposed to things—that I would not even want to repeat in this Senate—on television growing up. But what is the difference between 2006 and 1986? The difference is, the concern by members of society was not singular, and I believe that until we honestly reassess where the youth of this country lie in terms of our priorities, we are going to continue to have problems coming from our young people. All the police, airships, helicopters and foreign help would only be a net to catch more and more and more of the wayward young people who have gone astray. My question this afternoon is: What are we doing in this country to prevent more criminal acts from grassroots level?

Madam President, I am concerned as well, given last week's murder and buggery of young Master Luke, as to whether it is possible in this country to have a list—not a list that would sit and gather dust, but an active list—which can be passed on to law enforcement; which can be used by law enforcement to ensure that crimes that are perpetrated by sexual predators can be stemmed and can be curtailed. I was very pleased to see the country rise up; turn on their lights; wear

black, wear red in their protest against young Master Luke's murder. However, that young man's death would be in vain unless concrete steps are taken to make sure that that sort of situation does not happen again in our country.

While we are being honest, let me say that the Motion put forth by Sen. Prof. Ramesh Deosaran, I believe—despite what was said earlier this afternoon by Sen. the Hon. Martin Joseph—is an honest assessment of what people in this country feel. People in this country, according to the poll numbers—despite what has been said on progress and kidnappings—do not feel they are in a better situation than they were, say a year ago. I do not believe that the people of this country truly believe that fewer kidnappings, and more homicides equal progress or performance. I believe in giving credit where it is due.

So while we are absolutely happy to see the progress made in certain areas, at the end of the day, performance to me has to be looked at the bottom line. The bottom line is that as a country we are in a state of emergency, whether or not we want to admit it. The young people in this country that I speak to, feel as though Trinidad and Tobago is now a country left to them that could not be in a worse state. We have to be honest with ourselves in terms of, are we doing everything we can to make sure that these young people get a better sense of: This country belongs to me and what is being handed down to me from the generation which precedes me is worth saving.

I believe, Madam President, that what we are seeing from so many of the young people in this is, they simply do not care and they do not care because they do not see a Trinidad and Tobago worth preserving. It is my very, very firm belief that when young people get a sense of no longer caring, is when we are in a real, real crisis. I am very aware of the many steps that are being taken. I would like to humbly submit that young people, youth and social services be moved higher up the ladder, [*Desk thumping*] otherwise all our other industries and resources would very quickly suffer as a result.

Madam President, I thank you.

Madam President: Before we move on, let me take this opportunity to congratulate Sen. Boldon on his first contribution in the Senate, and hope that we would have the privilege of your participating in other debates.

Sen. Dr. Eastlyn Mc Kenzie: Thank you very much. Madam President, like you, I would like to congratulate Sen. Boldon on his first speech in the Senate. To tell him how heartened we feel to hear the voice of youth, and to say thank you; continue to speak for the young people.

Madam President, you know before we started in November of last year to debate this Motion, Sen. Prof. Deosaran and I nearly had a fallout because that was just about the time when the Government and Opposition were getting together to discuss the situation with crime. He came to me and said: "Senator, you know I am thinking of withdrawing the Motion". And I said to him: "Your head good?" He said, yes his head was good. I said: "And why are you coming up with that suggestion?" He said: "Well, I have heard it on the air that the Government and the Opposition are getting together to talk about crime and so on". I said: "But you do not even know what aspect of crime they would talk about; theirs would be purely a legal thing, because from the composition of both teams they are lawyers and in the Senate we have a range of expertise, so why do you want to confine what the Senate has to"—and I must say that he decided not to withdraw the Motion. I want to thank him and congratulate him for bringing this Motion to the Senate.

Then you know, after the first session—and we heard former Sen. Roy Augustus, Sen. Mary King and Sen. Angela Cropper—he did accede and say, well yes, I now understand what you were talking about. So I want to congratulate Sen. Prof. Deosaran for bringing the Motion, because it gives us an opportunity to look at a situation spanning some months because we started to debate this Motion since last year. In fact, the Motion was in a different form on the Order Paper earlier; then it lapsed; then we had to bring it back; send it to Professor; change it around a little and here we are. So, Senator may I say to you, thanks for the opportunity, because it seems as though very soon positions dealing with crime, police and so on, would have no way in the Senate. They would all be confined to the Lower House, so let us thank you for this opportunity. [*Desk thumping*]

Madam President, I want to look at the Motion, sort of clause by clause. The first one, "the fears and concerns of law-abiding citizens about the worsening crime situation in the country." I agree with every word. The situation has gotten worse and I would not like to repeat what Sen. Boldon just talked about—the death of the little child. I would say that I think parents have begun to get a little paranoid within the last two weeks; rightly so. In fact there was a call-in to radio stations, televisions and so on in Tobago; if you heard the comments of parents; of people on the street, and so on—paranoid. Some of the older people who do not know anything about guns, never saw a gun, never held a gun, like myself; were talking about trying to see whether they could revive their catapult—we call it, you here call it sling shot—that they could stay from a distance and put a stone in it and lick off the heads of those two alleged committers of the crime—paranoid, crazy clean, according to the Tobagonians. People want to take their

Government's Performance in Crime
[SEN. DR. MC KENZIE]

Tuesday, April 04, 2006

own action. Just look at the news and look at what happened last night on television showing the angry crowd; the anger; the disbelief and everything, and it has gripped all of us.

I looked at the second part of the Motion; “vast sums of money on resources;” yes, we have had anaconda; we have had the "eye in the sky"; we have had the airship, and now we are going to have the British cops coming to assist, and we cannot say what would be the result. As Sen. Boldon said, we would probably have to wait and see. I would like to say that when these people come we should have something like an “each one, teach one”. In other words, they should be coming here with some sort of expertise and knowledge that our police officers do not have. I am hoping that when they leave these shores, because of that sort of hands-on experience; the sort of on-the-job training that they would have; the sort of attachment that our police officers would have, and they would have with us, that the police service would be a better one.

Madam President, foreign countries and foreign institutions have begun to realize that there is a plus in getting an exchange of expertise. We have had in Tobago the experience of nurses from the universities in the United States coming to do attachments to the health sector in Tobago. Because where those nurses come from, in their universities, in the training they get, they have a big immigrant population. They found that in trying to deal with the immigrant population, they were coming up short in their training, and so they thought of bringing back the nurses into the cultural environment of the immigrant, and understanding their culture and their way of life, so that they could better serve their people. So I am saying that at times these exchanges could be very, very useful.

Now I come to the resolution; “Government's handling of crime,” et cetera, and here is where I would like to put in my twopenny worth. If we look at the solution to crime only from the police action and the legal action, we would be trying to mop the sea. We would be trying to do what farmers in Tobago do not know, and that is trying to cut off the head of nut grass. Those of you who have ever worked a garden would know if you want to get rid of nut grass you do not just cut off the head—Sen. Baksh—you dig it from the root. This is more or less something of what Sen. Boldon was talking about. So, Madam President, I want to say that there are not only legal remedies to help us in our strong fight against the crime in the country. And there are just a few comments I would like to make generally.

One of the things I would like to say—and I saw where the hon. Minister tried to use the advice a while ago—in that, at times I think the police and the authorities talk too much and they give the wrong type of information to the public. So I understood and in fact, I agreed with you, Minister, that there are certain types of information that you do not give out. One of the other things I cannot understand and probably the hon. Minister would tell me privately, why is it that every time there is a police raid, the names of the policemen who actually went on the raid are put in the newspapers? I do not know. There must be a reason for it. And the raid was carried out by so and so. I want to know if they are setting up the people in a small community. I do not know, I do not know, but I am saying look at it.

Madam President, when I talk about trying to mop the sea and trying to cut off the head of nut grass, I am saying that we should stop feeding the cancer of crime. That is why I think I want to congratulate the hon. Minister of Education for the focus and the emphasis on pre-school education [*Desk thumping*] because, as I have said here, in a good pre-school, at play time and at activity time, a good teacher could spot a child who is likely to be a deviant. They could look at the selfish children; they could look at the cruel children, and there is where you could start to nip the thing in the bud, because at times, a child at home would not display the type of behaviour that they would display in another group setting. I want to congratulate the Ministry of Education for the action, the focus and the attention they are putting on pre-school education.

What I want to add is that you do not only detect and you discern, but you have to act on it to ensure that some sort of remedial action; some sort of counselling; some sort of interaction with these children is happening, otherwise you leave it; you pass it on. I have seen it in the primary school. The teacher in Standard 1 just hoping that this miserable, disgusting, 'botheration' child move up to Standard 2 and get out of "meh" class. That is what they are hoping. The child who is the bully, they say: "Oh gawd, all yuh make haste, make haste, go up and move out of meh class." That is not what we want. What we want to happen is action to be taken on the situation and try to remedy the situation.

I also would like to say that there should be curriculum change in the training colleges, so that teachers in the primary schools could be able to detect also, and not only detect but be able to assist those children who are coming through the system like that. If you do not have the teachers with the expertise to deal with it, they must know to whom they could turn. Too often we have this happening in the primary school and you hear when the child gets there, the teacher comes forward to tell you: "I taught that child in Standard 4, same thing they turned out

to be in the secondary school, same thing.” I am saying that probably a paper trail should follow these children into the secondary school because you have universal secondary education. So that the school to which the child is assigned, the teacher would know. Not that I have a disgusting child coming; not that I have a bad child coming, but I have a child with a weakness that I need to pay special focus and give attention to. [*Desk thumping*] That is what we need. Not just to come, suspend them and put them out of the class; we need help for these children.

So, Madam President, I am suggesting that we have to train teachers; have a curriculum where teachers are trained to detect the children who are at risk; not to label them, tag them and get rid of them to the other class, but the need for psychologists and people on staff.

3.00 p.m.

Madam President, when I was a little child growing up we used to have, what you called, truant officers. We used to call them the school police and they would go around to the primary schools and find out if a child had been absent for a long time. You are absent from school for a week and your parents did not come up to the school; you did not have anything as writing a note, your parents went up to the school and said, the child had measles, or mumps or whatever have you. These truant officers would come to the school to find out: Do you have children who are absent from school for long a time? What is happening to this child? They would go out to the homes and find the child, and probably we need to do something like this.

The reason might not be that the child is a truant child who is running away from school to go and beg, or fish or whatever have you. The situation might be the child cannot come because the child cannot afford to come to school. And therefore I want to shift from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Community Development. There is where the focus on community development has to shift from one of purely being physical of roads, water and bridges that used to happen in the 1960s, to one of a socioeconomic type of job where your community development officers and your National Parent Teachers Association should know of every child in the village who is at risk, who is a sufferer because of one reason or the other and to divert attention towards that situation to help to solve it. We could do what we want with the situation with crime at the legal level that is necessary to try to contain, to try to suppress and to try to minimize, but we are going to be really trying to mop the sea; unless you stop the rain you cannot mop the sea. We have to stop feeding the cancer of breeding criminals and then

hoping that after they have become criminals, we try to catch them and put them in jail and whatever have you. We have to start doing things like that. [*Desk thumping*]

Another point I would like to make, Madam President—I spoke about it last week very briefly and I would just hint on it—is the unwritten laws that they have in some of these police districts and the practice of sending you from one station to the other. I know the hon. Minister took a note of it. I read in the newspapers of another unwritten law, that if you report someone missing they have to wait for 24 hours or 48 hours to decide if you are missing in truth. Well I have never heard that! I am saying it is better to waste police time for 24 hours than to wait for 48 hours and find somebody dead. [*Desk thumping*] This is my point. [*Interruption*]

They say you are not missing until so many hours would have elapsed before I really report you missing. I applaud the mother who went to the station the day before and say, “my child is missing”. By the time she was reporting the child was back home but you cannot take any chances now. You cannot take any chances now! The danger of inaction outweighs the waste of what they called, “waste of police time”.

Another point I would like to make, and I understand we had the prison service here this morning, is the practice of jailing young people for one joint and putting them among hardened criminals. You are putting them to graduate to be criminals. They put them in Remand Yard, but they lock them up with people who know crime, who are seasoned criminals. When they come out they are angry, and not only are they angry they have formed bonds with the hardened criminal who knows how to keep in touch, who knows how to recruit them and to get them really as graduates of crime. They become professional.

I want to shift back to the Ministry of Education. As soon as the Ministry of Education could stop the shift system in secondary schools the better. [*Desk thumping*] There is a saying in Tobago for that, but I cannot say it in the Senate. [*Laughter*] “When pastor boy nuh have nuttin to do whe he duz do”; so watch it.

Another matter I would like to raise is that of the need for us to do. Again a little thing in the curriculum of comparative religion; the seasoned or the popular religions, they have their own context and environment, et cetera. But we are seeing creeping in the type of belief, the type of ideology that tells a young man or woman there is fame and glory in being a suicide bomber. There is something that you become great in the eyes of who is your supreme being is in strapping a device on yourself and blowing up a whole pub, a market, a train station, whatever have you. There is fame and glory in your supreme being for you with

that type of ideology. We are not paying attention to comparative religion, comparative ideologies and comparative beliefs, and trying to educate our young people in what is the way of truth and justice and development.

Madam President, I come again to the question of trust in the police. As Sen. Boldon said, people do not trust the police. We have had instances: Just a few months ago there was a call-in on our Tobago Radio Tambrin; there was this resident calling in to say: My name is so and so, I live so and so; last night about 9 o'clock the police came to my residence. "I understand you have a problem with drugs in the community, could you give me any information?" He said, as a good citizen, as a good person in the community he confided in the police; that was about 9 o'clock in the night.

I spoke to him on Sunday night to verify my story before coming here. And he said by 5 o'clock the next morning—9 o'clock tonight; 5 o'clock in the morning—he did not even say his prayer; he said, "Eastlyn, if you heard the noise outside my gate," and these were the people whose names he had given to the police. He said—I do not know if Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh could help me—the parts of his mother that they mentioned he had never heard of them at all in his life. [Laughter] And the man said, he called in on the radio— How you do not trust the police; the same police you are trying to help.

So when you talk about drugs and so on; people want to help. But how would you help and put yourself in danger? This is a point! When people tell the police and the police would tell them who said, you put your life in danger. That is why now, you know what is happening in the country; "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil". Nobody is going to tell you anything anymore and that is why it is serious that you get your detection methodology different. How to detect the crime and arrest the criminals; your DNA and all of this, I applaud you. You are not going to have people—

Another point I would like to make and the hon. Minister mentioned it, the types of murder differ. We have different types of murder. Obviously, you need a different type of remedy because, for example, look at domestic violence, the murders connected to domestic violence. In 2004 we had nine; in 2005 we had 26. Obviously, there is need for a different type of attention, a different type of remedy and a different type of help for these people. When we had a noise and a quarrel, 26 in 2004, 35 in 2005. Gang related, 32 in 2004, 73 in 2005.

So different types of murders you have to have a different type of remedy and a different—not to talk about the unclassified types. Nobody knows what types of murders these were, you had 129 in 2004 and in 2005 you had 206. You look at

the types of weapons used and again firearms went from 180 in 2004 to 272 in 2005. Sharp cutting instruments actually the same; blunt instruments 15 to 32. So again, Madam President, you see where you cannot just have a blanket type, a general type of remedy, you have to tailor to suit your situation.

One of the things I talked about, and I am glad that the hon. Minister talked about it, is the question of constituency policing or district policing their pride of place in this situation. I think if we have them sort of manageable and so on, it would make for more intimacy. The people would probably realize I could trust the police in my area to tell them; the people would become sort of more vigilant and say this is a stranger in our district. I know if I see a stranger in the night passing along my street I try to enquire who is he or who is she, where is he or she living, who is he or she renting from. What kind of person he or she is? You have to look at this. Again, when you look at the murders, according to divisions here, the statistics that I have, tell another story.

For example, in the Port of Spain district in 2004 you had 77 reported; nine detected. In 2005 in the same district, 117 reported; 12 detected. Look at the detection rate! Southern district, 16 reported; seven detected. In 2005, 20 reported; nine detected. In the western division 39 reported; seven detected, but in 2005, 70 reported; nine detected. The rate of detection fell. Northern 44 reported; 15 detected as against 64 reported in 2005; 24 detected, and it goes down like that. North eastern 40 reported in 2004, 50 reported 2005; whereas you had 9 of the 40 detected in 2004, you had 8 of the 50 detected in 2005. So again, if we could have the thing more manageable I think that it would make for better policing.

Madam President, let me just close by saying that I do not agree that we should not ask the Government to explain why the actions of the relevant agencies have failed to produce the desired results. Actually, we expect so much and we did not get it and there must be a reason; this is not to say that the Government has not done anything or has not done anything right. I am not blaming the hon. Minister, he has to go according to what he has been asked to do in the Cabinet. But I am saying that—to us, we are saying that you have tried since in the days of former Sen. Howard Chin Lee; action has been taken, people have been trying all over but we have not had the results. We know some of reasons; you have actually mentioned some of them, but I am saying, do not take it out, tell us what you know. And again we are saying give us specific performance targets and so on, and that is what you did today, hon. Minister.

The hon. Minister in his contribution actually gave us so much valuable information which, probably, we would not have gotten had not this Motion been brought to the Senate. I want to thank the hon. Minister, probably he got this information for his own interest but towards the end of his contribution he gave us so much information that I was wondering— *[Interruption]* We never heard of this before.

So I want to thank you for the information you gave and to ask that you give us periodic updates. Do not just wait for a Motion, give us some periodic updates on what is happening, how far you are succeeding; if you are not succeeding, probably somebody may be able to whisper something to you to tell you what could be done, what their suggestions are. As far as I am concerned, we are all in this together and we are supposed to help each other to make this country safer for all of us and our children. I can tell you if nothing happened to shake us to reality, last week's action, the tragedy of last week really shook us all up.

In fact, Madam President, when I said that parents got paranoid you should really see, you should have really come out and walked around and heard parents telling children, "Hold on to me; hold on; do not let go my dress tail". They were so paranoid, they were so scared that whereas parents who carry their children to little places, and the little child in the bank would run around the little rope and so—no, no, no, do not do that—"I might just look at the teller and;" paranoia.

That is why I say to you, Madam President, and to the hon. Minister of National Security, you are not in this alone as the Minister responsible, we are all there. I can tell you, the more you tell us your problem the more we will be able to give suggestions; some you can take, some you may not be able to take. The more we may be able to tell you what is happening on the ground, as Sen. Boldon was trying to tell you; how the young people feel, where the focus should be, where the priorities should lie. We are all in this together—Government, Opposition and Independent Senators—and whereas we know you cannot go down there and talk these things, we will say it to you, tell the Attorney General when he goes to Cabinet let him talk for you.

Thank you very much, Madam President. *[Desk thumping]*

The Minister of Local Government (Sen. The Hon. Rennie Dumas): Madam President, thank you for the opportunity to speak on the framework that has been laid out in this Motion. I think it is fitting at the outset to take the opportunity to express my own regret, my sympathy for the parents and empathy, hopefully, with the parents of Dane Andrews and Sean Luke, two children whose

murders have traumatized the society. And of course, we would want to take the opportunity to express that same sympathy and regret to all the relatives and other loved ones who have had losses.

I also think the opportunity should be taken to express similar sentiments with the parents of those children who are facing charges in a number of cases across the country because it must be quite hurtful to face the public with a child of yours facing such a charge and it must often result in a feeling of shame or feeling of failure.

We are sure, and I am sure that I speak for everyone on this side, that crime when it occurs in the society brings pain, brings a sense of loss and brings a sense of failure to those who suffer at the hands of the criminals. Somebody was saying this morning that the whole socio-psychosis of crime is something that we struggle with as a society. I am sure that when the goodly Senator brought this Motion he did it out of a sense that, and I think the easiest way to say it is to echo the words of my esteemed colleague from Tobago when she said that, "it is all our problem."

I would like to take that context because I would also like to take the context of the mover of the Motion, when he clearly identified the fact that where this Motion started and where it ended are quite two different places and we are all in this together. And therefore when we come to this table, when we come to this Senate we should come to it with an argument or arguments which carry us forward.

I note that there was reference to this Motion on June 08, 2005; November 22, 2005 and this is April 04, 2006. In that time a number of things have changed, the movement of the data has changed, the situation with kidnapping and certain other crimes have changed dramatically in one direction, whereas others have changed dramatically in another direction.

In other words, Madam President, we are living in a dynamic situation in which any description of what we are trying to do as a Government, and here I am using the word Government in the widest possible context, because as far as I am concerned everyone sitting in here is part of this Government. That is how they see us out there. And yes, it must be said, because I think when we speak, we do not see it that way. Of course, it is not too often I get to say young to somebody, but I want to take the opportunity to congratulate the youngest Senator on his maiden speech [*Desk thumping*] and I would not even warn him that he has to be careful. I would just congratulate him on the efforts that he has made to join this discussion.

I want to suggest that what the Motion must call for is a mobilization of all the forces of society. We must be calling that for all within the sound of our voices that we have to join a mobilization that puts away divisions that stop us or block us from, in fact, building a ring fence around every home, a ring fence around every child of ours, a ring fence around each community in such a way that we would be most likely and best able to protect both our homes and our loved ones. It is in the failure to do that, that we are most likely to have criminals succeed. The criminals succeed when we are divided, when we practise the non-observation, the non-reporting and the non-trust that a good community, that a good society should practise.

I want to note that on June 08, 2005 these discussions would have gone on in a different mood. There was a mood of, "we do not trust the Government," there was a mood of, "we will not be party to anything the Government is doing," there was a mood that some of the people who spoke at the earlier part of this discussion were very clear that, "this was not something that we should seek to do." I want to suggest that, today, the mood is one of communication, the mood is one in which the Police Service Bills were passed. We had a joining of ideas, a joining of ways in which we saw things and therefore in that context, the mobilization that the Motion speaks to, the mobilization that we must have, the whole question of how we join public entities, NGOs, CBOs, communities to this action has become very relevant.

Madam President, the Minister of National Security said that he could not blow his own trumpet. I want to suggest, and I honestly believe that if today we have that mood, at least 50 per cent of it is laid to the benefit of the Minister who has demonstrated that he could be a good national leader in the mobilization of Trinidad and Tobago in the fight against crime. I want to suggest that. Therefore the Minister may not need to blow his own trumpet, but I could say how proud I am to associate with him as a Member of this Government and to observe him as he carries out his task as Minister of National Security.

As we come to the environment, we come into a situation where we observe phenomena. We have a choice. We all selectively choose what we see. We look at the indicators that we think relevant to us, the indicators that we think should be measured and we come to a definition of life that we think is useful. In terms of crime, it is a difficult definition to manage. As I am saying, when we say crime as used in this Motion it is—I do not want to sound as if I am measuring the writer—a different indicator as structured in this Motion.

Crime in this Motion is wide, it is unmeasurable. It is not a useful definition for the discussion because we are discussing things that are a multifaceted kind of indicator in which you have factors going in all different directions. So therefore, in

some of the discussions we would have difficulty wrapping our minds around them—those factors—and deciding how we should treat with them as we go about that definition. I want to suggest that, again, the Minister demonstrating his capacity suggested to us that maybe we can take three or four of the factors out, the indicators out, that could be most useful and treat with those.

I am guided by the words of the mover of the Motion when he said that he wants to come to this discussion in a conciliatory tone. He wanted us to come to this discussion in a way that will build civic consensus. It is no difficulty in joining with the mover of the Motion and suggesting that if we come to this discussion with good faith, that we could help to define the problem properly. When you read the Motion again and it says—the original Motion—and I therefore want to commend and speak in commendation and agreement with the amendment made by the Minister. If we go to the original way the Motion is put and we try to come up with an explanatory formula from the words, we would have something that seems to suggest that change in Government activity or an increase in Government activity results in an increase in crime, that if—[*Interruption*]

Madam President: Minister, may I interrupt you? The amended Motion has been circulated:

Whereas the fears and concerns of law-abiding citizens have increased over the worsening crime situation in Trinidad and Tobago, resulting in severe psychological, social and economic consequences;

And whereas the Government has expended considerable sums of money on resources for fighting crime and on foreign expertise and assistance;

Be it resolved that this Senate:

- (i) express its concern over crime;
- (ii) agree that the Government outline, with specific performance targets and mechanisms for accountability, what concrete measures it intends to take to deal effectively with the serious crime situation now facing the country so as to facilitate the pathway to national consensus and civic mobilization.

Seconded by Sen. The Hon. D. Montano.

Question on amended Motion, proposed.

3.30 p.m.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Madam President, again, I was suggesting that given how the Motion was originally structured, one could have come to the suggestion that we had an identification of the relationships that suggested that a change in Government's activity, in terms of increased expenditure; increased

acquisition of resources and increased access to experts were in fact resulting in an increase in crime, so that the movement of the measured indicators could be determined by the movement of the explanatory factors and therefore, we have what in a sense makes nonsense of our logic. In that context, therefore, the direction of the amendments that we have would therefore be the one that we must commend.

You see it, would also demonstrate the inadequacy. Yes, it would demonstrate the inadequacy of the formulation because by definition, you are in fact setting up what has to be an impossibility. Madam President, we are in a position where we are asked to look at the interventions that in fact have been made. The interventions have been considered by two parties. Some of the suggestions have been changed; the other side has discarded some of the options. The Government has discarded some and now we have some that we have agreed to try.

In that context, the Minister has outlined a number of activities by the State. But I want to suggest to you and to the mover of the Motion, that the strategy for treating with crime has to reside fully in the development strategy of the country. Yes, it must reside in where we want to go as a people; how we want to go in that direction; what are the mechanisms for going in that direction, and the mover of the Motion identified one critical factor when he suggested that national consensus is needed.

What are the instruments we have for change in the country? The Government has laid before this Senate a National Strategic Plan. In that strategic plan, we have a medium term programme which has a number of interventions outlined as strategies for development and then by the budgetary process, we identified which ministry will do what, when, where and how much it would cost. An examination of the National Strategic Plan will show that we have a serious and focused vision that this country would be a developed country by 2020, if not sooner.

The programme, because it is a dynamic programme—it is a dynamic set of relationships we have—has resulted in a look at 28 sectorial areas, areas which have to be taken together to understand the impact on whether it is crime or the bringing up of children, as Sen. Dr. Mc Kenzie was pointing out, and it points out that development is a broad and inclusive process. The mechanism by which the plan emerged demonstrated that you must have consultations and discussions across a wide front. Madam President, crime, whether we take it as a unit of measurement, or whether we take the phenomena as a reflection of failure on all our parts, has no difference to the way in which we will look at development.

We want to suggest today that this Government has brought to the table a plan which would take us out, whether we are dealing with national strategy for development or a national strategy for dealing with crime. I could understand the confusion. You see, if we do not take a development focus to government activity, then we cannot understand it when it is being spoken about otherwise.

Madam President, the Government does not act except through people and as we go forward, the Minister was clear that there are institutions by which we pursue anti-crime activity. There are institutions by which we pursue crime detection. There are institutions by which we pursue the trial process and in that you have to treat with both the criminal and the person, the crime victim. There are institutions by which we hold people after they have been sentenced and these same institutions, we ask that they do for us a rehabilitative function. Those institutions do not act in isolation.

When the Government has agreed that civil society will be empowered and will be facilitated with the resources to intervene in terms of treatment of individuals; in terms of the nurturing of individuals, the Government is in fact addressing the crime situation.

When the Government in its implementation, outlines exactly where you want to be in terms of poverty eradication; in terms of the development of an environment for economic activity; for business development, the Government is addressing crime. When the Government takes the time to design a number of social programmes covering the gamut of activity from birth to death in this country, the Government is in fact, addressing crime. Because one of the issues that we are told—there is always scepticism—as to the extent to which believing that you are deprived leads to crime, we are suggesting that when you have a Government which is clear that the focus of its annual activity, as has been demonstrated in this year's budget, starts with the family, goes on to treat with education; goes on to treat with the environment that constitutes the community in which these families live, that Government is setting up a model of intervention that treats with the interest of individuals: the protection of families and families' assets, and of course, the development of a well-knitted community.

I am sure that the mover of the Motion would agree that the model of intervention he is seeking when he asked us to seek consensus, is a model that would have the Government activity joined to private sector activity; joined with household activity; NGO and CBO activity as well as community activity, if we are going to see a change in the crime rates by whichever way we define them.

Madam President, there is an argument that says, that you have a cycle of continuance of any behaviour which we consider socially deviant and that cycle of crime as it were can be identified. The mechanism for changing of that cycle must be interruption of the intergenerational activity that feeds that cycle. By recognizing the mobilization required, and this recognition did not come with the moving of the Motion by the goodly Senator, but whether we are looking at the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan; or you are looking at the Medium Term Programme of the Government; or you are looking to the annual budget; or you are looking at the programmes of ministry after ministry; government agency after government agency, you see some common features. You see a focus on the family. Some people say that that is a programme of dependency that is carried on by this Government. But this Government is very clear that whether it is tertiary education; secondary school education; primary school education or the pre-school educational focus, they are all interventions to ensure that no negative cycle, whether it is of poverty or crime continues or is likely to proceed unabated or without an appropriate intervention.

The Government is quite clear that opportunity for change must be placed in the system. Therefore, when the argument comes up as to what the Government is doing, I say, look at the government programmes, because if you do not look at the government programmes there can be no appreciation that this is a strategic place that it must come from; it must be long term; it must be sustained and it must be multifaceted. I think this Government has demonstrated that it understands that and is providing the opportunity for the breach of any such cycle.

Madam President, I was pointed to this booklet today, *A Guide to Social Programmes and Services* and I think it was laid in this Senate, am I right?

Hon. Senator. Yes

Sen. the Hon. R. Dumas: And really, we should be seeking to put one in every home and I hope that in fact is happening. Sometimes I sit and listen to people and I ask myself, is there a sense of reality? They often accuse us, you should come out and walk; and I want to say, these programmes were not designed in isolation. These programmes were all designed to respond to need, and these programmes are part of the demonstration of the call for a mobilization of the society.

The Motion refers to the expenditure by the State and in looking at the budget which was endorsed by this very Senate—I remember the Senate saying, they want to be able to discuss it and certainly by the Lower House—the questions of

where the money was placed in terms of expenditure on national security was a feature of that intervention that is required. And we are eyeing a situation in which expenditure whether it is on machinery; on people; on the institutions for crime detection; the institutions for the Judiciary; the physical infrastructure for restraining people and for rehabilitation, all those institutions and expenditures are the responsibility of the State. Whether it was another group or this group that is in government, then this group has the responsibility at this point in time.

One of the areas that we must consider, is the extent to which expenditure on national security issues or crime issues, in fact relate to the very sustainability of the nation we call Trinidad and Tobago. Madam President, there were times in the history of this country when people have asked, where are the security forces? Where are the security forces when we need them for rescue; for intervention; for restraining of some people; what are their capabilities? Why did they not know of X or Y? Those very people are in fact asking almost for, in one manifestation of themselves or another, asking for more and more expenditure, whether it is at the district level, the local level or the national level and in various institutions. It almost comes across sometimes as if we are asking for a policeman at every house and yet when the expenditure is made that seeks to create a similar or correlative cover by another mechanism rather than put an individual, we have a howl of overexpenditure or maybe misplaced expenditure. We need to make up our minds as to the extent to which we want security cover in the country.

Madam President, there were parts of this country that thought they were less susceptible to crime, not understanding that crime in any part of the country impacts on crime all over the country; that the flows of people, the very freedom we asked for, those freedoms that are installed as it were in our Constitution, those freedoms that we pay for, in fact, allow the criminals among us to move into areas that you would think formerly were not susceptible to crime.

In Tobago—the young Senator alluded to it—the reality is that whatever is happening in whichever community in Trinidad is in fact finding its way into that Tobago community. And it therefore limits the freedom of choice the Government has in terms of the economic end of it; interventions you can make in terms of economic development.

Whether you go to Biche, or you go to Buccoo, the drugs menace pervades the country and the activity. The activity required to intercept those people who are perpetrators of the drug trade, has to have a national platform. But unfortunately, some types of criminal activity impinge on the economics on one area more than

it does on another. When almost—I do not want to use the word “gloating”, because I do not want to sound like I am criticizing anybody on the maiden speech—but when we say glibly, that the Tobago tourism industry is under threat from crime, I would suggest it is a realization of a wider understanding that criminal activity, criminal behaviour is not confinable to any area in the State when all of the State is one. If there was any need to demonstrate that we live in one country, under one set of laws, with one set of factors impinging on every area in the State, then that is one demonstration that we cannot seek to avoid.

Madam President, whether at the household level; community level; regional level, crime is an issue. The mechanisms for treating with it require national mobilization and coordination, but more than that it requires national consensus and mobilization, and I hope that we can agree to the amended version of this Motion as presented by the Minister of National Security.

I so urge Senators here today. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Dr. Jennifer Kernahan: Madam President, allow me to give my fullest support to the Motion before us, Sen. Prof. Deosaran's Motion. Sen. Dumas in his contribution spoke of a strategy that we must devise in this country for moving forward. He spoke of the Opposition needing to feel part of the Government, and as my colleague said to me when the Senator made that remark, "I wonder why we don't feel part of this Government; I wonder why we don't feel that we are part of this consensus of a strategy to move forward."

The Minister of National Security has made certain amendments to the Motion before us and I think it is absolutely typical of this PNM Government that the part of the amendment that he excised was the part that called on the Government to explain to the Senate why the actions of the relevant agencies have so far consistently failed to produce the desired results. It is typical of this Government because this Government has absolutely refused to be transparent, to be accountable through Parliament to the people of this country. Therefore, it is no surprise that the Minister of National Security has refused to agree that this Government should account to Parliament for its expenditure and for its performance.

This Motion is being debated in the Parliament at a time when our beloved Trinidad and Tobago is reeling with shock and horror at the acceleration of the crime rate in this country, the rise in violent crime, just as the Motion has suggested. We are experiencing even as we speak, an unending vicious cycle of patricidal, genocidal war among our young men and an unprecedented assault on women and children in this society. In spite of the billions of dollars that have

been spent on the so-called anti-crime measures, in spite of our vast oil revenues, we are experiencing the social repercussions of our headlong flights into the abyss of underdevelopment. And this is the source, the genesis of the social crisis, as Sen. Ato Boldon said that we are experiencing here today; the politics and the philosophy of underdevelopment that this Government preaches and practises, as exemplified by Sen. Dumas and Sen. Martin Joseph when they have refused to acknowledge Government's responsibility to account to Parliament and account to the people of Trinidad and Tobago. That is the part of the philosophy of underdevelopment and this is what is destroying this country.

This social crisis that we are experiencing in this country is manifested in a number of ways. It is manifested in the abject poverty that over 30 per cent of our people face; the marginalization of over 30 per cent of the population being confined to live in a state of penury on US \$2.00. It is manifested in the cultural illiteracy and the cultural poverty of many of the younger and older people in our society. It is manifested in the cultural and spiritual void and in the general lawlessness that we are experiencing. And they are experiencing all this under the leadership of the most fascist and the most dangerous incarnation of the PNM that we have had since 1956.

What is happening now? The whole society is crying out. But we are paying the price for the economic and social policies over the last 40 years. I am not going to say within the last four years alone, because the effects that we are seeing and feeling now are cumulative. They did not happen overnight; they did not happen over the last two years; they did not happen over the last four years. The effects of the general decay and degeneration in the social fabric of our society; the crime, the disenchantment, the anger, the helplessness and the lawlessness, this is a cumulative effect of over 40 years of the philosophy of the underdevelopment that the PNM Government has inflicted on this country, and we must be clear about that. [*Desk thumping*] We are paying the price now. Our young people are paying the price.

Madam President, this is a government, an Executive, to be more precise that embraces, as eminent political scientists have said, the philosophy of a gangster state, as I mentioned before in this Senate. They have embraced the philosophy of intimidation, of force, of fear, of propaganda; \$10 million in a bank account that eventually fell to the ground, that came to naught. They have embraced the philosophy of misinformation, of mis-education, as tools of rulership and you cannot take that philosophy of governance without consequences. And the

Government's Performance in Crime
[SEN. DR. KERNAHAN]

Tuesday, April 04, 2006

consequences are being translated throughout the society from the top to the bottom. I believe that Sen. Dr. Mc Kenzie would agree with me, as the saying goes, "a fish rots from the head", so the rots and the decay that we are seeing in this society have to come from the political head, from the leadership in this country. [*Desk thumping*] And this is what is happening.

This Government consistently engages in character assassination, in spite and malice. So many cases we have seen. I do not have to elaborate on all those cases at this point in time, they have been elaborating in the Senate. Spite and malice against individuals in this country; law-abiding citizens of this country, from the highest to the lowest. From the Chief Justice back down have felt the brunt of the spite and the malice of this administration and we are paying the price. The whole society is paying the price for that breakdown in law and order, the lawlessness of this Government is manifesting throughout the society right now.

We are feeling the brunt; we are reaping the rewards, the seeds of a gangster state which is happy to sell out the patrimony of this country to foreign multinationals as fast as they can pump it out of the ground and ship it abroad. I am not saying this by myself. Sen. Mary King has complained that this Government is monetizing these gas and oil resources faster than they can ship it off; she has made these remarks. Other eminent economists and so on have made this sort of analysis with no thought to alternative energy resources which is going to face us in the next 15 to 20 years, since the reserves as has been said, given the rate at which we are using gas reserves, we only have about 12 to 15 years of reserves.

It is a thoughtless, visionless Government which is pauperizing this country. You cannot pauperize a country, you cannot massively remove resources from a country without consequences. The social crises we are seeing, are the consequences of this massive dislocation of wealth and the disproportionate division of wealth and resources in our country. This is what is happening.

4.00 p.m.

Madam President, they are selling our birthright for crumbs, and under their philosophy and ideology of the politics of underdevelopment, it is perfectly all right for Alcoa to walk into our beautiful country, take out billions of dollars in profits, and leave our present and future generations to literally die after they have poisoned and polluted the water, the ground resources, the air and the seas of our country; after they have left us without food, land on which to till, and without air to breathe. This is what this Government is facilitating and the people know. The

people of this country are not blind, dumb or deaf. We see what is happening. Hundreds of persons marched in Chatham two Sundays ago to protest the imposition of two smelter plants in this country, a feat unprecedented in the history of the world.

Madam President, a scientist has testified and the information that has been given to the people of this country is that smelter plants are usually placed in isolated areas where there is this buffer maybe of 100 miles from human habitation, and this reckless Government is bent on a path of putting two smelter plants in this small land mass which will not only affect Trinidad and Tobago but the whole of the Eastern Caribbean.

Madam President, I am saying that this recklessness of this Government resonates in the population and translates into intransigence on the part of people who would ordinarily be law-abiding citizens, but they are seeing that this Government does not care about them, so they do not care either. They are reacting, it is a reactive situation. This is what is happening.

Madam President, the Prime Minister has said that no matter what happens, no matter how many persons protest, his policy and these reckless schemes would go on and he shows the population every day that the people's views count for nothing and what is important to this Government and this administration is the trappings and the pomp of power. So you have silver Coat of Arms on the Prime Minister's car; private jets; individualized number plates; we have grounds being requisitioned and co-opted for the backyards of Prime Ministers, the seizure of Parliament.

Madam President: Senator, Senator, Senator. I have been very patient and I know you are trying to connect all this to crime, but moreso stick to the Motion. I really do not see the relevance of all this. You may have been relevant in the beginning but you have gone off track.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Madam President, I am saying that I support this Motion because the crime that is being manifested in this country stems from the whole concept of a gangster state where the lawlessness starts at the top, the lack of concern for the ideas and views of the people starts at the top and it is manifested throughout the society.

Madam President, we have to look at the manner in which the Government addresses issues that the people feel very strongly about to understand the crime and the social dislocation. For example, if you have a Minister addressing a situation where a legal counsel is taken to look after people's interest, of residents

Government's Performance in Crime
[SEN. DR. KERNAHAN]

Tuesday, April 04, 2006

who are opposed to being dislocated from their homes which they have occupied for over 60 years as it happens in Port of Spain, and these residents have taken a legal, lawful method of taking legal counsel to look after their interest, and you have a Minister of Government on television saying that this indicates mayhem in the society. I watched this with shock, to hear that these people who are taking legal counsel to defend their interest indicates mayhem in the society. What message are we sending to the young people in the society?

If one is going about looking after his/her interest in a legal, lawful way and the Government Minister says that is mayhem, then the gun is okay? If one protests with guns and violence and so forth, that is okay? What do they want from the people of Trinidad and Tobago? What is our recourse if taking legal action to defend our interest is considered mayhem and lawlessness?

Madam President, I am saying that under this administration we have seen this further attack on the people of this country and it is going to directly influence the way people think. If there is a Prime Minister actually attacking academia in this country, attacking intellectual thought, talking about politicians masquerading as professionals and as professors, then the young people who are looking on at the situation will say if professors in the university are under attack for making their constitutional right, political analysis and so forth, then what hope do we have in the society? This is the problem. The young people who are most vulnerable and disadvantaged—if I am so low down, I am the least of anybody in the society, and I see people high up being attacked in this manner, what hope is there for me? What place will I find in this society?

Madam President, we are talking 2020 development, we are talking about eradicating crime, and about establishing a stable social system. Sen. Dumas talked about that. He said in order to attack crime, the Government is instituting a whole series of social, political and economic measures to deal with crime. So when I am talking about social and economic issues, it has to do with the issues that Sen. Dumas raised. He said that whenever the Government built schools, institute social programmes, he brought up the whole guide to social programmes and he said, that is the Government we have attacking crime so I am merely replying to him.

I am saying that when you have academia and intellectual thoughts being attacked in this manner—he is talking 2020 and developed country status, but Madam President, I am saying that in developed countries, the universities and the professors in those countries are actually the think tanks for social policy and change. They are the leaders, they are the ones who come up with all the social

policies, the ideas, they do the research, liaise with Government Ministers and Senators and they are regularly on the television analyzing what is happening in government, in politics and so forth. They are the leaders in intellectual thought.

If one destroys that, if one intimidates professors, lecturers and intellectuals, who is going to lead the society in intellectual thought and debate and in carrying the society forward? The community leaders? [*Desk thumping*] Are the community leaders and the gangsters going to set the tone of the debate, the social policy and development in this country when you attack the thinkers, intimidate them and make them feel that they should not talk politics in this country? [*Crosstalk*]

Madam President, this is the politics of underdevelopment when one is talking 2020, social development and social policies and so forth. That is a policy they have to rethink. Do not attack everybody who does not agree with the PNM, do not try to intimidate everybody who does not agree with everything the PNM says. [*Interruption*] So what is going to happen here now, what is the message? Are we going to see paramilitary troops—

Madam President: Please can I have some order? We seem to have a number of debaters at the same time. I have recognized one. Please continue, Senator.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Madam President, former lecturers are known at the university who are part of the PNM team, they are part of the politics of underdevelopment. They cannot say anything. [*Desk thumping*] What will we see next, Madam President? Will we see paramilitary troops mobilized and organized to attack lecturers and the university as were mobilized in 2002 to steal the election?

Sen. Dumas: Nonsense!

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Do not say nonsense, and do not say it cannot happen here because it happened in Haiti, in Guyana and in Grenada where intellectuals and trade unionists were killed. Maurice Bishop's father, a trade union leader, was killed in Grenada by the "Mongoose Gang" under Eric Gairy. So do not say it cannot happen here. It has happened in the Caribbean and we are part of the Caribbean. It can happen here if we are not vigilant and do not protect our democracy, if we do not speak out whenever these crushing statements are made in the society. [*Desk thumping*] We have to speak out.

How are you going to talk about crime and isolate these things from crime? Crime is largely as a result of the literacy of the culturally challenged sector of the population, so if we do not have the leaders, the thinkers, and the talkers, who

Government's Performance in Crime
[SEN. DR. KERNAHAN]

Tuesday, April 04, 2006

would get on television and analyze, criticize and look for a national consensus? What hypocrisy! How could you talk about national consensus and bash people and say they are masquerading as professors? It is doublethink and we will no longer accept it from the PNM administration as so typically exemplified by the contribution of Sen. Dumas.

Madam President, I personally want to find out from this administration and from Sen. Martin Joseph, since when have we given up the right to free political thought and expression in this country. Since when?

Madam President, we are paying the price in blood, tears, incredible pain and suffering because we are living in a society where the drug barons are untouchable. They are operating with impunity and the young men and the young unsuspecting people of our country fall prey to this and I cannot see any other explanation.

We are talking about a huge drug trade, and the Minister has mentioned that Trinidad is becoming less accessible to drugs because it is being diverted from coming into the country, but I am still to read anywhere what this Government has accomplished in terms of interdicting the huge money laundering racket that is taking place in this country. It seems to be a fairy tale. Are you going to tell me that drugs are no longer coming into the country at the rate it used to? Tell me about the money laundering so I will be able to relate that fairy tale story you are giving me with the actual reality of the attack on the money laundering that is taking place on a regular basis through the financial institutions in this country.

Madam President, we are talking about crime, the Motion before us calls on the Government to say why the actions of the relevant agencies so far have consistently failed to produce the desired result, and as my colleague, Sen. Boldon said so aptly this afternoon, that the bottom line is the result. We cannot judge you any other way, we have to judge you on the results of the so-called programmes that you have instituted to combat crime in this country and you have to account. It is a prerequisite of the democratic system that the Government accounts for its actions, the moneys spent, the time, and for the personnel and so forth.

So when there is a criminal justice system that is clearly in array, nobody goes to the court to report anything anymore, nobody goes to the police, nobody goes through the court system. It is instant justice on the street and everything is a capital punishment: "You watch a man girl too hard, capital punishment; you steal some drugs from somebody else, capital punishment; everything is capital punishment."

Madam President, I will just give you a living example. On the morning of International Women's Day, I was totally traumatized by a telephone call from Gonzales from somebody who said to me that a young girl whom I knew and who grew up with my children as my daughter—because she is the same age with my youngest daughter; she lives right behind me in Gonzales, in the community—she was at home with her brother, sister, and brother-in-law and four armed men broke into that house and raped that poor child, a young girl. After that, you hear the talk on the street that the gang leader from Harpe Place sent two men with guns to kill those four men. They are looking for them. That is why every time you hear a killing, there is a revenge killing and it is a vicious circle. They do not have any faith in the criminal justice system; they are taking their own justice. They have heard about that, they are annoyed about it and they sent a man to kill these men. This is what is happening in this country under the nose and the aegis of this Government; the politics of underdevelopment that they are imposing in this country.

Are you going to tell me that the police force with all its resources, \$60 million worth of technological equipment that has been imported, all the intelligence they are able to gather, cannot deal with a few men terrorizing whole communities? I refuse to believe that. I refuse to believe that this Government is unable to deal with crime. I am saying that it does not have the political will to deal with it. [*Desk thumping*] I am saying this Government is using crime to further its own fascist agenda and I make no apologies for this statement. It is clear; all the evidence is there to show. And so the *lavway* goes.

Sen. Montano: Madam President, on a point of order. The term “fascist agenda” is out of order.

Sen. Mark: Since when?

Sen. Montano: That is a gross insult to the Members on this side, and there is no evidence to suggest that. She must withdraw that, she cannot go there, that is imputing improper motive.

Sen. Mark: She did not say you are a fascist, she said fascist Government.

Madam President: The issue is a very—as I said to you, Senator, I have been listening and trying to weigh your contribution and trying not to make you irrelevant, and be imputing improper motives, but you are continuing. Words like fascist, I agree, really should not be repeated in the Senate.

Sen. Mark: Why? But this is a fascist Government.

Madam President: It is not a nice word. Senator, try to come back to the Motion. You got away with it a number of times, so do not repeat it.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Madam President, there is a *lavway* in this country that says: "Mooma Mooma, yuh son in de grave a'ready, tie yuh head and ban yuh belly." Today I ask my colleagues in this Senate and the women of this country: How much tighter do we have to band our bellies? How much tighter does the mother of Sean Luke have to band her belly? How much tighter does the mother of Pixie Lakhan, of Dane Andrews and Akiel Chambers have to band their bellies? How much tighter do the women of this country have to band their bellies to absorb this horror that we are being subjected to under the politics of underdevelopment of the PNM?

Sen. Mark: Fascist Government.

Madam President: Come on Senator.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Madam President, we believe that the crime and the culture of violence that is bred in the society because of the social and economic policies, the ghost gangs, the criminal elements that have access to all these hundreds of thousands of dollars to conduct their nefarious acts and so forth, is directly responsible for the escalation of the crime and for the fact that this Government will never be able to stop it. I have absolutely no confidence that this Government will do anything to stop the escalating violence and crime in this country. Only the people of this country in the next general election will stop this Government.

So what do we have? If we have lack of political will to deal with the escalating crime, if we have the Minister of National Security actually denying any Government responsibility to account to people for crime, what we have is the day of the strongman. In one of Johnny King's calypsos that is what he said: "The day of the strongman is the devil's heyday." So there is this arrogance, this lack of accountability, this lack of sensitivity to the will of the people and, therefore, there is the strong oppressing the weak in the society.

We have men murdering women at will, we have children being the victims of abuse in their households, by their elders and older children and they themselves become aggressors. The psychiatrists have given us that intelligence. We have families disintegrating, older people being murdered at the drop of the hat by family members, so Madam President, what do we do? Sen. Dumas spoke about the Opposition being involved, being part of Government and the need for a national civic consensus and mobilization.

The Motion before us speaks to national consensus and civic mobilization but I would like to draw the hon. Senator's attention to what it really means. What

does national consensus and civic mobilization mean? I would like to draw your attention to a report of the *National Committee on Crime and Violence* October 31, 2001 which originates in Jamaica and it was interesting when I saw this document because this is what civic mobilization and a consensus is about. At least they had made some attempts at that because what they did was establish this national committee on crime and violence, a bipartisan committee of the Government and the Opposition and they did not only look at—as Sen. Dr. McKenzie said—the policing and the legislative aspect and so on, they looked at all aspects of the society—that Sen. Dumas pretends that they are looking at—which would contribute to crime. And I believe that the Members of the Opposition would have then felt to be part of the Government if they are included in a national, civic—

Sen. Dumas: Madam President, I take all kinds of abuse, but pretence is one thing I am not party to.

Madam President: Did she—oh, I missed that.

Sen. Dumas: Pretend is not a word that I class with my character. I am very boldfaced and upfront. I am very clear about my motives, intentions and actions, not pretend.

Madam President: I missed that word because my head was down. Do not suggest that the Minister is pretending?

Sen. Dumas: Do not discredit me with that word.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: I did not mean that he was pretending, but I am saying that he is not serious about implementation, that is why the word “pretend” came. I did not mean it personally.

Madam President, this bipartisan committee on crime and violence in Jamaica made a number of recommendations dealing with all facets and aspects of the Jamaican society including preparing the next generation. They made recommendations under that heading. There were different sub-headings and specific recommendations were made under the following headings: community empowerment to deal with first-time offenders; there was a heading, increasing the citizens power, which the PNM does not understand at all; there was a heading, re-establishing legitimate leadership within communities, which my friends on the other side do not understand at all; giving troubled communities a fresh start; bringing in the guns; improving public effectiveness and police community relations; dealing with gangs and terrorisms; empowering inner cities,

Government's Performance in Crime
[SEN. DR. KERNAHAN]

Tuesday, April 04, 2006

communities and residents economically; reducing political tribalism; enhancing the police service commission the way forward. I think this is very relevant to us because they are experiencing practically the same problems.

Madam President, what is interesting is their situation is much more developed and much more radical than ours. And if we look at what they are going through and what they are suggesting, their remedies can serve as serious lessons for us. So this is an important document. I know the Minister has looked at all kinds of arguments in terms of crime internationally, that is why we have crime here and all that, but we can also look at—if it is not too much trouble—the solutions that are being proposed on a bipartisan basis right here in the Caribbean to look for solutions. I also think this is what would be important and what would make the Government seem to be serious about civic mobilization and a consensus on going forward.

Madam President, I would not go into the reality of the horrendous nature of the crime and the insecurity people feel in this country based on the headlines that have been emanating in the newspapers over the last few weeks such as: “A nation under the gun” in the *Sunday Express* April 02, 2006; in a *Sunday Guardian* poll, the UWI/Ansa/McAl Psychological Research Centre talked about crime fears at school and how people feel about sending their children to school, and how people feel about the sexual abuse being perpetrated by students in primary schools and so forth.

Madam President, these are well known to all of us here but we are now looking for solutions. What can we do about these issues? What are the measures taken by this Government to deal with these issues? In the midst of all this hysteria in the wake of Sean Luke's gruesome murder, there is this call to revise laws on young sex offenders to publish the names and show the faces and so forth, and I respectfully submit that we are missing the point.

Madam President, if that happened to me, the name and the face would no more be important to me. That would be water under the bridge. The problem is to get to the root, the genesis of the behaviour of these children. [*Desk thumping*] This sentiment was expressed by Sen. Dr. Mc Kenzie and my colleague, Ato Boldon. What created the monsters that are evolving in the society? We have to look at the fact that you are publishing three names today and 10 more are coming through the system. You cannot know everybody, you cannot protect your child from everybody so what you have to do is go to the root of the problem and evaluate what is happening in our society.

Madam President, I have given an evaluation, this is why my debate took the structure that it did. What I did before was give the general, social climate and the reason for the alienation, the fear, the tension and the reason for the anger in the society based on the politics of underdevelopment of this Government. But there are also specific social situations that we have to understand in relation to where those children live, how they operate, their family situation and so forth. What is producing a child to commit such a horrendous act? That child clearly must have been seriously abused, or had serious problems and they do not fall from the sky. They came from our society and we must understand what specific and general social conditions in our society are producing these children. So the register and all those things are after the fact. After our children have been abused, sodomized, and traumatized is after the fact. That is a reactionary way to deal with the social crisis that we are facing in this country.

Madam President, so what has this goodly Government done to protect the children of this country over the last four years? I looked at what we had proposed in terms of setting up institutions in this country to protect the children and there was an Act No. 64 of 2000 to establish a Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago to act as the guardian of the children of Trinidad and Tobago. This Act has not been proclaimed, it is not in force and there is no Children's Authority in Trinidad and Tobago and yet we cry crocodile tears about the abuse and abandonment of children, the psychological and social trauma mentioned in this Motion, and the severe psychological, social and economic consequences. We are crying crocodile tears, but where is the Children's Authority which would serve as an institution to deal with the protection of children in our country?

Some of the measures that this authority would be empowered to effect in terms of the police is that:

- “22. (1) Where it appears to the Authority that a child—
- (a) has neither parent nor guardian who is fit to exercise care and guardianship;
 - (b) is lost or has been and remains abandoned by his parents or guardians;
 - (d) is exposed to moral danger;
 - (e) is beyond the control of his parents or guardians;
 - (f) is ill-treated...”

And so forth.

Government's Performance in Crime
[SEN. DR. KERNAHAN]

Tuesday, April 04, 2006

“and that the intervention of the Authority is necessary in the best interests of the child, it shall investigate the matter and it shall be lawful where appropriate for the Authority to receive the child, into its care.”

It talks about the role of the police.

Madam President: There are five minutes left of your 45 minutes. Would you wish to take it before we break or to continue at the next sitting?

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Yes.

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Public Administration and Information (Sen. The Hon. Dr. Lenny Saith): Madam President, I beg to move that the Senate be now adjourned to Tuesday, April 11, 2006 at 1.30 p.m. at which time we would complete the debate on the Pharmacy Board (Amdt.) Bill and on the completion of that, we will go to the Fair Trading Commission Bill.

Question put and agreed to.

Senate adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 4.30 p.m.