

*Leave of Absence**Tuesday, June 27, 2006***SENATE***Tuesday, June 27, 2006*

The Senate met at 1.30 p.m.

**PRAYERS**[MR. VICE-PRESIDENT *in the Chair*]**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**Mr. Vice-President:** Hon. Senators, I have granted leave of absence to Sen. the Hon. John Jeremie from today's sitting of the Senate, and to Senators Basharat Ali and Angela Cropper who are both out of the country.

**SENATORS' APPOINTMENT**

**Mr. Vice-President:** Hon. Senators, I have received the following correspondence from Her Excellency Dr. Linda Savitri Baboolal, Acting President:

“THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

By Her Excellency DR. LINDA SAVITRI  
BABOOLAL, Acting President and  
Commander-in-Chief of the Republic of  
Trinidad and Tobago.

s/Linda Baboolal  
Acting President

TO: MRS. JOAN HACKSHAW-MARSLIN

WHEREAS Senator John Jeremie is incapable of performing his duties as a Senator by reason of illness:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, LINDA SAVITRI BABOOLAL, Acting President as aforesaid, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, in exercise of the power vested in me by section 44 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, do hereby appoint you, JOAN HACKSHAW-MARSLIN, to be temporarily a member of the Senate, with immediate effect and continuing during the period of illness of the said Senator John Jeremie.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of the  
President of the Republic of Trinidad and  
Tobago at the Office of the President, St.  
Ann's, this 27<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2006.”

*Senators' Appointment*  
[MR. VICE-PRESIDENT]

*Tuesday, June 27, 2006*

“THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

By Her Excellency DR. LINDA SAVITRI  
BABOOLAL, Acting President and  
Commander-in-Chief of the Republic of  
Trinidad and Tobago.

s/Linda Baboolal  
Acting President

TO: MR. WALTON FRANCIS JAMES

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

NOW, THEREFORE, I, LINDA SAVITRI BABOOLAL, Acting President as aforesaid, in exercise of the power vested in me by section 40(2)(c) 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 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2006 and continuing during the absence from Trinidad and Tobago of the said Senator Basharat Ali.

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 26<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2006.”

“THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

By Her Excellency DR. LINDA SAVITRI  
BABOOLAL, Acting President and  
Commander-in-Chief of the Republic of  
Trinidad and Tobago.

s/Linda Baboolal  
Acting President

TO: MS. ALTHEA ROCKE

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, LINDA SAVITRI BABOOLAL, Acting President as aforesaid, in exercise of the power vested in me by section 40(2)(c) and section 44 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, do hereby appoint

*Senators' Appointment*

*Tuesday, June 27, 2006*

you, ALTHEA ROCKE, to be temporarily a member of the Senate, with effect from 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2006 and continuing during the absence from Trinidad and Tobago of the said Senator Angela Cropper.

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 13<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2006."

#### OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

*The following Senators took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance as required by law: Mrs. Joan Hackshaw-Marslin, Mr. Walton Francis James and Ms. Althea Rocke.*

#### TOBAGO HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY (AMDT.) BILL

Bill to amend the Tobago House of Assembly Act, No. 40 of 1996 to increase the number of secretaries from five to seven, brought from the House of Representatives [*The Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister*]; read the first time.

#### PAPERS LAID

1. Report of the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the financial statements of the Princes Town Regional Corporation for the financial year ended September 30, 2001. [*The Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Sen. The Hon. Conrad Enill)*]
2. Annual audited financial statements of Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago Limited for the year ended December 31, 2005. [*Sen. The Hon. C. Enill*]
3. The Value Added Tax (Amendment to Schedule 2) Order, 2006. [*Sen. The Hon. C. Enill*]

#### **Value Added Tax (Amendment to Schedule 2) Order**

**The Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Sen. The Hon. Conrad Enill):** Mr. Vice-President, may I also advise that the Statutory Instruments Committee considered the Value Added Tax (Amendment to Schedule 2) Order, 2006 and found that there is nothing to which the attention of the Senate should be specially drawn. The minutes of the Committee were circulated to Members.

**WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION  
Immigration Department  
(Rejected Applications)**

- 57. Sen. Wade Mark** asked the hon. Minister of National Security to state:
- (a) How many applications were rejected by the Immigration Department and subsequently approved by the Ministry of National Security?
  - (b) Could the Minister of National Security provide the Senate with a detailed breakdown of both sets of applications?

*Vide end of sitting for written answer.*

**FIREARMS (AMDT.) BILL**

Bill to amend the Firearms Act, Chap 16:01 [*The Minister in the Ministry of Finance*]; read the first time.

**FIRE SERVICE (AMDT.) BILL**

Bill to amend the Fire Service Act, Chap. 35:50 [*The Minister of National Security*]; read the first time.

**GOVERNMENT'S PERFORMANCE IN HANDLING CRIME**

[Fourth 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.*

**Mr. Vice-President:** The following Senators have already spoken on the Motion: On November 22, 2005, Sen. Prof. Ramesh Deosaran, the mover of the Motion, Sen. Roy Augustus, Sen. Mary King and Sen. Angela Cropper. On April 04, 2006, Sen. The Hon. Martin Joseph, Sen. Ato Boldon, Sen. Dr. Eastlyn Mc

Kenzie, Sen. The Hon. Rennie Dumas and Sen. Dr. Jennifer Kernahan. On April 25, 2006, Sen. Dana Seetahal, S.C. and I see here Sen. Dr. Kernahan wound up on that day; Sen. Vasant Bharath, Sen. Walton Francis James, Sen. The Hon. Mustapha Abdul-Hamid and Sen. Bro. Noble Khan.

**CLERK AND STAFF OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF GUYANA  
(WELCOME)**

**Mr. Vice-President:** Hon. Senators, just before we go into the debate, I would like to welcome to Trinidad and Tobago and to this Senate, the Clerk of the National Assembly of Guyana and the clerks of the committees. Welcome.

**GOVERNMENT'S PERFORMANCE IN HANDLING CRIME**

[Fourth Day]

**Sen. Dr. Tim Gopeesingh:** Mr. Vice-President, this Motion standing in the name of Sen. Prof. R. Deosaran has been discussed in the Senate here for a long period of time. *[Interruption]*

**Mr. Vice-President:** Bro. Khan was to continue? I would allow Bro. Khan to continue; Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh, you would speak after.

**Sen. Bro. N. Khan:** Thank you. Mr. Vice-President, I had the honour of sharing some thoughts on what is before us here, the question on the Motion standing in the name of Prof. R. Deosaran.

Much has been said in the past and even what I have mentioned too, this whole question of the psychology, particularly dealing with social and economic consequences and as it affects crime as such. Crime as we know it—I am sure all of us will agree—is a manifestation; the outcome of crime, the end result of what we refer to as crime, is a manifestation of things for which we had planned; for which we had hoped have not realized. Of course, there may be some who say man by very nature might be good; or on the other the hand, man by very nature has a tendency to be other than good.

For my own view, I am on the side of those who hold that man—and I have referred to here as humankind—has a tendency, and by nature we are good. So when we see the manifestation of crime—and I would put on the table that crime is an expression of things not going good—obviously it must be that the environment in which we find ourselves is not good, hence this manifestation. Who then will we ascribe some element of responsibility for that?

We claim here in this honourable Senate to be occupying the highest level of the State as far as law is concerned. We formulate law, although we do not actually interpret it, though to some extent at the managerial level you would find

that. But broadly speaking we have a big input in the form of law and the nation as such, looks forward to us here. We know society is very complex and when things happen there is always a strong tendency to apportion blame, to ascribe where the cause for something that is not going right is.

I would like to adduce particularly in the area of crime that it is, as I said before, more complex. The question of allocating blame, I do not think that is the way to go. It is a manifestation; it is there if anybody is to be blamed, it has to be all of us; and when I say all of us, all in the society. But, I think the challenge is where could we form or create the solutions to meet this challenge before us. I do not want to sound like if it is a cliché, but very often the cure or the manifestation for meeting a challenge is very close to us, and I would like to adduce firstly, our closeness to our spiritual self, because by nature human beings are spiritual. We have a connectivity with our Lord and Creator, for those who believe in a god; even for those who do not ascribe to the belief in a god, it does not mean that a god does not exist. So that formulation of association-ship, or culture or friendship with our Creator we should start or deepen the process if we have not started.

Secondly, every human being belongs to a family. We come here because of family; our entrance into the world, no matter under what circumstance it might be. Very often it might not be the best that we would like to see but even taking our "historics" in the great systems that we have in our country, small as it is, I would think that if we were to look at some of them—Christianity, Islam, not much Judaism, Hinduism, our traditional religions from the African mother continent, one of which is the Orisha, new form systems that continue to emerge, but all have a connectivity with some of the old systems, Buddhism or what have you—we would find that the family plays a most important part in this scheme of things.

Perhaps too, one could think in terms that if we have to start we should start with the family. I know my organization, the IRO has been invited to serve on a committee that is supposed to formulate policy for the family, which is an ongoing process at the moment and some work has been done before. We are hoping that in this area the policy that will emerge will lead us into better understanding in putting the role of the family into place in meeting challenges; not only of crime but in also moving forward as a people, as a nation; this I think is a most important step.

Within recent times, I would say with the beginning of this millennium, the world has started to recognize the role of spirituality. I would not say the church as such, because the church acts as a catalyst for the expression of spirituality. In my own humble view, at times you would find—maybe in the parliaments, and I use parliaments generic here, where you have the high decisions of a nation being

formed—that you would have representatives of the great traditions, great systems; the rules, the churches and what have you. But when it comes to the expression of sharing and bringing to bear these traditions on the decisions that we make, though they might, as I have just said belong to these groups, one does not get the feeling that sufficient input that they are capable of is being brought to bear in the decision-making process or even the respect by the various parliaments, or Houses or what have you, where the decisions are taken seriously.

Even before these matters are brought to us, for example, the plans that are before us and are coming, Vision 2020 in our own instant case here in our country, but in other parts of the world; the plans are so highly geared towards economic inputs that are devoid.

In my younger days when we were speaking in terms of economics and some of the other sciences, there was a cogent attempt to keep that element out. They would speak about utility and not bring any moral value in it; they would speak about going forward, no ethical content into it. But the question of using the simple parameters of a balance sheet: What is the end? Is it red or black? Very often that detracts from what a society that has a soul bent; that has a part of spirituality as its base, these elements are pushed aside and these have ricocheted. They have ricocheted within the last 500 years or so, where the western systems have adopted an element of dominance as far as the economic inputs are concerned, though the West too have elements of spirituality, great traditions, particularly of the Judiac-Christian elements pervading the society; the extent to which we should allow the high elements of love, of caring, of sharing, of mercy.

One wonders when we look at some of these things that emerge out of the systems like the World Bank, even the United Nations, which have recognized the element of spirituality; where are they in the decisions? Where are they in the implementations? Where are they in coming down to us, the people at large? Because as far as the economic input, the social inputs that have been brought to bear, it seems to be a widening of the gap of the haves and the have-nots instead of a reduction of the numbers, but in this instance, in the case of crime, the numbers seem to escalate.

Our young people, where are they in the mix? This is an important aspect: Where are they in the mix? How do our children relate to us? Do they give you a cynic smile and brush you aside; taking other values; adopting other systems that are totally foreign to even our own, especially of our age group; values that we have inherited and have been transferred to us, to some extent, by our parents at that time? And I touch again on the question of the family. This mad rush for the

inputs of the materialistic end; this mad rush fired very often by the media, particularly within recent times the electronic media,. There is nothing that comes before you that you cannot attach an element of sexism that they are trying to sell; even the football that we relish; look at it and you would see how much of that is in it. Good!

What I am trying to put in here is the need for going back to these values and giving them some element of prominence, and I strongly suspect that if we were to pay particular attention to bringing that aspect into the mix— A few years aback, one got the impression that the role of the church per se—and I speak across the board, not any one in particular—would have been recognized and would have formed a place within the scheme of things. When a member of the Cabinet or a high Member of the Government of that Cabinet at the time was allocated, what has been referred to as ecclesiastical duties—now this has been an item on the estimates for the longest while. When we think in terms of ecclesiastical duties or words to that effect, we think in terms of not particularly anyone; we think in terms of across the board.

Again, within recent times the world has recognized the question of multi-diversity; that might appear to be a diversity-diverstiy, but this is a fact of life and the recognition of those inputs would have formed a sort of predominance within the framework; Government recognizing that, would have given it a place within the scheme of things. But it never got off the ground, I suspect. I long for the day when we could have this element being brought on.

I am not speaking here of trying to bring any form of theocracy or any form of religious-based government per se; I am speaking in terms of recognizing a very powerful input in our community and giving it the space and the place that it deserves. I suspect if we had taken this some years ago and run with that, it would have taken up some time, because we are talking about change within people; we are talking about change between our younger generation and forging so that they themselves—that will take some time.

I know to a great extent the Ministry of Education has been attempting to bring this into the mix as far as school is concerned, but there is need obviously, for a faster clip, for direction that would be definitely high on the burner so that when this impacts, it could definitely be recognized as a means of improving our society and obviously would have a negative effect on the rise of crime, if I were to put it that way, which is before us.

I would not like to burden you too much with what I am about, but I am sure all of us have given much thought to the question of crime and the various areas to which we could address it. Again, I would like to say that the approach must be



multi-disciplined, multi-causal, and it has to be a part of all of us; it is a responsibility of all of us. I would like to proffer that the element or the basic rock upon which civilization is based, the family, be looked at again, be strengthened and given more resources, and that it be brought up into a higher framework in meeting this challenge of crime, which we find is of such a concern that it has to be before us today.

Thank you, Mr. Vice-President.

**2.00 p.m.**

**Sen. Dr. Tim Gopeesingh:** Thank you, Mr. Vice-President. The Motion raised in the name of Sen. Prof. Deosaran has in it a number of preambles and the first preamble is:

*“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;”*

This first aspect of the Motion over the last four and a half years, the psychological, social and economic consequences of the crime situation wreaked havoc in the minds of the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago and still continue to raise serious fears about an individual's safety and security.

Any student doing modern studies would obviously quote the Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs. The most basic and fundamental needs of any citizen are food, shelter, clothing and of course, security. And when the security of an individual is threatened to such an extent that you feel that every move you make you may be shot down or something ill may happen to you or your family, is it worth living when these basic fears grip your mind on a daily basis? It seems as though this administration has been unable to allay the fears and anxiety and apprehension that is continuing to grip this country and all the citizens, particularly over the last four and a half years.

Mr. Vice-President, I just want to refer to some statistics which are empirical evidence to substantiate the Motion raised by Sen. Prof. Deosaran. I want to compare the statistics over the last four and a half years to the statistics of the previous six years.

Let us first start with the murder rate: in 1994, 137; 1995, 121—this is the beginning of the UNC administration—1996, 106; 1997, 101; 1998, 97; 1999, 92; 2000, 120 and 2001, 151. So in the six years under the UNC administration, six years, there had been 788 murders and only six kidnappings for ransom in the

year 2001. Let us contrast that to the empirical evidence and to the figures and statistics under this administration. In 2002, 171 murders and 29 kidnappings for ransom; 2003, 229 murders and 51 kidnappings for ransom; 2004, 260 murders and 28 kidnappings for ransom; 2005, 387 murders and 42 kidnappings for ransom; and 2006, so far, 193 murders in 178 days and eight kidnappings for ransom.

Mr. Vice-President, in total, in the short space of four and a half years under this administration, we have had 1,240 murders and 158 kidnappings for ransom. Is this what this administration could be proud of? Twelve hundred and forty murders in the short space of four and a half years and 158 kidnappings for ransom, that is an average of approximately 300 murders per year, and we are now in 178 days of the year and we have 193 murders already.

**Sen. Mark:** And we might have another one right now.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And as we speak, there might be another one. Compare that and contrast that to an average of 130 murders per year under the UNC administration; an average of 130 murders per year under the UNC as contrasted to 300 murders per year under the PNM administration. It is for everyone to see that this administration seems incompetent—

**Sen. Mark:** Totally incompetent!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:**—unable to deal with the escalation in crime.

Let us analyze the relationship between the murder rate and the Ministry of National Security budget and expenditure. Mr. Vice-President, this is a graph [*Holds up document*] showing the murder rate escalating even as the Ministry of National Security expenditure climbs. So it seems as though as we spend more money in the Ministry of National Security it facilitates an increase in murders. I want the hon. Minister of National Security to see this. [*Interruption*] I would send a copy across to him. This is the murder rate and this is the Ministry of National Security expenditure.

**Sen. Mark:** The more money they get is the more murders in the country. You have more crime!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** The more money you have the more is the crime.

**Sen. Mark:** Joseph should resign. Joseph should go! [*Crosstalk*]

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** You are responsible! You are responsible as the Minister of National Security.

**Sen. Mark:** Go! Go!

**Mr. Vice-President:** Members, we could reduce the speaking out of turn. We do not want this to degenerate, please.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** When it touches their blood they get hot.

**Mr. Vice-President:** Senator! *[Interruption]* Please continue.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Thank you, Sir. *[Interruption]* And to substantiate what I am saying, this is not a hullabaloo type of talk. I would substantiate what I am saying. In 2001 the budget under the UNC administration was \$1.47 billion.

**Sen. Mark:** Cannot take the pressure.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And we spent \$1.38 billion out of that \$1.4, but in 2002, \$1.5 billion spent; 2003, \$1.88 billion; 2004, \$1.955 billion. Although the budget was \$1.6 they spent \$1.955 billion.

**Sen. Mark:** Oh good!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** In 2005, although they were supposed to spend \$2.2 billion, they spent \$2.35 billion *[Interruption]* and in 2006 the budget estimated is \$2.497 billion and already they are predicting that the actual expenditure would be \$2.99 billion. Mr. Vice-President, in 2006, \$3 billion would be spent by the Ministry of National Security—

**Sen. Mark:** Total failure!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:**—yet they are unable to control the crime and escalation as compared to when the UNC—\$1.4; almost more than two times the budget that the UNC administration had. When we had an average murder rate of 130; they have been spending two times the amount of money and the murder rate has gone to an average of almost 300 per year.

**Sen. Mark:** Incompetence! Incompetence!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Mr. Vice-President, this substantiates the reason why the hon. Sen. Prof. Deosaran spoke in the preamble of his Motion on:

“...the fears and concerns of law-abiding citizens increasing over the worsening crime situation...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;”

**Sen. Mark:** None!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** The more money you spend is the higher the crime rate goes up.

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** But that is the effect. That is the visible effect; it is going up.

**Sen. Mark:** Total incompetence! PNM must go!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Mr. Vice-President, in the contribution by the hon. Minister of National Security, the hon. Martin Joseph—

**Sen. Mark:** Oh good, failure! Total failure. [*Laughter*]

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:**—hear what he said,

“The last time I addressed this Senate—last week Tuesday when I piloted the three Bills...”

Those were the Police Reform Bills and so on—

“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;”

One hundred and fifty eight kidnappings in four and a half years, kidnapping for ransom.

“Secondly, we had a situation where there were bombings; and thirdly there was the question of homicides.”

One thousand two hundred and forty homicides in four and a half years.

**Sen. Mark:** Ooh my God; what a record. That is more than American lives lost in Iraq, you know.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Mr. Vice-President, Trinidad and Tobago experienced a tremendous sharp rise in gang-related and drug-related killings.

**Sen. Mark:** Oh yes.

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** They mashing up the place.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And what is even more significant is that no suspects were ever identified in 82 per cent of the homicides committed in Trinidad and Tobago.

**Hon. Senators:** Hmm! Hmm!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And only 18 per cent were identified. The murder rate in Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Vice-President, is now 30 per 100,000 citizens. It is 19 times the rate in England and Wales [*Interruption*] and 16 times the rate in Canada.

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** They are trying to get rid of all of us.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And of the 18 per cent of the homicides that are detected only one in five or 20 per cent of these arrested, charged, indicted and prosecuted eventually resulted in a conviction. [*Interruption*] So of the 18 per cent which were detected only 20 per cent of those resulted in a conviction. [*Interruption*] Let us say one in four; so out of 100 murders committed only four resulted in a conviction.

**Hon. Senators:** Oh my lord.

**Sen. Mark:** What a record! What a record!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Is this something that this administration should be proud of?

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** Somebody should resign?

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** What does it say? It smacks—

**Hon. Senator:** Dookeran.

**Sen. Mark:** Totally incompetent!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** No. [*Crosstalk*] It is all right [*Interruption*] Dookeran could do better than that, what the hon. Minister of National Security is doing.

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** It looks like somebody going home.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Even though, Mr. Minister, you may not say it is in your hands, you have the total responsibility for it. [*Laughter*] You have the total responsibility for it! [*Laughter*] And he cannot shirk his responsibility, Mr. Vice-President.

**Sen. Mark:** Nah, not at all.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** What is even worse, the proportion of murder convictions even fell to 3 per cent of those recorded in 2002, so it is now down to 3 per cent. [*Interruption*] What is responsible for that? [*Interruption*] What is responsible for the cause of the low detection and the low conviction rate?

When you have 42 Magistrates' Courts that are derelict; you have court prosecutors who were policemen; you have understaffing in the Director of Public Prosecutions' department; you have inadequate personnel and equipment to look at homicides. Now this is the responsibility of the Minister of National Security, and he cannot shirk his responsibility. Who is responsible for improving the police stations? Who is responsible for the Witness Protection Programme? Who is responsible for making sure that the court prosecutors are good prosecutors? The Attorney General should be doing that job as well. And who should be responsible for deploying the right personnel and the well-trained personnel in every situation where a homicide or where a murder has been committed? That is the responsibility of the Minister of National Security. He has failed this country, Mr. Vice-President!

**Sen. Mark:** He has failed and he should resign! [*Desk thumping*] [*Interruption*]

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Yes, Mr. Vice-President, he has failed this country.

**Sen. Joseph:** Mr. Vice-President, I think in the interest of— [*Interruption*] I think Members of the Senate ought to be given the right picture. I think, Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh knows very well that to talk about the fact that the Minister of National Security has responsibility for deploying persons for crime fighting, et cetera, that is certainly out of the hands of the Minister of National Security and he ought not to be misleading the Senate—

**Sen. Mark:** That is true; that is true.

**Sen. Joseph:**—as it relates to the question about such type of deployment. That is not correct and he knows it!

**Sen. Mark:** You have the police under your control.

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** He has the resources.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Yes, he has the resources; he has the \$3 billion budget; [*Interruption*] he has the ability to direct his personnel, [*Interruption*] although he may not have the direct control over the Commissioner of Police.

**Sen. Mark:** The operational.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** The operational; and he is a management man. [*Crosstalk*] It seems as though the hon. Minister has only talk as far as management is concerned. [*Interruption*] I will come to that and I will exemplify where I mean it is only talk.

**Sen. Mark:** Talk! Total failure!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Mr. Vice-President, amongst the difficulties in obtaining convictions is the failure of the witnesses to come forward. *[Interruption]* You do not have any control of that for sure but you have control over the Witness Protection Programme.

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** True!

**Sen. Mark:** Yes.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And when a case goes to trial and even when the witnesses come forward with information they are reluctant to testify. You know why? They do not feel safe. They feel they would be shot; they feel that they would be murdered, because the Witness Protection Programme has fallen into disrepute over the last four and a half years.

**Sen. Mark:** It is a waste of time. Total waste!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** There are long delays between a murder and a trial; that is as a responsibility—I am not blaming you—of the court system, but it is because of the oppression and the inability of the administration to fund the Judiciary with resources. *[Interruption]* They need more judges; they need better courts and they need this type of CAT typing in courts so that the judges do not have to take it down by writing and all of these things frustrate the whole judicial process.

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** Incompetent!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And today, Mr. Vice-President, you would have heard about the freeing of four men who had been held for kidnapping. You remember the name “Skelly”?

**Sen. Mark:** Kidnapping and murder.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Kidnapping and murder and you know why? The witness did not come forward.

**Sen. Mark:** Disappeared.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Disappeared! So what has happened, the Minister must give to this country *[Interruption]* an account of what has happened to the Witness Protection Programme. *[Desk thumping]*

**Sen. Mark:** Waste of time; give us an account. [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** There was this lady—I cannot remember her name—who was shot in her car in Mount d'Or recently. Mr. Vice-President, you would have read it in the newspaper. [*Interruption*] She was supposed to give evidence in a kidnapping case the next day.

**Sen. Mark:** She got shot.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** She was a young mother and she was shot in her car. [*Interruption*] Now if you have a well-functioning Witness Protection Programme these things should not occur. Take the responsibility, Mr. Minister!

**Sen. Mark:** Resign!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** When I do my case I have to take responsibility. You have to take responsibility in your situation! [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. Mark:** I find so. [*Crosstalk*]

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And today, Mr. Vice-President, this administration seems to be grossly incompetent and ineffective and has caused an erosion of the gains of the past. We had a very solid Witness Protection Programme and this administration has now reversed the gains from the past.

**Sen. Mark:** Definitely!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** But you know who is behind the organized crime in this country.

**Hon. Senators:** Yes.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** You know who are the untouchables; you know who the untouchables are, Minister.

**Sen. Mark:** Yes, yes. Lenny, you know that.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** The police know who the untouchables are.

**Sen. Mark:** Yes, the police know.

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** They well know.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** They exist amongst us all here! [*Laughter*] [*Desk thumping*] The skyscrapers; the purchase of dozens of \$7-million apartments, Mr. Vice-President, [*Interruption*] that is going on in Trinidad and the average middle-income man, the young professional with his wife; two of them cannot buy a property because the property is beyond their range. Do you know why; because of the infiltration of the drug money—



**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** Of course.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:**—and the hiding of the drug money in the purchase of properties [*Interruption*] and the purchase of unit shares in the stock market. You could imagine one person building a 70-unit apartment in the west and each one is being sold for \$8 to \$10 million.

**Sen. Mark:** And it is being purchased.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And they are being purchased.

**Sen. Mark:** And what the Minister is doing about that? Crisis in this country!

**Mr. Vice-President:** Sen. Mark, you would have an opportunity to make your contribution, I believe.

**Sen. Mark:** Next time, Sir. Next time. [*Laughter*] [*Crosstalk*]

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Mr. Vice-President, every one of us knows that the underworld economy is larger, so the informal economy is larger than the formal economy in Trinidad and Tobago.

**Sen. Mark:** Definitely, definitely.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Although our budget is \$34 billion annually, the underworld economy is larger than that.

**Sen. Mark:** Larger than that; I agree with you.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And this is one of the areas that is responsible for the crime situation, amongst others. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Vice President, recently on April 02, 2006, *Sunday Guardian*:

“Crime is killing the tourism industry in Tobago...”

Mr. Vice-President, you are from Tobago, Dr. Eastlyn Mc Kenzie is from Tobago and I am sure that you shudder to know what is going on in Tobago at the moment. Let me just give you some statistics on this.

In 2004, in Tobago, they say that crime menaces Tobago now and you are acutely aware and I am sure that you feel a sense of pain within you to know that this is happening in your own island where you felt that you were in paradise. Murders—2004, 4; 2005, 10; kidnappings—2004, 4; 2005, 8; rapes—2004, 27; 2005, 35; serious indecency—5 both years; robberies—2004, 92; 2005, 164; and house break-ins—2004, 407; 2005, 493.

Mr. Vice-President, all the gains that we would have gotten from the Soca Warriors in terms of showing Trinidad and Tobago would go to nil as far as tourism is concerned. The United States and the British updated travel advisories warn their citizens that it is dangerous to visit Tobago. So any amount of goodwill that we may say that we are sending missions to Asia, South America and Europe and so on, that would go to naught because it is meaningless when you try to woo tourists to Tobago and the advisories are warning against anyone going to Tobago.

The latest British advisory on February 24, noted the inability of the Tobago authorities to apprehend and prosecute the perpetrators is a serious concern. They advised against staying in villas, particularly the southwest villas in Bethel, Plymouth, Buccoo and Mt. Pleasant, and even the Tobago House of Assembly Tourism Secretary, Neil Wilson said, as a result of the advisory the Association of British Travel Agents had told him that they would advise visitors to stay away from Tobago if the crime situation did not improve. Did your crime situation improve?

It is no longer just crimes; it is vicious crimes and I am sure that you are aware of it. They have a low detection rate; they are ill-equipped; so where are the 39 Scotland Yard officers being placed now as of March 19? Hon. Minister, you said that they were scheduled to be plugged into the homicide bureau and the Anti-kidnapping Unit.

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** Somebody unplugged them.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Are they going to be plugged into assisting Tobago? The number of policemen in Tobago is way below the sanctioned strength. The police stations are derelict and out of the discussions they came up with an 18-point crime plan as of November 30, 2005. The hon. Minister of National Security, the Minister of Tourism, Sen. Howard Chin Lee, my good friend—

**Sen. Mark:** Hmm!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Yes, he is my friend. The Tobago House of Assembly—

**Sen. Mark:** My friend as well. [*Laughter*]

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:**—Chairman, the representative of the Special Anti-crime Unit of Trinidad and Tobago and the T&T Regiment came up with an 18-point plan in November 2005. They said they would release 246 serving officers from desk duties; they would implement bicycle patrols. In this day and

age you are implementing bicycle patrols in Tobago. Where have we gone back to the Dark Ages? And that is part of an 18-point plan—utilize officers from CID to assist and augment investigations when CID does not have officers. Assign more officers to carry out criminal investigations when the homicide department is short of officers

Mr. Vice-President, how could people get together make an 18-point plan and they know that this plan is untenable; it is unrealistic, because it cannot work. Where are the minds? This is where we ask the question from this side; it seems as though those on the other side lack the thinking ability, because they know that something ought to be done and they come up with a plan which they know cannot work.

And you know what, Mr. Vice-President? You know, and Sen. Dr. Mc Kenzie knows, that tourism employs 54 per cent of the population in Tobago. So if the tourism sector falls as a result of crime, what happens to the people for employment? So the World Cup and Soca Warriors have placed Trinidad and Tobago on the world stage and international map and people who never heard of Tobago now know that Tobago exists and are anxious to come. I was there. They say, "Trinidad and Tobago; everywhere you go Trinidad and Tobago, we want to come." But can I in my own heart and conscience tell the people who are interested in coming that you are going to be safe when you go to Tobago or you are going to be safe in Trinidad? No, Mr. Vice-President. We would like them to come; we would like them to help boost the economy, but the crime situation militates against it.

And if effective anti-crime measures are not put into place, all the gains in the tourism that we got benefits from the Soca Warriors, no matter what trade mission you send it would come to naught. *[Interruption]* My brother, you know that you cannot patrol on bicycles *[Interruption]* and you have the resources; you have the financial resources. I am sure the Minister of Tourism, Sen. Howard Chin Lee wants to see the situation improved, but he seems to be helpless; he cannot get his colleagues to work effectively to alleviate the crime situation in Tobago.

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** Surrounded by incompetence.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** The last travel advisory posted by the British Embassy: They were advocating that you should not go. And do you know what has happened to the number of tourists in Tobago last year? They dropped by 35 per cent. The number of tourists dropped by 35 per cent in 2005.

So the Tobago House of Assembly wants \$1.7 billion—

**Sen. Dumas:** Check your data.

**Sen. Chin Lee:** That information is incorrect. In fact, last year we had the highest number of arrivals in Tobago, averaging 90,000 persons. It was up 20 per cent, so that figure is incorrect, Senator.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** You may have visitors, hon. Minister, but not people staying any length of time for tourists. [*Interruption*] These are the figures that I picked up along the way and if you would be kind enough to supply the Opposition with the figures, we would be grateful for it.

**Hon. Senator:** Admit that you make a mistake, Martin. [*Crosstalk*]

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** You have to take the responsibility, Mr. Vice-President, that there is spiralling and uncontrolled crime in Tobago and in Trinidad and Tobago.

**Sen. Mark:** We would put Joan in your place just now.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** There is generally a cycle of inefficiency with respect to policing in Tobago and in supervision in Tobago and this is why Sen. Prof. Deosaran said that people must be accountable. Police must be strictly accountable; supervisors must be strictly accountable; the Commissioner of Police must be accountable and without accountability—you know when this guy came down and lectured in Trinidad about what happened in New York and the murder rate fell, it was because people were made to be held accountable and if they did not perform they had to move out.

**Sen. Mark:** Guiliani.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And I would come to a report of the Police Service Commission and the operations of the Ministry of National Security pretty shortly and I would justify what I am saying. Those in supervisory capacity must be held responsible for the failure of the police to deliver service to the Tobago public. It is facing the worst situation in terms of crime. The hoteliers are facing a decline in revenue and there is a sense of helplessness and despair amongst them. Even the resident Tobagonians are fed up and frustrated with the crime; totally out of control; saying that they no longer bother to report matters to the police, it has reached such a critical situation and that the police were ineffective and there is absence of police patrols whether mobile or on foot. [*Interruption*] There must be an immediate transformation and overhauling of the policing in Tobago. Policing there can be no longer an arm or extension of the police head quarters in Port of Spain.

Three years ago they promised that calls made to the E99 unit from landlines in Tobago would be immediately dispatched to officers posted there, but to date, three years later, calls are still being sent to Trinidad before being dispatched to Tobago. *[Interruption]* With billions being spent on security, surely, their technology can sort that problem out in one day.

**Sen. Mark:** Yes, they definitely can. *[Desk thumping]*

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** But they lack the capacity to solve that problem; a simple problem of technology where calls from the landlines in Tobago have to come to Trinidad and then go back to Tobago. *[Interruption]* What nonsense is this? Why can it not go directly to Tobago?

**Sen. Mark:** What nonsense is this?

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And this is what we have to sit and accept over a period of time—four and a half years.

**Sen. Mark:** Oh good!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** At three years they made the decision and three years later it has not changed.

**2.30 p.m.**

It is time—I am not making a plug for anyone—that the Tobago House of Assembly must have some control over the operations and the administration of the police service in Tobago. As of today, the 178<sup>th</sup> day of the year, 193 murders reported and still echoing in the public memory, the hon. Minister of National Security, Sen. Martin Joseph's cries, two weeks before from the depths of frustration. The Minister chose 666, June 06, 2006 to announce his 555 anti-crime initiatives. *[Desk thumping and laughter]* So he is telling you on 666, to move from 999 to go to 555—*[Laughter]*

**Sen. Mark:** You see, this is a joke.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:**—an expatiation in numerology. And he stressed the pains and burden that this is not a new crime plan because he knows every time he says something—he was venting the pain of a man bruised, battered and shattered by the failed experiences of earlier repeated plans. You would acknowledge that “Operation Baghdad”, “Operation Anaconda”, “Operation Lockdown”, all failed. So he was sensitive to the fact, he could not say it is a new crime plan; so he said it is not a new crime plan.

We know, hon. Minister, that you are very weary of people now conditioned, conditioned dismissive responses to any anti-crime anything you say as new. You cannot come with that anymore. And hear the words, you claimed that the Government has systematically targeted every aspect of law enforcement and the protective services, but these are not achievements, Mr. Vice-President. The Government has systematically targeted every aspect of law enforcement and the protective services, they are only steps taken. He goes on to say, a comprehensive and nationally coordinated strategy is beginning to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. The statistics I gave, Mr. Vice-President, does that show that it is reducing crime? In fact, crime is climbing. So what is happening? You are saying one thing and the exact opposite is happening. But his true achievement has been in contriving words, phrases and sentences to represent what you hope for as distinct from observable empirical reality. You are hoping for that. You may have a good heart, you are hoping for it, but your actions and your competence do not show that the observed reality is proving you to be correct. The reality is that the action is on the criminal side and little or none on his side. Both you and your predecessor, my good friend, as Minister of National Security have failed this nation—

**Sen. Mark:** Totally.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:**—and failed the people in safeguarding their basic human rights of safety and security and you should do the honourable thing.

**Sen. Mark:** And go.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** You know what the honourable thing is. Big words: “nationally coordinated strategy as a major effort to develop a partnership between the public and the police”, that is 555. Do you really believe that the public would deal with 555 confidently? If not, they do not even call 999 and they cannot get a response when they call 999. And what about crime stoppers paying them for calls made? You think that people would bother with 555 when they know that any call they make, their lines would be tapped. People would not take this, Mr. Vice-President. He says building the capacity of the police; coordinated strategy; new synergy; strategic framework; ethos of cooperation, all these are words from the hon. Minister of National Security and coming to naught. That is the language of a man who is competent in the administration; you are a management person. That is beautiful language. But convert it into reality; convert it into implementation and let us get the outcome of it and make sure that the outcome is good and satisfactory. So, the Leader in the Senate should sit down and talk with his colleagues and begin to—after four and a half years if they have not done anything yet, I doubt that they would be able to do anything in the remaining year and a half.

**Sen. Mark:** They gone through, it is a matter of time.

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** [*Inaudible*]

**Sen. Mark:** They have gone through, that tired bunch of them.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** In 2005, one year ago, the St. James Barracks Police Training College was set to begin, with completion in 2009. They have Mastrofski. Mastrofski said he is going to train police officers. Where are you going to train them? You have a dilapidated training facility down in St. James. The physical facility for training recruits is run down, so where are they going to be trained? The institution itself has been run down, the training institute.

In 2004, half the recruits failed their final exams and the blame was attached to the incompetence of their trainees. Officers high and low are regularly retiring, quitting, facing disciplinary charges, being thrown through the courts. Such talks of six new units, where are you getting officers to staff these units, hon. Minister? You speak about a special anti-crime unit which is SAUTT, which the Attorney General has under his control and when you ask the police commissioner, who is responsible for the police officers under the SAUTT, he cannot give you an answer. He evades the question because he does not know for himself who is responsible for the officers under SAUTT.

**Sen. Mark:** That is an illegal structure?

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And it is obviously going illegally. The police officers in SAUTT, each one of them gets \$5,000 more than the average police personnel outside of the SAUTT.

**Sen. Mark:** That is illegal.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** How can you have these things occurring in a country?

**Sen. Mark:** That is parallel organization.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And he speaks of a homicide prevention working group. Hear the big names of the units: a Homicide Bureau of Investigation; Crime and Problem Analysis Unit; Organized Crime and Firearms Bureau; Incident Coordination Centre. Mr. Vice-President, what achievements?

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** The Leader of Government Business is bored with that, see how he is yawning. Bored with the "ol' talk."

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** His achievements: more helicopters; more airships and blimps; 360 degrees radar; eye in the sky; more drugs coming into the country; 35 billion plus in the underworld economy and the crime rate going up and the kidnapping worst. It is a war on words, not war on crime. [*Laughter*]

**Sen. Mark:** War on words!

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** They spoke about the lockdown on crime hot spots. Police Commissioner Paul said those who cannot hear must feel. How is all this "ol' talk" different from the PR blitzes of "Anaconda" and "Baghdad" and "Operation Lockdown" and Police Reform Bills?

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** And they cross the line.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** You remember, they told the nation and the 39 business organizations in Trinidad began to accept the fact that the UNC is responsible for the crime. They started to blame the UNC. They came with some Police Reform Bills that were outlandish; that were affecting the individual basic rights of a citizen, when you could lockup an individual as you want to and we objected to that. Then they mounted the pressure; a PR campaign and spent billions of dollars to say that the UNC and the Opposition is responsible for the crime.

**Sen. Mark:** Millions not billions.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Millions. And then what happened? We said all right, you said that we are militating against solving the crime situation by not accepting that we would be part of passing the Police Reform Bills; we decided to support you. Mutual consent because we want to ensure that the crime situation in Trinidad and Tobago is reduced and we did what we were supposed to do and we passed it.

**Sen. Mark:** In January.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Six months now, since January, this has been passed in the House of Representatives and nothing has happened since. It has not been proclaimed, it has not been brought into action, so all this talk about Police Reform Bills that they were accusing the UNC about has gone to naught. Nothing has been done! And this is the typical type of behavioural pattern with this administration.

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** Typical PNM backwardness.

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** Where is Ato?



**Sen. Mark:** Do not worry about Ato, we want to deal with your incompetence.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Mr. Vice-President, on March 06, 2005—

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** No red herrings here.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:**—*Sunday Guardian*, the junior Minister of National Security, Mr. Fitzgerald Hinds, addressing a conference on Prison Conditions and Reform at Temple Court, Ministry of National Security acknowledged that overcrowding in the prisons was a main concern shared by many. Part of the reform process is to ensure that only very serious and persistent offenders are housed in prison. As it now stands, obscene language and committing minor offences could cause someone to be part of the prison population. It is of the view that prison ought to be reserved for only the most serious and persistent offenders. What has he done about it? Where is the prison reform taking place? Nothing has happened and he is one who has been speaking about prison reform and we are seeing no reform whatsoever.

The Hon. Sen. Dr. Lenny Saith said that Government must and would handle crime—in 2004. Public Administration Minister, Dr. Lenny Saith indicating deep concern by Government over the further deteriorating crime situation—2004—has declared that the crime situation must be dealt with and would be dealt with. He said that Government had reintroduced Police Reforms Bills in Parliament to try and obtain a meeting of the minds to deal with the situation. We agreed; we passed the Bills. He indicated that Government had to be concerned with the level of criminal activity in Trinidad and Tobago—You ought to be concerned and you ought to be more deeply concerned now, because all the “ol’ talk,” nothing has happened—and Government would seek to do whatever it had to do as a Government to deal with the problems that have arisen. He was speaking for every Cabinet Minister when he said that when you have increasing levels of crime, particularly where lives are lost, it is a cause of concern and Government had a responsibility for the safety and security of the population. And therefore ensuring that this is maintained, his Government was conscious of that and would seek to do that. What has been done, Mr. Vice-President, only “ol’ talk” again?

**Sen. Mark:** “Ol’ talk.”

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** “Ol’ talk.” “Ol’ talk” from the hon. Senator; “ol’ talk” from the Attorney General; “ol’ talk” from the Minister of National Security, pure ‘ol’ talk” on the other side.

**Sen. Mark:** Waste of time.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** And hear, the Prime Minister says, that the PM is prepared to lockdown Trinidad and Tobago. Lockdown, *Sunday Express*, April 24, 2005. Lockdown Trinidad and Tobago and the crime continues.

**Sen. Mark:** I think we should lock up the PNM.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** The hon. Prime Minister said, at a PNM public meeting in Tunapuna, Manning vowed that there would be no safe haven in Trinidad and Tobago for criminals.

**Sen. Mark:** “Ol’ talk.”

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** They see what has happened to the safe havens. Government would accept the proposal from Israel to provide Trinidad and Tobago's Military Forces with new high tech vessels which would be used against drug traffickers and gun runners who operate in Trinidad and Tobago coastal waters. Manning also said some of the crimes in Trinidad and Tobago—hear the stupidity—politically motivated. I mean, you have to forgive me for saying that, hon. Minister.

**Sen. Yuille-Williams:** Language.

**Sen. Mark:** Stupidity, politically motivated.

**Mr. Vice-President:** Hon. Senator—

**Sen. Mark:** Sen. Yuille-Williams, I am surprised at you.

**Mr. Vice-President:** —I think you should withdraw.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Yes, I would withdraw that word, a nonsensical statement, politically motivated.

**Sen. Mark:** Yes, everything is politically motivated. Look what he did with the Soca Warriors, you divide the country again.

**Mr. Vice-President:** Sen. Mark.

**Sen Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** The Prime Minister said he would have to lockdown the entire country. And you know what, he said that Government was purchasing surveillance equipment from Israel to be used and you know how that equipment is being used, those equipment are being used against his political opponents. His political opponents that you have your phones tapped in your house; you have your cell phones tapped; you have your meetings tapped—

**Sen. Mark:** Blimps all over your homes.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:**—all over your homes.

**Sen. Mark:** Mr. Vice-President, could you believe that?

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

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Mr. Vice-President, what we are saying today is no “ol’ talk,” what they are saying is “ol’ talk” and no one is really immune from crime. Remember Naparima MP, Mr. Nizam Baksh's son was kidnapped and killed; former President, ANR Robinson's bodyguard was gunned down; former President, Sir Ellis Clarke was robbed; head of the Inter-religious Organization, Rev. Cyril Paul was kidnapped, beaten and robbed and his car was stolen; former Senate President, Dr. Wahid Ali was robbed; former Attorney General and now Trinidad and Tobago High Commissioner to London, Glenda Morean had her car broken into; the Cuban Ambassador was robbed; the Laventille West MP, Eulalie James was robbed; the Head of the Crime Suppression Unit was robbed three times.

Mr. Vice-President, all this is continuing to happen in Trinidad and Tobago and they cannot help it. This is going to raise some ears. What I am about to say will raise some consternation.

**Sen. Yuille-Williams:** Say it.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** I have before me an affidavit from one of the men who indicated that he was involved with the People's National Movement (PNM) a number of years ago. This affidavit is for public consumption for anyone to see and I would just like to read a part of it. It is the Jamaat al Muslimeen, Lennox Phillip otherwise called Yasin Abu Bakr. [*Laughter*]

**Sen. Mark:** Is Bakr, Abu Bakr.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** However, he said in his affidavit in 1997 or 1998, I was met by two members of the Jamaat, Mr. Abdul-Hamid and Mr. Small who informed me that they had visited the Prime Minister, then Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Patrick Manning. [*Interruption*] This is not before the court, this is a public document.

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** If I am not mistaken, Mr. Vice-President, that would have been filed as part of a court matter which is taking place and I am not sure it is proper—

**Sen. Mark:** It is public, we could go and get—

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** Well, if it is public, go and get it. [*Crosstalk and interruption*]

**Mr. Vice-President:** Hon. Senators, please, let us tone down again. Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh—

**Sen. Mark:** What you all afraid of? You all went to bed with Abu.

**Mr. Vice-President:** Sen. Mark, please. Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh, once the affidavit, even though it is published, whatever the statement was, that does not mean that it has no bearing on what matters are before the court. I would prefer if you desist.

**Sen. Mark:** We want to know the role of Joan Yuille-Williams and the Minister of National Security in these things and Sen. Abdul-Hamid.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Mr. Vice-President, we just wanted to know the role of Sen. Mustapha Abdul-Hamid, Sen. Joan Yuille-Williams, Sen. Hazel Manning, Hon. Patrick Manning and Sen. Dr. Lenny Saith in the role with them.

**Sen. Mark:** We want you all to get up.

**Mr. Vice-President:** Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh, I have advised you to desist from using the contents. Please proceed without it.

**Sen. Mark:** But that is in the public. People have that in the public already.

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** Mr. Vice-President, I read that affidavit in the newspaper and I do not recall my name appearing in it.

**Sen. Mark:** Your name is here.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** I would pass it on for you to see. [*Crosstalk and interruption*]

**Mr. Vice-President:** Senators please. Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh, if you need to give somebody the information, after we adjourn please do so, but please continue your contribution without the content of the affidavit.

**Sen. Mark:** Joan , your name here.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Mr. Vice-President, I think I am brave enough to call a press conference after this. I would stand the legal consequences of it and I could give this to the media because it is a document that is free. I could pass it

on. You know what it touches; it touches the core of the crime problem in Trinidad and Tobago. We have always said that the PNM is in bed with the criminals, that is why they cannot solve the crime situation in Trinidad and Tobago and they are afraid for that to come out into the public and here is substantiation of it. This is substantiation of it and we would pass it on to you.

**Sen. Mark:** Yes, we would pass it on to you.

**Mr. Vice-President:** Sen. Mark.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** No, you are afraid—

**Mr. Vice-President:** Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh, I am on my feet.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Sorry, Mr. Vice-President.

**Mr. Vice-President:** Sen. Mark, please do not thump the desk as you have been doing.

**Sen. Mark:** You mean thumping like this?

**Mr. Vice-President:** You did not do it like that.

**Sen. Mark:** Or it is too hard.

**Mr. Vice-President:** Please.

**Sen. Mark:** Okay, Sir.

**Mr. Vice-President:** Let us get back to civility here. Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Mr. Vice-President, you remember the name Bickram, we read the affidavit of Bickram right here.

**Mr. Vice-President:** Senator, please.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** I want to touch on a few points again before closing.

**Sen. Mark:** PNM is part of the crime.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** The annual report of the Police Service Commission 2004 mentions—that is the Police Service Commission Report 2004—compliance by the Commissioner of Police with delegated authority. This is a very important and critical point that has to come to the notice of the population. The compliance exercise by the Commissioner of Police with the authority delegated to him by the Commission has not been consistently timely. So the compliance of the Commissioner of Police for the authority delegated to him had not been consistently timely.

Over the last year the Commission has addressed this question with the Commissioner through regular structured meetings. The situation has improved, but continues to fall short of the ideal. So there is a relationship between the Police Service Commission and the Commissioner of Police. He is supposed to report back to the Police Service Commission and the Police Service Commission is saying that it falls short of the ideal. So where is the accountability? If he is accountable to the Police Service Commission and he does not submit his report, is this not one of the reasons why the crime situation is worsening? The Commission is aware of the tremendous responsibility and duties that fall on the Commissioner. However, untimely compliance with certain delegated responsibilities undermines the efficiency, morale and quality performance and this is what has been undermining the morale within the police service. Because they have a very inefficient system and his reporting back to the Police Service Commission has been ineffective and useless. "The Commission perceives the tardiness in compliance as the personnel management issue which impacts upon its work."

Mr. Vice-President, on the question of promotions in the police service, acting appointments: In 2004, the Commission made 46 acting appointments to officers in the First Division of the Police Service; 46 acting appointments. The Commissioner of Police made 487 acting appointments in the Second Division in accordance with the powers delegated to him. You see the reasons for the failure. The practice of protracted acting appointments in vacant offices is of great concern to the Commission—there are vacant positions, but they have to have acting appointments—and these can be significantly reduced if performance appraisal reports are diligently done, required supervision carried out in a timely manner and effective monitoring undertaken.

This is an administrative matter which could be solved with a proper human resource management team in terms of reporting, but you still have 487 acting appointments in the Second Division in 2004 and 46 acting appointments in the First Division. So Mr. Vice-President, how can the police service work comfortably when people are holding only acting positions and the Minister of National Security says it is not his responsibility? So whose responsibility is it then?

**Sen. Mark:** You have to meet with the Police Service Commission.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** You know what it is? The performance appraisal report which was designed in 1995 and introduced in 2003 allows for continuous objective and unbiased assessment and feedback to officers. So all they had to do,

is to put in a beautiful performance appraisal system, train their people, train their supervisors, make timely completion of reports with accurate reporting and they would solve this problem. Is that a nightmare for anyone to do? This really smacks about incompetence.

**Sen. Joseph:** Incompetence of the Minister?

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Well, you know, I do not need to say anymore on this.

**Sen. Joseph:** [*Inaudible*]

**Sen. Mark:** Sen. Joseph, you are frustrating. Sen. Joseph you are a frustrated man.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** I want to come to a report on the operations of the Ministry of National Security which the Minister knows about. The report of the Ministry of National Security speaks of the accomplishments in 2003 and 2004. They recruited two batches of regular police and special reserve police. Fine, you recruited them; you had almost a thousand new officers. They said that they had increased mobility; Crime Stoppers; introduce a drug abuse resistance education programme; expansion of communication network; training of officers in narcotic investigation; recommencement of the Crime Stoppers programme.

Mr. Vice-President, is anything here of any significance when they boast of their accomplishments? What I have just read there, is there anything of significance to really allay the crime situation? And then they went on to speak of the accomplishment in the Forensic Science Centre, training eight officers in human resources and the Minister cannot take responsibility for the Forensic Science Centre. The Forensic Science Centre—it comes like a doctor having to do work in a hospital and if the policemen cannot have their work done in the Forensic Science Centre, how are they going to solve crime? He has the temerity to come and say that he cannot be held responsible for it. Well, if he cannot be held responsible, the PNM administration has to be held responsible.

What about the accomplishments of the Special Anti-crime Unit of Trinidad and Tobago? Their accomplishment, 42 vehicles, that is their accomplishment. Equipment: arms and ammunition, specialist communication and sensor equipment, training 152 officers. They did all of that and have all the vehicles and training and you know what it contributed to? The above acquisitions contributed to the following: conduct of 30 operations and a number of low visibility and

maritime patrols; seizure of illicit drugs, 7.1 kilograms; arms, 10 items and ammunition 321 rounds; that is the accomplishment of the Special Anti-crime Unit of Trinidad and Tobago in the years 2003 and 2004.

**Sen. Mark:** How much money they get, about over \$150 million?

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** Mr. Vice-President, over the preceding time that I had, I tried to illustrate empirically and substantiate my comments based on evidence and facts and it is quite clear for everyone to see that this administration lacks the capacity to solve the crime population in Trinidad and Tobago.

**Sen. Mark:** The crime problem.

**Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh:** The crime problem. The Minister of National Security seems to be throwing his hands up and making statements on a daily basis which does not effect into reality. So we want to say that the Minister of National Security should be held responsible and he knows what the honourable thing to do is. This administration knows that they have failed this country and therefore they should get out as fast as possible. We are ready to take over and we are ready to help the people of Trinidad and Tobago with the crime problem.

Thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

**3.00 p.m.**

**The Minister of Labour, Small and Micro Enterprise Development (Sen. The Hon. Danny Montano):** Mr. Vice-President, before I go into the substance of the issue, on behalf of the Government I would like to put on the *Hansard* the Government's appreciation, gratitude and congratulations to the Soca Warriors. [*Desk thumping*]

I remember as a young boy at high school seeing a plaque on the wall in the recreation room with an anonymous quotation which said:

"When the great scorer comes to tell of the game, he talks not about whether you won or lost, but how you played the game."

I think those words certainly ring very true under the present circumstances. [*Desk thumping*] Our boys demonstrated the courage and fortitude to face their opponents on the field and they played their hearts out. They played well and they represented us all and, certainly, on this side of the Bench, we are all very proud of every single one of them. [*Desk thumping*]

As I turn to the issue at hand, let me put on the record that I rise in support of the Motion as amended by my colleague, the Minister of National Security. The first issue I would deal with was something that Sen. Prof. Deosaran said when he



opened the debate. He said that the psychology of the Westminster system includes an adversarial relationship; more specifically, an alternative government always standing by, so that one man's meat would always be another man's poison; one man's losses, the Government's losses, in a sense, would also be a victory for the Opposition. Then he went on to say that was the psychology of the Westminster system.

I know that he was referring to the issue of the Police Bills and the need for the Government to get the support of the Opposition and the Independent Senators in order to pass them, because there were certain elements of the Constitution that required changing. Clearly, that was what he was referring to.

I suggest to the goodly Senator that I do not think he was entirely accurate. That may be an attribute of the Westminster system in this part of the world, but it is not an attribute in Westminster for the Opposition to hold the entire nation at ransom. That is not what happens in Westminster. It may be part of the practice outside Westminster, but not so in Westminster. I take strong issue with that.

**Sen. Mark:** What is your point?

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** The good Senator did not seem to understand the nature of the issues involved. He seemed not to understand and to recognize that in order to improve the policing in the country, there were, at least, two major elements that any administration would have to tackle. The first element was the legislative framework which sets out how the police body is to be managed. The second element is the details of the operational management in terms of efficiency and expertise. Do not overlook the question of expertise. There are two distinct issues that are linked in a way that cannot be delinked. They have to be linked together. Mr. Vice-President, it is that argument of the two issues that I want to address in my contribution this afternoon.

It is important that we understand the history behind where we are and how we got here and what is being done. I listened to Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh for the last hour or so, and two words came to mind: "born yesterday". It is as if everything happened today; as if there was no history. He stands and speaks without understanding the nature of what happened in the past. One of the things that he overlooked, and one thing that I understand well, is numbers. The good Senator spoke about the statistics of crime and the number of major crimes that occurred during the period of the UNC and the number that occurred during the period of the PNM, since we have been in government.

I would build my case backwards; I would just outline, first of all, what my point is. I had heard a number of Senators on the other side say on several occasions here that under the UNC crime went down. I was surprised to hear Sen.

*Government's Performance in Crime*  
[SEN. THE HON. D. MONTANO]

*Tuesday, June 27, 2006*

Dr. Gopeesingh stand and read the numbers out which showed that major crime actually went up under the UNC and, in fact, not down at all. That is a significant point. Let me just make the point clearly for you so that you understand exactly what I am talking about.

[*Sen. Gopeesingh rises*]

I am not giving way unless it is a point of order.

**Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh:** Mr. Vice-President, on a point of correction. [*Crosstalk*]

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** No, no. [*Crosstalk*]

**Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh:** It is a point of order. The statistics that I gave to this Senate are evident. The number of murders we had during the six years under the UNC administration was 788 at an average of 130 per year.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** He is not correcting anything at all.

**Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh:** I am.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** You are not correcting anything. He cannot speak twice. There was no correction. There was nothing to correct. I am not disputing that.

**Mr. Vice-President:** You cannot both be speaking at the same time.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** He missed the point. The point was that murders under the UNC went from 107 to 151; rapes and incest went from 295 to 545. Kidnappings went from 81 to 135; other serious crimes went from 759 to 894. Mr. Vice-President, nothing that he said disputed what I just said.

**Hon. Senators:** Oh yes!

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** What he said supported what I said.

**Hon. Senators:** Oh no!

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Of course it does. I am going to put it in a different context. [*Crosstalk*]

**Sen. Seepersad-Bachan:** You are misleading the Senate!

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** You have your turn to speak; I will deal with you.

**Hon. Senators:** Ohh!

**Sen. Seepersad-Bachan:** You want to deal with me? No one deals with me, Mr. Vice-President. [*Crosstalk*]

**Mr. Vice-President:** I am on my feet. [*Crosstalk*] Sen. Montano, please desist from speaking directly to the Senator across the floor. Please do not appear as if you are threatening the Senator.

**Sen. Seepersad-Bachan:** I will deal with him.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** I do apologize, Mr. Vice-President; I am a gentleman. [*Desk thumping*] [*Crosstalk*] I do not need to deal with her; there are others who are going to deal with her, so I do not need to go there.

**Sen. Seepersad-Bachan:** Typical PNM style!

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Mr. Vice-President, if you do the math and you look at the rate of increases in these major elements and you extrapolate them on a growth chart, you see what would have happened. That is exactly what has happened under this administration: the rate of crime escalation that the UNC left us with.

Let me just point something out to you. [*Crosstalk*] If the UNC was so effective in dealing with crime, then surely they would have put some management systems in place that would have carried over, so that the police, as a body, could deal with the situation without them being here.

Mr. Vice-President, I own a business.

**Sen. Mark:** Still?

**Sen. Seepersad-Bachan:** Did you report it to the Integrity Commission?

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Of course. I left it a few years ago. Thank heavens, with everything I put in place, it continues to do well and has continued to prosper and grow without my being there. [*Desk thumping*] [*Crosstalk*]

[*Mr. Vice-President pounds gavel*]

**Mr. Vice-President:** Senators, please.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** I put management in place that could take that business beyond my lifetime. [*Crosstalk*] If the UNC did anything at all in their administration, you would have expected that it would have had a depressing effect on the crime numbers and it would have carried over into the next administration. Surely that is what governance is all about. Are they saying that governance is only when you are in government? That is what I am hearing.

**Sen. Seepersad-Bachan:** When you stop dealing with Abu Bakr.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** I am hearing that you could do whatever magic you think you were doing and when you leave everything falls down.

**Sen. Seepersad-Bachan:** When you stop dealing with the Jamaat.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** I want to put the lie to what they are talking about. [*Crosstalk*]

**Mr. Vice-President:** Senators, the crosstalk is getting to a level that is not becoming; please desist.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Mr. Vice-President, let me just give you an example of the level of expertise and management of the UNC government; you have to hear it. In the 2001 election they had a former head of the coast guard touted as their next Minister of National Security, "This is the man we are going to have." We all know that most major crimes here have their origin in the drug trade and most of the drugs come through the south coast, Venezuela to Trinidad.

A wise man told me the other day that there were some fast boats that could make it from the Macareo River to the coastline of Trinidad in eight minutes. They are bringing drugs here in eight minutes, so what does the UNC do? They bought a boat called the *TTS Nelson*. On a good day, it could not make 15 knots. If the drug lords come to Trinidad, they could get on the *Panorama* and escape faster than the *TTS Nelson*, because it could not catch up to the *Panorama*. That was how they fought crime. [*Crosstalk*] That is the only visible thing that the UNC did. [*Crosstalk*]

**Sen. Seepersad-Bachan:** At \$9 a barrel.

**Sen. Mark:** He is unprepared.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** I want to go back a little and talk about the history. I think it is important to educate and speak directly to the Independent Senators, as well as the wider population, so they could hear exactly what the history of this whole business is all about. [*Crosstalk*] I want to talk about what the UNC did.

Mr. Vice-President, I note the bad manners of my friend, Sen. Mark; he cannot keep quiet. He does not like what I say; I know it hurts him, but I have a loud voice and I would shout over it. Notwithstanding the fact that he is grossly out of order and very rude, I would continue and keep on track. [*Laughter*] [*Crosstalk*] You hear that; not Minister, but my first name. That is all right, Wade; I am happy. [*Laughter*] You make noise.

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** What are you talking about rude?

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Back in the late 1980s, the then administration had certain issues it had to deal with. You would recall the enquiry into drugs and the resulting Scott Drug Report. That administration commissioned a study from Scotland Yard which produced the O'Dowd Report. It was published in May of 1991 and was one of the more recent and relevant documents that dealt with the management issues inside the police service. If you read this document, you would begin to understand the magnitude of the problem that had to be addressed.

When the PNM came into government in that year, the administration understood the nature of the problem and sought solutions immediately. Another study from Scotland Yard was recommended and done and a report was done by Mr. Graham Seaby. I want to read fairly extensively from the document, just to give a capsule to hon. Senators so they understand the nature of the problems that had to be addressed. As I read this, Senators, I want you to ask yourselves what the UNC did about any of this when they were in power, because this is what the issue is all about.

My colleague and friend, the Minister of National Security, has already spoken about some of the specific initiatives he has taken, how he has beefed up different units. Behind that are some of the systemic issues that needed to be addressed and are being addressed. The Minister alluded to them, but when you hear those issues and you ask yourself what the UNC did, then I would not have to make any further points.

"Commander George NESS, QPM, accompanied by Detective Superintendent Graham SEABY...of the International and Organized Crime Branch, New Scotland Yard, arrived in Port of Spain on Monday, 22 June 1992...

Discussions were held with the Prime Minister, The Hon. Patrick MANNING, the Minister of National Security, The Hon. Russell HUGGINS, and with the Attorney General, The Hon. Keith Sobion."

Mr. Vice-President, just to put the following into context, you would recall that there was considerable consternation in the police service about the fact that foreigners had come into the country; a situation that we do not face to the same extent today; however, it is still an issue. Let me just read what happened:

"7.1.7 The 'foreigners' stance was also taken up by the Police Services Commission. They refused to accept that the new Scotland Yard team existed, and at one point their chairman made a public statement confirming that, in their view, New Scotland Yard had no status or authority in Trinidad and Tobago. Thus reports prepared for the Commission had no purpose.

- 7.1.8. A dispute between the Commissioner and the Police Services Commission over the extent of delegated powers added to the inaction on reports submitted.
- 7.1.9. On 4 February 1993, it was proposed that five additional and temporary posts in the ranks of Deputy and Assistant Commissioner would be created specifically for the New Scotland Yard officers. There followed the police march around the Red House which was the visible face of the police opposition. The plan was dropped because of 'constitutional' problems whilst 'alternative means' of achieving an answer to the authority problem were sought.
- 7.1.10. On 29 March 1993, Commissioner BERNARD issued Departmental Order No. 66. In it, he stated that New Scotland Yard had his full support, were to be granted full co-operation, were to have access to police officers..." *[Interruption]*

**Sen. Seepersad-Bachan:** What is the point? You could not govern then and you cannot govern now. Is that it?

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** It continues:

"The existing arrangement of Mr. JACK ordering Senior Superintendents and lower ranks to appear as directed was confirmed, and the Commissioner took it upon himself to make arrangements for more senior ranks. The latter did not prove effective."

I hope that you would give me some leeway, Mr. Vice-President, because it is very important that I paint the background so you understand the nature of the problem, what was done and what was not done about it.

**Sen. Seepersad-Bachan:** That was during your time.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** You are not paying attention, Senator. I said that this was during our time and these were the problems you failed to address when you were in government. *[Crosstalk]*

**Sen. Seepersad-Bachan:** You did not address them and they were during your time and you are still not addressing them. *[Crosstalk]* Address the issues.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** When you listen to the magnitude of the problems, you would see that the good Senator has no idea what she is talking about. *[Crosstalk]* *[Interruption]*

**Mr. Vice-President:** Senators, I have spoken about the crosstalk already. I would really appreciate if we use maturity and observe that we are in a very high forum here. Could we please demonstrate to the public, through the media that we know is obviously present that we deserve to be here. Please proceed with the necessary discussion.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Thank you, Mr. Vice-President. Let us hope it does some good.

There is an article in the *Guardian* of Friday, June 23, just last week. It talks about the five-year study done on murders in Trinidad by Prof. Roger Hood from Oxford. He talked about the very low rate of conviction. I think that Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh spoke about it as well. Let me just go back to it a bit. Paragraph 7.5:

"The Absence of Accurate Records"

That was in 1993, a problem that we inherited; again, exactly the same thing because absolutely nothing had changed between 1993 and 2002.

- 7.5.1. A central factor which caused serious difficulties and led to abandonment of many lines of enquiry was the absence of accurate records.
- 7.5.2. Other files, such as investigations into murder and other serious crime, were so sparse that it was difficult to determine what had been done, and equally important what had not been done. One murder investigation report consisted of just twelve lines, with some witness statements. In some cases crime files did not show why decision had been taken. Examples were decisions not to prosecute when clear evidence appeared to exist.
- 7.5.3 Some crimes files also had a distinct absence of markings showing who had seen the papers and often no indication that they had been reviewed by any supervising officer. Inaction was commonplace and unattributable.
- 7.5.4 The second part of the problem with files was their non-existence or non-availability. It was often difficult to know which applied...An astonishing number of files on major investigations could not be found. According to our local officers, they were just lost.
- 7.5.5 Tracing a non-crime file, such as one relating to internal investigations or even a training file, was just as difficult and it had an even lower success rate than tracing crime files.

- 7.5.6 The classic reason given for the absence of many files was 'destroyed when headquarters was burnt down at the time of the insurrection'. Although this was a genuine reason in many cases, there were other occasions when it was felt that the fire was the perfect excuse for 'losing' embarrassing papers."

What changed? What did the UNC do about this?

Let me go on a little:

“11.4.1. A Propensity for Recording Useless Information

The habit of junior ranks jotting down all sorts of useless information in numerous station books and records was observed. The New Scotland Yard team spent a considerable amount of time examining books and records. They found reams of useless information recorded. Useful information found was usually recorded in a laborious manner, and quite often contained inaccuracies. The impression gained was that record keeping had become a mechanical task completed without enthusiasm and without any thought as to the reason why. The amount of time wasted must be immense. [*Crosstalk*]

11.7. No Concept of Personnel Management.

The most precious, and usually most expensive, resource of any police service is its workforce, its officers...There was no evidence of any effective assessment of the capabilities of the workforce, nor of career development...

- 11.8.1. Little evidence was found in the matching of resources to demand. Nor was there much evidence of any enthusiasm for new ideas at management level. The idea that police management could and should be about risk management got little consideration, and lateral thinking was just a concept."

I invite Senators on the Independent Bench, after having listened to what I have read, to go back and read the contribution of the Minister of National Security and they would see how he has addressed every single one of these deficiencies, something I cannot say that the UNC did.



For the record, I want you to know that this is the second time I am reading these exact paragraphs into the *Hansard*. The first time was when I was in Opposition and I called on the government to do something about this. The reply of the then Minister of National Security was a deafening silence; he had nothing to say about any of the issues. One of the things Prof. Hood talked about was also the lack of expertise in forensic investigation. That was mentioned in paragraph 11.15:

"11.15 The lack of skill within the CID was seen as a central issue for anyone seeking to upgrade the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service...

CID investigators were found to be lacking in the skills associated with present day criminal investigation. They had little or no knowledge of the benefits that science has provided for the investigator, and had a poor appreciation of the concept of forensic evidence. Their scene examinations were often less than basic, and scene preservation and the avoidance of contamination were poor.

11.15.3 The concept of linking crimes scientifically appeared to be unknown, or at least unpractised. A prime example is in relation to firearms. There is no systematic approach to the examination of firearms coming into police possession. So an arrest could be made for possession of a pistol. The person would be dealt with for unlawful possession and the pistol disposed of. The pistol would not be test fired to see if it had been used in homicides or robberies. The forensic indexes for such comparisons just do not seem to exist."

Mr. Vice-President, I do not want to go any further with this report.

**Sen. Seepersad-Bachan:** Oh, please; it is such an indictment on your performance.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** I think it is important to understand that the UNC failed to address any of these issues. I have already indicated that they demitted office with an escalating crime rate. [*Interruption*]

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** All right, all right.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Having done nothing about these issues, crime continued to escalate, as it has done. One of the things that has happened, and the Minister of National Security, in fact, alluded to it, is that he has been successful in dealing with kidnappings for ransom and a bombing spree we had last year, which threatened to derail the entire economy. [*Laughter*]

*Government's Performance in Crime*  
[SEN. THE HON. D. MONTANO]

*Tuesday, June 27, 2006*

I am very confident in the present Minister of National Security. [*Desk thumping*] I have no hesitation to stand by his side, because I know he is doing the right thing. He is, in fact, achieving successes of which the UNC could only dream. [*Crosstalk*] The Senators on the other side would like to be here, because they would like to enjoy the successes we are about to reap from the initiatives of the Minister of National Security. [*Crosstalk*] [*Laughter*]

I do not want to be overly political; I just want to show you what happens in other areas of the world. The problem we face is not unique. [*Crosstalk*]

[*Mr. Vice-President pounds gavel*]

We have a neighbour in Caricom, Jamaica, that is suffering with a very similar epidemic, if I could use that word. They are struggling with crime precisely the same way we are.

**Sen. Seepersad-Bachan:** Your excuse now.

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** Who is doing better? I think the jury is still out on that one, but there are other areas where there are not the same types of crime, but crime nevertheless. I refer you to Iraq and Israel. [*Crosstalk*]

**Sen. Dr. Kernahan:** Oh my God! You are serious?

**Sen. The Hon. D. Montano:** You have terrorists operating within their borders with police agencies that are among the most sophisticated in the world and yet you continue to see some of the most heinous situations occurring in both those countries. Thank God we do not have terrorism yet, but I stand very assured that the country is in good hands. It is in the hands of a Minister who is of the highest integrity, who understands his job and is doing what the country expects of him. I am proud of him. I know that his party is proud of him. I know that this Government is proud of him.

With those few words, Mr. Vice-President, I thank you.

**Sen. Prof. Kenneth Ramchand:** Mr. Vice-President, thank you for the opportunity to take part in the debate on Sen. Prof. Deosaran's Motion on crime. We are discussing crime, but I am afraid that the problem is not simply crime. I am really very distressed by it. We have to come to terms with the fact that our society is becoming more and more inured to brutality, cruelty and sadism, not only in deeds, but in words. Let me play it safe and just talk about crime and not depress myself about the other things. I never thought you would be non-depressed speaking about crime.

This debate began in November 2005. Seven months later, things are worse than they were when Sen. Prof. Deosaran introduced his Motion. [*Desk thumping*] Seven months later, we are still talking about and around the problem of crime; we are still talking.

**Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh:** Plenty “ol’ talk”.

**Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand:** We are going nowhere slowly. Over the months, I have been wondering and I have looked around. As far as I know, there are no procedures or rules that would have prevented the people's Parliament from holding special sittings to conduct a sustained and intense examination of crime in our society. Just say, “We are holding special sessions. This is an important Motion; we are dealing with it now and urgently; conducting it with such care and urgency that the population will be encouraged to think along with us and realize that we who are against crime form a majority.”

We need only to put our minds together to deter the minority who terrorize us. As we deter them, apply our minds too, to finding ways of bringing about social reforms that would help those who are not beyond help to fulfil their needs and longings in more creative and satisfying ways. Why did we not seize the opportunity of the Motion to conduct a sustained national debate, instead of the disconnected stop and start series of speeches that we have had? I cannot remember all who spoke. I have had to do a lot of reading to catch up on who said what. I say no more on this procedural matter today.

It is good to maintain a distinction between symptoms and causes. When we seek relief from symptoms, as we sometimes must, we must be very clear that is all we are doing, seeking relief from symptoms. Many of the proposals for dealing with crime I have heard in the last few months have only been dedicated to finding relief from symptoms. To solve a problem we have to find the causes. I am not sure that we have yet conducted an examination into the root causes of crime in our society.

Mr. Vice-President, everybody is talking about the national footballers. I am proud of their performance. I was moved by the way that the whole society rallied around them, but I am saddened that the response of the whole country to the performance of the footballers was yet another sign that we are desperately in need of something to belong to, something to believe in, something to unite us. And that thing to believe in, to look up to, to unite us, is still a long way off. It is neither in sight nor is it anywhere in consciousness. That is the desperate, basic situation we are in and that is something which has a bearing upon crime in society. We have never found our way in this society and I do not know if we are even looking.

In the later stages of my contribution, I am going to go into debate about some of the things I have heard. I want to continue with a little perspective before I do that, and feel I can explain what I am about, by referring to a book written in 1964, *While Gods are Falling*, by Earl Lovelace. In that book, a character is standing in his tenement building and looking out to the hills. Remember that this was written in 1964, 42 years ago.

"On those hills there it is not only poverty, it is disorder, it is crime; it is a kind of fear and a way of thinking. It is as if there is a special narrow meaning to life. As if life has no significance beyond the primary struggles for a bed to sleep in, something to quiet the intestines and moments of sexual gratification.

Indeed, it is as if all Gods have fallen and there is nothing to look up to. No shrine to worship at and man is left only bare flesh and naked passions and that is not all. This disorder and poverty and crime, this kind of fear and this way of thinking, all reach down like rivers from the hills on all sides to Quarry Street and to Bishop's Place and Mary Street and beyond to Nelson and George Street.

Yes, and this way of thinking is true of young and old, and the middle-aged are not exempt from it, and there is no decrease in disorder and crime and no end to fear even though more policemen with more revolvers are patrolling the areas. Even though magistrates are dealing harshly with persons guilty of crimes of sex and violence. Though priests are saying more masses and in the daily papers various self-appointed psychologists are blaming government, parents, teachers, priests and the leniency of magistrates and some talk of the influences of London and the United States, unemployment and the fall of morality in the younger generation."

When in the pages of this book you read about the crime and the violence, the guns and the gangs, the troubled and displaced youths, the dispersal of families and the breakdown of communities, the inability of people or politicians to address the problems of this country, you really have to remind yourself that it was written in 1964, 42 years ago. It is all the more remarkable that its insights into the problem of crime in post-independence Trinidad and Tobago, are more direct and profound and point to more far reaching courses of action, participation and self-discovery than the pronouncements of the political parties and the experts addressing crime today. I will talk about the profundity of that vision at the end of my contribution.

I would like to look at the Motion itself. I begin with what it affirms. The Motion affirms that law-abiding citizens have increased fears and concerns over the crime situation. The Motion also affirms that the Government has spent vast sums on resources, foreign expertise and assistance with no visible effect.

The hon. Minister of National Security in his response to the Motion does not deny that there are increasing fears and concerns; so he accepts the first part of the affirmation, but the Minister would like to delete the phrase, "with no visible effect".

With respect to moneys spent on foreign expertise, the Minister has insisted, "We cannot help that; we have to outsource." I have an aesthetic distaste for the word "outsource"; no doubt that distaste is fed by my patriotic objection to the device. We so stupid, we so talentless and so rich that anytime we want to do something we have to outsource it. We cannot do anything for ourselves. I do not like to hear all this talk about outsourcing. The Minister is outsourcing and he declares, "If we have to bring law enforcement people from abroad, we cannot compensate them in TT dollars." If they want a Carib, are they not paying for it in TT dollars? If they go into the supermarket, are they not paying in TT dollars? Why can we not compensate them in TT dollars? When they are leaving and they say, "I saved \$1 million TT; I want some foreign exchange," they could go to the Central Bank and get it.

If we bring law enforcement persons from abroad, we cannot compensate them in TT dollars. We have to pay them the rates they would have gotten in the United Kingdom. That is nonsense! The cost of living here is different to the cost of living there. You have to ask them what is their take home after they get whatever they get and compare take homes. We would try to make sure they have the same take home, but we cannot give them what they were getting there and I am subsidizing Carib beer for them. I am paying cash and subsidizing food for them. They are benefitting from all of us paying our taxes, by living cheap here. I do not follow that logic about how you pay them.

"If we want the best and it is the best that we are getting, then we have to pay." How do we know it is the best? I do not agree with the Minister's argument, but all I would permit myself to observe is that up to this day, the people and the Parliament know nothing about the expertise of the law enforcement people from abroad or in what capacities they are advising and serving. Nobody knows their names or where they are to be found and this is a serious and disrespectful breach in any democracy. Unless they are secret agents; everything is a secret.

So much for the affirmations and the Minister's response.

I now want to look at the three proposals in the resolution. The first of the resolutions is that the Senate should express its concern over Government's performance in handling crime. The Minister does not like the phrase "Government's performance in handling", he wants the amendment to be, "express its concern over

crime". But if you listen to the Minister or if you went to the *Hansard* and got his contribution, you would see that he concedes in his contribution that for a number of reasons our law enforcement agencies became out of alignment with their environment. To remedy that, the Government intends to make sure that the law enforcement agencies responsible for providing our citizens with security and safety are "up to scratch." So why is he worried about saying that we are not satisfied with it? He is not satisfied with it. He is telling us why he is not satisfied and what he is doing about it.

Throughout his response to the Motion, he provides a certain amount of information about measures being put in place and that would be put in place to "beef up" law enforcement. The contribution asks us to recognize that the Government is determined to transform the police service, but it is also determined to provide immediately for the security and safety of the population. Two aims: To transform the police service, which he says would take time and providing for security and safety, which is an immediate challenge. The contribution pleads for understanding.

He says that we cannot tell the criminals to wait while we transform. We cannot tell them, he says, "Hold your criminal activities for a little while, because we are having a little challenge transforming the police; it does not work 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. Then he said, "When we do them, we are criticized." I for one am not criticizing; I just want information.

I want to know what the aerial surveillance devices do. I want to know who drew them to the attention of the Government. I want to know if there is a finder or agent's fee and how much. If the devices have helped to anticipate or solve any crime, I want to know and the public wants to know. I do not see how the public knowing that would make the devices any less effective. I do not see how disclosing that the devices have solved or prevented crime is a security risk. If anything, when people know that the devices are producing results, they would quake in their boots. The devices, according to the reports are like God; they can see and hear you all the time. Can there be any greater deterrent?

If you have that deterrent, should you not demonstrate to people, "Look we caught this one and that one and we are going to catch all of you with this thing"? What is the secrecy for? What is the security risk? I am not criticizing; I just want to know.

I do not know why the Minister wants to amend the first resolution which is, "express its concern over Government's performance in handling crime," because he confessed to it throughout his speech. I do not know why he wants to delete the

second resolution which calls on the Government to explain why the actions of the relevant agencies have so far consistently failed to produce the desired results, when he spends about half of his speech explaining why the agencies have failed and why they need to be transformed and fixed.

His contribution, in effect, agrees, to a large extent, with the first and second resolutions. It is to his credit that by providing the information, he has made it possible for us to examine the Government's understanding of why we have failed so far and to comment constructively on the measures that are in different stages of implementation. I feel that the Minister could have accepted the Motion as it came, because the content of his contribution accepts it. I am very grateful to him for providing the information which allows us to have a real debate.

I have several problems with the contribution. While it is committed to dealing with crime, it is not systematic in the sense that it does not sufficiently indicate on the one hand what measures are to deal mainly with crimes committed; and what measures on the other hand are expected to work, in the main, towards crime prevention. You cannot just give us a lump of measures; you have to say, "We recognize that we want to deal with crimes committed and these are the steps we are taking; we cannot just go blotting up crime; we have to find ways of preventing it and this is our crime prevention programme; these are the measures." The contribution does not do that. I would really have expected the Minister to make that kind of distinction and to organize his material in that way.

It is not systematic in another sense. Its policy component, that is to say, the section that declares its overall commitment to dealing with the crime situations is clear enough, but the measures outlined for dealing with crime do not fall into any pattern that we might call an overall plan. We are doing a million things, but I do not see a plan. Of course, there is good reason for that. You cannot have an overall plan if you have not done a proper survey of the crimes and made a satisfactory analysis of the information you have gathered.

When you have an overall plan, based upon research and analysis, you can have nesting inside the overall plan, a series of action plans. An action plan sets out a series of actions that would be implemented against a particular type of crime. It would tell you who would do what; how they would do it and when they would do it. An action plan has time lines. An action plan has indicators of progress, so that the people carrying it out would know that after three months we have got so far; we are falling behind or we are ahead. It is very important to remember that an action plan is a declaration of an intention to work on a

particular kind of crime and it contains the concrete steps that you are going to take. You could have a number of action plans, targeting a number of different crimes going into operation at the same time.

**4.00 p.m.**

If you have an action plan, Mr. Vice-President, that would help you to recognize what kind of person and what kind of organization can play a part in executing the plan. If the evidence that you have gathered suggests that there is an unacceptable level of crimes against children for instance. An action plan would be devised and tailored for preventing such crimes and for apprehending those who commit them. An action plan targeting crimes against children would suddenly discover that it needs to enlist schools, teachers, school children, maxi-taxi drivers, shops and stores, parents, vendors, streets, villages and so on. As soon as you get the plan, and you start to think, you will see how you can involve your community, your whole society in the fight against this particular type of crime. That is what I think Sen. Prof. Deosaran was asking for in the third resolution.

Mr. Vice-President, the third resolution says:

*“Be it resolved that this Senate:*

- (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...”

That is what I think resolution (iii) is aiming at. It says that we want an action plan because if there is a proper action plan, it will guide you to declare concrete measures and guide you to national consensus and civic mobilization. There is nothing wrong with such a resolution and, I think the hon. Minister in his contribution is drifting towards that. When you look at what he says about homicides, you will see that he is groping towards an action plan of the sort I have described.

This is what he says about homicides:

*“When I came here in October, I indicated that most of the homicides were gang related and drug related...”*

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.”



Obviously there is some thinking going on there and some targeting. He is focusing on a special aspect of homicide, the ones that are drug related and gang related. Unfortunately, he does not unfold a plan of action.

Mr. Vice-President, I would encourage the hon. Minister to replace the generic word “agenda” because that is what he uses instead of action plan, to replace that word with the more prescriptive action plan and develop action plans for the more pressing kinds of crimes in our society. Now, I have some quarrel with his analysis of the pressing crimes because this is what he says:

“The last time I addressed this Senate—...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.”

I do not know what research was conducted, but my impression is that the list is incomplete. What about violence in schools, robberies, break-ins? What about crimes against women, crimes against children, crimes against the elderly? All these things are going on and all require specific preventive remedies, and if you analyze and say you have crimes against women, how do you deal with that? You can develop a plan. How do you deal with crimes against children? You can develop a plan, so I am just repeating my point that you need to have an overall plan based upon research and analysis, and you need to have nesting within the overall plan a set of action plans with the time lines and the concrete steps that you are taking, and ways of monitoring the degrees of success or failure that you are having. When you develop action plans, it becomes clear to you how you can involve the national community and particular regional communities.

Mr. Vice-President, I know the Minister understands about community involvement in action plans, or at least I think he had a glimpse of it because he referred to a point Sen. Dr. Mc Kenzie made about geographical accountability, and he said that 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.

He spoke about working at the community level and said that because of the level of law enforcement that would be in place where there is “geographical accountability”—which Sen. Dr. Mc Kenzie talked about in her contribution—when it gets to that, if there is a divisional commander who has a particular area and he or she knows the area, he or she would be responsible for making sure that

crime in that particular area is at a certain level. So I would love it if the Minister could sit and think about this phrase he caught from Sen. Dr. Mc Kenzie and allow the notion of geographical accountability to play a part in his overall action plan for crime.

For several years now I have been talking about geographical accountability through another phrase. Again and again, whether you are dealing with education, health, or traffic, crime or economics, I have been arguing that we have to redraw the map of this country into a set of regions and direct our budget and activities towards the development of the regions. If that is done with a hospital, a set of schools, a fire brigade, a bus depot, Government offices, computers attached to headquarters, et cetera, and if you understood your regions and the economic possibilities of them, and spent money to develop them, you would not need this absurd interchange which is based upon the assumption that all the regions have to be underdeveloped and all roads lead to Port of Spain because we all have to go there to work and be and do.

Mr. Vice-President, regional development is an answer to so many of our problems, and I was so glad to hear the Prime Minister the other day referring to the case of Tobago and talking about how well local government works there. Or you give people a budget and tell them you know the place; you know the people; you know your needs; develop the place. I take that as a very good sign and I sincerely hope that we would go into regional development in the sense I have been describing and that such an interest will be reflected in local government reform and eventually in constitution reform.

Mr. Vice-President, there is something else that interested me in the Minister's contribution and that is what he has to say about the training of police recruits. The Minister's mantra for this is, "if you want good law enforcement and good policing, you have to get good police officers." I would go further and say that the recruitment, education and training of policemen and policewomen are the most important weapons in the fight against crime and it is the measure most likely to transform the police service. So I take the new curriculum and training of recruits very seriously. Now I have tried my best, I have asked the Minister several times to get a look at the new curriculum, but I really have not seen it, so I am dependent on what the Minister says. But when I look at the new curriculum as declared in the Senate by the Minister, it seems to me that it is mainly aimed at training the recruits to deal with the kinds of crime situations they would have to deal with, and the emphasis is on training.

Modern techniques of delivery are being used; they are trying to be interactive by using videos and computers, but the drive is towards training and I will talk about that in a second. We are told that there are 792 hours of instruction. I do not

know whether that is over three months, six months, one or two years; whether the training of recruits is a one-year programme or a two-year one; I do not know if they have lectures; tutorials and seminars; I do not know how much written work they have; all I hear is 792 hours of instruction. I do not know what the level of entry is. Are you taking persons with O levels? What is the entry level? Maybe it is there in the curriculum but I have no idea from what was said. We know there are more tests and exams the students must pass. What kind of tests?

Looking at the sorts of things that are being taught now, there is clause (c) which says that recruits are exposed to different academic disciplines: criminal justice, social sciences, humanities, public health, et cetera. I do not know how many courses are involved. Is it one course that exposes them to all these things? What is the exposure to the humanities, the social sciences? What is the exposure to the geography and history of the country? What will a graduate from the Police Training Academy or whatever they want to call it know about the culture of his country? What will he know about the politics of his country? What will he know about the history and economy of his country? There is one word we use to cover all that—cultural literacy. What degree of cultural literacy are we giving to the people who we are training to be police officers? And if, when I get a hold of the curriculum it is as vague and wishy-washy as this, then I would say that it is not going to transform the police service and it is going to do worse.

In her contribution, Sen. Dr. Mc Kenzie, in a slightly different context was warning about our investment in technology and science—and I would add to that training to do a specific job, she said that if we focus so exclusively on this technical thing; science, technology, training, “I keep saying we are going to produce criminals and export terrorists because we are educating their heads and not their hearts, Mr. Vice-President.”

So I take very seriously this new curriculum for police recruits and I am going to make it my duty to see whether it is really aimed at teaching or helping our people to be people; helping them to achieve cultural literacy; to be alive in their time and to their time because I find that most of the police I have had clashes with are just ignorant, you cannot talk to them.

**Hon. Senator:** True, true.

**Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand:** I am not blaming just police, I am just saying that these are people who have to interface with the public, who have great responsibilities and these are the people who should understand our society in depth. When a policeman is talking to me he says well, this man's name is

*Government's Performance in Crime*  
[SEN. PROF. RAMCHAND]

*Tuesday, June 27, 2006*

Ramchand, he probably grew up in the countryside, he is a person of Indian origin, and they came here so and so. He must have things about me, not stereotypes, but information about where I am coming from.

So Mr. Vice-President, I have a great interest in the new curriculum, but I have fears that it may not be doing what it ought to be doing and if my fear or suspicion is correct, then I really hope that the Minister would do something about it.

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

*Motion made,* That the hon. Senator's speaking time be extended by 15 minutes. [*Sen. Dr. E. Mc Kenzie*]

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand:** Thank you Senators, thank you, Mr. Vice-President. I want to move now to a phrase that the Minister uses which I find very interesting when he confesses that the affirmation is correct, that we have a problem with the way in which we handle crime. I really do not think it is the way the Government is handling crime, I think it is the way the whole society handles crime, so when I say Government I am saying "we"; it is all of us. The Minister said:

"Madam President, our law enforcement agencies became out of alignment with the environment for a number of reasons."

Before that he said:

"...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."

So you should really have organizations aligned to, attuned to, aware of, immersed in, steeped in, consciously and unconsciously aware of the environment. So if you have a police service or agencies responsible for law enforcement, they should be properly aligned and if they are, they would not only respond to what is happening there, but help to shape what is happening there and the Minister said we have lost that alignment.

Mr. Vice-President, it is very disappointing that having stumbled upon this notion of organizations being aligned, or in line with the environment, all the Minister can say is we have fallen out of line therefore, we have to beef up law enforcement. No, if it is out of line, you have to bring it back in line, beefing up

is not the same as bringing it back in line. I do not even know what beefing up means. Beefing up means just give us more than we have at present. It reminds me of another Minister who said one day that he was negotiating with Atlantic LNG and he has to tell this honourable Senate that we have got our pound of flesh out of Atlantic gas. "Our cow eh, but we are celebrating that we got our pound of flesh." Ministers should stay away from beef and cow. [*Laughter*] We have to bring it in line.

Mr. Vice-President, you will understand what alignment is about if you read a book called *Crime in Trinidad* published in 1986 by a Trinidadian scholar, David Trotman and this book covers crime in the period 1838—1900. It does a thorough analysis, good research; it gathers up all the information that he could find about crime in Trinidad in the post-emancipation period up to 1900. He classifies the crimes, et cetera, analyzes them, and then he comes out with a number of generalizations about the crimes. One of the important generalizations is that there is a connection between the pattern and nature of criminal activity and the structural organization of a society.

There is a connection between the two. He points out that in the organization of society there is a hierarchy, a bias in the development of roads; a bias in the provision of utilities; a bias in the patterns of settlements and housing and in the pattern of development. The bias helps us to understand the connection between the pattern and nature of criminal activity and the structural organization of a society. The second generalization he comes out with is if there is a disconnect between certain levels of the society and the rest of the society, the disconnected sector becomes a law unto itself which is usually translated to mean that they are lawless, and they constitute an area of social activity that cannot be analyzed by people who do not have intimate and sympathetic knowledge of these areas.

So looking at crime in Trinidad and Tobago between 1838 and 1900, he comes out with these two generalizations which still apply today. These generalizations suggest themselves automatically from the evidence he has collected. What he also finds is that in that period, something started which has continued into the present. Law was the defender of property and privilege, law was used to declare as illegal the culture of the disconnected sector, it was used to defend the privileged against the disconnected sector.

Carnival was banned because it was declared illegal; camboulay, hosay, the Shouter Baptists, drumming. Everything these people did was regarded as a threat and an illegality because they were disconnected, and the legacy of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century is still with us. There are people who feel the law is not for them, that it is there to oppress them; there are people who feel they do not belong.

Mr. Vice-President, I now come back to this question of belonging. Trotman indicates that we are guilty of intellectual failure. No contemporary study has analyzed modern society out of the kind of base that he has prepared. When we analyze crime in our society, we do it with a view to apprehending, not understanding, and he asserts that little attention is paid to the section of the society that does not regard the law as lawful or applicable to themselves, and that is a very big part of the problem, Mr. Vice-President.

If I may go back very swiftly to Lovelace's novel, if you check it, Mr. Vice-President, you are going to see the characters talking about discrimination by region. A young boy is in jail and people come to visit him and he is saying he is innocent and they are saying if he is not guilty they will let him go.

“‘If you not guilty, they’ll let you go,’ ...

‘Let me go?’ ...

‘You told them you wasn't there?’ ...

‘Yes. But they don’t believe me.’

‘They will believe you, if you’re speaking the truth.’ ...

‘I tell you they won’t believe me.’

‘Why? Why won’t they believe you?’

‘Because they don’t feel to believe me.’ ...

‘And why should they just feel that you’re guilty?’

‘I know why. Because once you from a particular area an’ you in a particular company, anything you do, you wrong. You never right. You never innocent, always guilty.’”

**Sen. Dr. Mc Kenzie:** What page?

**Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand:** Page 208. And on page 235, one character talks about what we know of today as social capital; on page 238 another character talks about being a human being, wanting to be a human being and what it is to be a human being, and if people do not treat you as a human being you are bound to behave like a beast. And the last thing on page 239 one character again—the bad thing about this, as a novel, is that it has a whole set of speeches about a set of topics, but it is very useful.

You see how some people are talking about the national footballers and they want to do something for them? It is speaking about that. It says:

“So I think if you are planning something for them, it shouldn't be something too easy. You know? It shouldn't be something too hard, either. It should involve a certain degree of challenge. Dare them to do something and they'll want to do it. And it will have greater value for them. Most of them own nothing. I mean nothing. Most people have families and so on, these boys have nothing. You have to make them realize that they belong to something, somewhere. They have to know that they're a real part of the community. You have to make them know that, else nothing you do will be really successful.”

So, Mr. Vice-President, I started off by saying that I would prefer to deal with the harshness, the brutality, and the sadism of our society, that I would like to talk about the root of the disaffection and crime in our society, and I end by returning to the simple notion that if we can create social capital, make people feel that they belong and they are an important part of the society, that might be the major key to the bringing of peace to our society.

Thank you.

**Mr. Vice-President:** Hon. Senators, we shall take the tea break now and return to the Chamber to begin at 5.00 p.m.

**4.30 p.m.:** *Sitting suspended.*

**5.00 p.m.:** *Sitting resumed.*

**Sen. Sadiq Baksh:** Mr. Vice President, I join the debate on a Motion by my colleague, Sen. Prof. Deosaran and, immediately, what I could say is that we cannot deny that law-abiding citizens are living in fear and that they are very concerned for their safety and that of their family and friends. We cannot deny that crime against law-abiding citizens has increased since 2001/2002 when the present administration spent the entire budget of that period to purchase votes. We cannot deny that crime has worsened under the management and leadership of the PNM. Those are facts. The statistics are there and those are the facts.

It is a fact that citizens are suffering severe psychological consequences due to the PNM's inability to deal with crime; it is a fact that citizens are suffering severe social consequences due to the PNM's inability to deal with crime; it is a fact that law-abiding citizens are experiencing severe economic consequences due to the

present high level of crimes under this PNM administration. Every citizen and visitor to Trinidad and Tobago has expressed concern over the PNM administration's poor performance, or some people would argue, non-performance, in handling crime at any level.

The PNM has simply not performed. The PNM just cannot perform and that is a serious problem that citizens are now concluding: We, the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, now call on this PNM administration to explain to all citizens why all the money that they have spent so far, has not been able to bear fruits in terms of all their planned objectives and deliverables as far as crime and fighting crime is concerned. Inaction by the relevant agencies—I cannot say, action; it is inaction, because all the policies have failed to date and after almost five years in office with this Government's best efforts, it has failed the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

This administration has not been able to prevent the criminals from getting the better of law-abiding citizens in our country. Based on these overwhelming facts, we, the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, have lost hope. We do not believe that this administration could outline any specific performance targets and/or mechanisms for accountability to us, the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. We, the citizens, have lost hope of this PNM administration's ability to implement any concrete measures to deal with the very serious crimes now affecting and facing us. This PNM Government cannot facilitate any pathway to national consensus nor can it engender any civic mobilization of our population, because we simply do not trust the PNM. Our citizens do not trust the PNM either. The PNM is hopeless, not only in terms of dealing with crime, but many other areas of national importance to us.

It would appear that this administration and, in fact, the PNM in general, has had a very poor record in dealing with crime, generally. During the period 1991 to 1995, we had a situation in which crime and criminal activities began to escalate. During that period, when we were preparing to seriously become the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, we then had to initiate a crime plan to convince the population that we had the knowledge in terms of what was necessary to reverse that trend. I found it extremely difficult to hear my colleague, Sen. Montano, trying to show that crime and the whole issue of crime, as handled by the PNM, was acceptable and that they were succeeding when no other citizen in Trinidad and Tobago could feel that way.

It is not a situation of knocking the Government. If people were to rank the performance of this administration, it would get the lowest score in terms of how it handles crime and criminal activities in Trinidad and Tobago. There are other areas that people would give more marks, but I feel certain that across the board,



irrespective of political affiliation, irrespective of colour, creed, race or geographical location, they would come up with that. Therefore, just by that, it should be the number one national objective to reduce crime.

During that period, 1991 to 1995, we saw across the board, all crimes, including murder, increasing. I want to inform this honourable House that whereas my colleague, Sen. Dr. Tim Gopeesingh, looked at it on an annual basis and came up with an average for the years 1995 to 2001, and then compared it with another period where the average in one case was just over 100 and in another case just about 300 per annum, I could tell you for certain, that murders went down in 1996, compared to 1995, and 1997 compared to both 1995 and 1996, and there was a downward trend for three successive years during the UNC administration. But I do not take comfort with a reduction in murders from 100 to 92. Ninety-two murders are really too many for a country of our size, so I am not into comparing period to period. We now have a situation in which we find ourselves with almost one murder being committed daily and that cannot be acceptable for a country aspiring to be First World in the shortest possible time.

Therefore, whereas I share the views of the hon. Prime Minister that one of our national objectives would be to go to South Africa in 2010—and I applaud the Government for making that a national objective in terms of going to South Africa, not only trying to qualify but, in fact, going there with the intention of at least making it to the second round or winning the tournament—but we must be prepared to put in the hard work necessary to make that dream a reality. We must be prepared to begin in our primary schools. Although those might not be the ones to go in 2010, but then we should have seed programmes in primary through secondary and then look for them on the international arena. So when our young men go out there, like we have done in cricket, we would be able to do it in football and have a team that would represent us as good as the Soca Warriors, and even better.

I, too, want to join with my other colleagues in congratulating the Soca Warriors for an outstanding performance in Germany and representing Trinidad and Tobago like no other group, or all the other groups put together, in our World Cup tournament in Germany. I, too, feel satisfied that the Government made a very good effort in rewarding the Soca Warriors but I found that, like the similar manner in which it did not perform in satisfying the national objectives in terms of the reduction in crime, that in overlooking the architect of the Soca Warriors for our effort into Germany, Jack Austin Warner, the Government did itself a disservice by not recognizing him appropriately for that outstanding effort.

The Government needs to really treat citizens equally irrespective of colour, creed, race, geographical region or political affiliation. It cannot be because of your political affiliation that your outstanding work would not only go unnoticed but without reward or just recognition. We need to move away from where it is for the boys and girls to where a meritocracy would, in fact, be the order of the day so that every single citizen would feel that he or she could aspire to the highest office. When I saw the situation with the Vice President of FIFA and the way in which he was treated, I recalled an event that I was privy to in terms of another meeting in which the Government acted in a similar manner and the Prime Minister, in particular, in that when the administration took office in 2002, the Prime Minister met with the then Governor of the Central Bank and told him of the outstanding job he did and the confidence with which he was able to draw in the banking community, which led him to believe that his contract might be renewed, only to be told that he did an excellent job, but “Thank you very much; we have another person for the job.” It is similar in terms of the actions of the Prime Minister.

Crime and criminal activities and the way in which we manage our resources to fight crime would always be on the agenda in Trinidad and Tobago. Since this administration came to office it is alleged, initially, that in 2002—and you would recall that early in this term of office I mentioned to this honourable House the activities that took place in some marginal constituencies and the involvement of criminals and criminality entering the public domain and the political arena. On several occasions, including my budget contribution, I drew to your attention and the attention of this Senate, the involvement of the Jamaat al Muslimeen in the activities that undermined the democracy in Trinidad and Tobago.

I recall vividly what took place. I recall vividly the activities of the Jamaat in marginal constituencies in my capacity both as a candidate and as a party organizer for the United National Congress. No administration and no politician should invite, encourage, sustain or allow criminality to undermine the democracy of Trinidad and Tobago. It is unfortunate that people who hold high office, without any evidence, would cast aspersions the way my colleague on the other side would seek to do—the Leader of Government Business. I was aghast and pained when it came to my attention that the hon. Prime Minister, in fact, could accuse citizens of being involved in criminal activities when, if he had evidence, or if he is privy to that evidence, was unwilling to carry it to the right judicial authority. This administration really cannot deal with crime nor can it curb criminal activities in Trinidad and Tobago because their priorities are misplaced. They would prefer to engage in propaganda, in spreading misinformation, in looking at scapegoats instead of looking at the root cause for crime and the introduction of criminality into the politics of Trinidad and Tobago.

In November last year when the Government invited the UNC to an inter-party meeting to deal with crime and the issue of the introduction of the so-called Bills to deal with crime in Trinidad and Tobago and the management of the police service, the hon. Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, in the presence of members of both political parties, in fact, made an accusation that I was involved in criminal and gang-related activities. When the hon. Prime Minister made that accusation, it was drawn to my attention by the Political Leader of the United National Congress and I found it really, really difficult to believe that the hon. Prime Minister could make such an accusation in the presence of the hon. Minister of National Security, the distinguished Attorney General, the then Leader of the Opposition and the Political Leader of the United National Congress and the present Leader of the Opposition, Kamla Persad-Bissessar.

Could you imagine the pain that any law-abiding citizen would go through when the hon. Prime Minister would say such a thing, especially not on a one-to-one, but in the presence of five senior leaders of our country? So pained was I that I had to pen a letter to the hon. Prime Minister. With your leave, I read this letter into the record to show in this particular Motion why this administration is incapable of dealing with the problems that we now experience in Trinidad and Tobago, and I would lay it. It is written on the letterhead of:

“SENATOR SADIQ BAKSH

November 24, 2005

Honourable Winston Dookeran

Political Leader

United National Congress”

It was in response to the Political Leader asking me to account, based on the information that the most important person in Trinidad and Tobago made about me. I quote:

“Dear Winston,

Re: Recent accusations made by the Honourable Prime Minister in which the Honourable Prime Minister accuses me of being involved in criminal and gang related activities.

Pursuant to our conversation concerning the above captioned accusation made by the Prime Minister of criminal activity on my part, I have summarized the key items of our discussion. Further, I have included for your information relevant details concerning some of the Honourable Prime Minister's accusations of my involvement in other criminal activities.

It is frightening and disturbing that our Honourable Prime Minister would choose to make such dangerous accusations. It is even more disturbing that he chose to do so in your presence and that of other political colleagues who were invited by the Government to attend an inter party meeting. This meeting was convened to address how to deal with national crime issues.

Before proceeding further, I wish to thank you for the credible, objective and firm manner in which you discussed the Honourable Prime Minister's accusations with me in the privacy of your office. The manner in which you handled the accusations, is in my judgement, a clear indication of your competent and sincere style of leadership.

It occurs to me that since the Prime Minister could make such accusations, surely it must be with non-compromising evidence. Based on the understanding that this evidence exists, then why has the Prime Minister failed in his duty to take appropriate actions on information to which he alleges that he is privy? Why has he not referred the matter to the relevant judicial authority? Is the Honourable Prime Minister in pursuit of justice, political assassination, or is he perhaps interested in assassination only? I must speculate further, is the Honourable Prime Minister acting on his own accord or is he basing his conduct on the agenda of some unknown puppet master?

The following are some of the accusations and related actions taken against me and the Government:

1. Voter padding.
2. Searching of my home and seizing of computers.
3. Accusation of fraud in the Airport scandal.
4. Arresting of UNC political activists working in my campaign.
5. The arrest and handcuffing of my niece with accusations of perjury and illegal voting.
6. Interrogation of my daughter at her workplace by homicide officers.
7. The threatening of my son (campaign manager) of imminent arrest.
8. The arrest and handcuffing of my sister and family friends on Election Day 2002.
9. The unresolved issue of missiles and cocaine planted in the water tank of my house.

10. Threats of arresting me for my non-attendance at the Airport Inquiry.  
Continuous threats of my imminent arrest.
11. Reading of my arrest warrant while I was in the Senate.
12. Fabrication of charges designed to embarrass and compromise my integrity.
13. The setting of bail, in the sum of over one million dollars.
14. Accusation of criminal association with Sean Francis.
15. That I am involved in criminal gang activities with a known criminal element...

It is apparent from this litany of allegations made over the years against me and those dear to me, without any resulting judicial resolution, that the Honourable Prime Minister and the government seem bent on the assassination of my character. It is highly probable that their true motive is to politically neutralize me.

Despite this onslaught of deliberate and constant assault on my character I firmly, with a clear and uncompromising conscience deny all the accusations against me made by the PNM and/or its agents. At no time whatsoever, whilst in the service of the people of this country, or during my personal interaction with those with whom my personal and/or professional commitment exposed me, did I intentionally or knowingly or unknowingly engage in any activity or activities that were ultra vires of the laws of Trinidad and Tobago, and/or for that matter any other jurisdiction. In all my undertakings, I am guided by my own moral, spiritual and ethical beliefs.

Further more, at no time whatsoever was I in collusion with any person and/or persons whether in private or in joint enterprise involved in criminal activities in Trinidad and Tobago or elsewhere. Make no mistake then, there is no truth whatsoever in the allegations against me and the UNC. The PNM in its pursuit to destroy me and the United National Congress politically and otherwise is clearly engaging in illegal means to obtain their partisan political objective. I am innocent of all their fabricated allegations and charges."

**Sen. Dr. Saith:** Mr. Vice-President, I did not want to interrupt the hon. Senator, but I want us to clearly understand what we have just done. Allegations are made against people all the time. Allegations are made against me on public platforms and even here. What we have done is, that I could now write to my Political Leader and come here and read out that letter for the record. That is what

we have done. I do not think it is right, but I did not want to be accused of—but we are opening up a system of debate now where each one of us could write to our Political Leader and come and read out: “Dear Patrick”. And one thing, I am not saying anything about Sen. Baksh's innocence or guilt or anything, I just did not want it to pass and for us to understand what we have just done.

**Sen. S. Baksh:** Mr. Vice-President, for clarification to the hon. Minister, I, too would not like to set such a precedent. I assure you and this honourable Senate that the Political Leader has assured me that he sent a covering letter to the Prime Minister, and also on February 16, I, personally, wrote the Prime Minister enquiring from him whether he got this letter and what action was taken. I further wrote the hon. Prime Minister on April 07 enquiring as to the status of it, and further, I wrote to the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on March 01. The President did call to make an appointment but at that time I was out of the country.

The point I am making to you is that over that entire period I kept this as confidential as possible because I did not want to really engage in this type of activity because I respect the office of the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. I have the highest regard for the hon. Prime Minister and I was pained and, really, I could not understand and I wanted to verify whether this took place and it is brought up here today because it has a bearing on how the Government handles crime in the present and the future.

### **5.30 p.m.**

It cannot be that anything goes. I agree and I do not want to set such a precedent. I do not have any objection in laying it into the Parliament record and leaving it at that. I do not take any joy or pride in bringing this matter publicly. I would have thought that since November 24, when the matter was handled it would have been handled in the manner that would have brought an end to this kind of situation, but it persists. It is a document that I took a lot of time and effort in preparing so that it would reflect what really took place and what I feel is very important in the preservation of the democracy in Trinidad and Tobago, bringing to an end the introduction of criminality into the politics of Trinidad and Tobago. It is something that just cannot continue without having the kind of results that we are now experiencing.

We need to develop programmes so that our young people would have new goals and targets; 2010 would be a national priority that we work together for improving the quality of the infrastructure in the country; deal with crime to, not an acceptable level, but where every citizen would be mobilized in a civic way to

take responsibility for themselves, their families and by extension their communities; to recognize that it is only help from within the community that invigorates a community and help from outside that enfeebles that community. We will feel confident that we could rebuild that kind of trust necessary in the people and leadership roles in the country that they will look after our interest. When we say our interest it does not mean the UNC's interest or the PNM's interest, but the interest of all the people of Trinidad and Tobago. It is then we would be laying the type of foundation not redoing the foundation, but building on the strong foundation that successive governments from 1956 to now went into building. It is our job not to undo it but to build on all the strong areas on which we displayed strength then, to now allow the citizens of our country to grow and prosper.

This type of activity where I have had to speak from the document and the kind of time I had to spend to refute every charge one by one in terms of allegations made by the most important office in this country, is one that I encourage everybody to look up to. Whether we like it or not the office of prime minister is an office always to be respected by citizens of our country. We cannot disrespect that office and expect our country to grow, develop, succeed, prosper and for us to deal with the new and old challenges that face us on a daily basis. All the challenges would never be insurmountable if we are able to mobilize a civic response to any problem that we may encounter.

I will table the letters and it is my hope that other citizens do not have to go through what I had to go through. I have the strength to withstand it and deal with it appropriately. Other citizens might not have it.

Thank you very much.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of Public Administration and Information and Minister of Energy and Energy Industries (Sen. The Hon. Dr. Lenny Saith):** Mr. Vice President, I beg to move that the Senate be now adjourned to Tuesday, July 04, 2006, at 1.30 p.m.

We will deal with the Motion on the Fair Trading Bill that came from the Lower House and the Tourism Development (Amdt.) Bill.

**Mr. Vice-President:** Hon. Senators, leave has been granted for Sen. Wade Mark to raise a matter on the Motion for the Adjournment.

**Aranguez Savannah  
(Improper Lighting)**

**Sen. Wade Mark:** Mr. Vice-President, the Motion deals with the failure of the hon. Minister of Public Utilities and the Environment, as well as the National Social Development Programme to provide proper lighting and other facilities at the Aranguez Savannah. As you are aware, the Government has in fact promised to light up this country with the installation of close to 100,000 street lamps. However, the citizens are not too clear as to how this programme is being managed; who is in charge of this programme and what criteria are used or are employed to access these services. Are party groups or activists being given priority? Do we have to approach the Minister of Public Utilities and the Environment directly, or do we have to address our demands at the National Social Development Programme?

Just as the people approached the party through my good self to agitate for a new bridge in the Aranguez community, it is in the same manner that the people of Aranguez and its environs have approached me to raise with the hon. Minister of Public Utilities and the Environment, the need to properly light up the entire Aranguez Savannah, especially the paved area where thousands of persons jog, walk, play football, engage in cricket and generally recreate and even picnic. Whilst some lights have been installed in some areas of the paved area of that savannah, there are many areas that are equally without lights. It means that many citizens especially our women and the elderly who would like to jog, walk and engage in some form of leisure and recreation are being robbed of this opportunity. Citizens are extremely cautious to walk and jog after 6.00 p.m. and particularly before 6 a.m. As the Minister would be aware there are criminal elements that stalk that part of the country as they stalk so many areas of this land.

The people of the constituency of St. Joseph and particularly the people of Aranguez are clamouring for the completion of a project that was started a few months ago. A few months ago a couple light poles with appropriate lamps were installed for just part of the savannah but the people are pleading through my good self for the hon. Minister and the Government to take appropriate action to complete this particular project.

We have no objection to the excellent work that the honourable Minister has done to the Eddie Hart ground. I traverse there all the time. I am asking the hon. Minister to also extend that same facility to the people of Aranguez and the constituency of St. Joseph. I would like the hon. Minister to take steps to at least complete that exercise. I have been approached by hundreds of people in that community and they have asked me to bring this matter to your attention.



The Aranguéz Savannah is a very important area of recreational activity for thousands of citizens who live in its environs, like San Juan—you are a man who is well known there—Barataria, El Socorro, Petit Bourg, Mount Lambert and Mount Hope. They all use that facility. As I said, a project was started a few months ago but it has not been completed.

On behalf of the citizens of that great constituency and community, I ask the hon. Minister to give some undertaking or commitment that this particular project would be quickly completed and just as she was able to provide the Eddie Hart grounds with the appropriate lighting facilities for night-time sports—if you go any time on the bus route you will see that ground properly lit with floodlights. We think that the time has come for the people of Aranguéz and the constituency of St. Joseph to play night football and cricket and walk after 6.00 p.m. because the place is properly lit. The police can traverse around the perimeter of that savannah to ensure they provide security to the people.

It is a simple request from the people of the constituency of St. Joseph and in particular the people of Aranguéz and its environs, to take appropriate steps to ensure that that particular work that was started sometime ago is completed. We hope that the hon. Minister would take appropriate action to have that completed long before August 31, 2006.

Thank you.

**The Minister of Public Utilities and the Environment (Hon. Penelope Beckles):** Mr. Vice-President, I thank Sen. Wade Mark for filing this Motion that would give me a second opportunity to deal with this issue of street lighting. Mr. Vice-President, you would recall that I came to this honourable Senate about three months ago and actually made an official statement authorized by the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago. In that statement I took about 15 minutes and listed exactly what the National Street Lighting Programme was.

My recollection of the hon. Senator is that he has a very good memory. I suspect that he was not here on that day when I made that statement, so I will forgive him, or he may have been distracted having regard to certain events that may be taking place in the Aranguéz Savannah and its environs. Having said that, I am a little disappointed when he talks about whether or not you have to apply through party groups. I am happy it is one of the occasions when I have seen him at his best, very humble and very gentle. I am sure that the Senate is not accustomed to hearing him that way. The only time the hon. Sen. Wade Mark speaks in that way is when he is not very convinced about his Motion.

*Aranguéz Savannah*  
[HON. P. BECKLES]

*Tuesday, June 27, 2006*

I would share with him so he would be comfortable on the occasions on which he would be jogging or the women that have been worrying would be jogging; very soon their fears would be allayed. It is interesting that the hon. Senator indicated that this programme we have started—I want to let him know that when I launched the programme in the Eddie Hart Savannah in the constituency of St. Augustine—that, coincidentally, is the first recreation ground that this Government has lit where his political leader, the hon. Winston Dookeran attended, by my invitation, and was invited to speak because it is his constituency and gave honourable mention of the programme.

As I said a few months ago, it was going to be a pilot project. The first constituency would be St. Augustine, an Opposition constituency; the second constituency would be St. Joseph, the Aranguéz Savannah and the third would be Palmiste, very close to where the former political leader of the UNC now resides. When I heard the hon. Senator say that he was approached on a prior occasion for a bridge to be built in Aranguéz and it was built and he is now saying that he has been approached for lights to be put in the savannah, I indicated that months ago. Nonetheless, I am not worried if my good friend gets the credit when I install those lights very shortly. It may very well be that he may be running for the constituency of St. Joseph. [*Crosstalk and laughter*]. Well, you may be. I am following in the lighter moment, so do not worry. “Ah know yuh could take a lil picong. Doh worry about dat.”

Let me just share with the hon. Senator. We would recall that under section 232 of the Municipal Corporations Act, it gives the municipal corporation responsibility for these recreation grounds. As it relates to the Eddie Hart ground we liaised with the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation and for Aranguéz we liaised with the San Juan/Laventille Regional Corporation. The Senator’s Motion does not only speak to lights but also to amenities. San Juan/Laventille Regional Corporation has a programme to deal with some other things such as perimeter lighting, the jogging track and also some fencing.

The parks were selected as a pilot project. Of the three, Eddie Hart Ground is the smallest. We started there to get an idea of how it would work out and the impact. That park is 794 metres. We obtained the necessary clearance and that project was completed in two months. As you said, it has had a very positive impact in Tunapuna. The Eddie Hart ground utilized 27 lamps and the cost of the project was \$400,000. As it relates to the Aranguéz Savannah, we are talking about 1,500 metres and that will utilize 65 lamps. Tenders are expected to go out at the end of June and we should have the bids open next month. We will say that around September or October the area would be lit. This project has been in the pipeline for sometime.

You mentioned the National Street Lighting Programme where the Government has agreed to install 82,000 new street lights and upgrade 36,000 street lights from 70 watts to 150 watts. To date, as I speak, the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) has installed 40,000 lights. [*Desk thumping*] This is important because of this issue that has been raised by the Senator as it relates to party groups and criteria. I have received requests, because I wrote every Member of Parliament, and I have received responses from almost everyone, but any citizen can write to the Minister, T&TEC, the National Social Development Programme or the regional corporations that have also been forwarding their requests. I do not want to give the impression that it is the Minister alone; it can come from anyone. If there is anyone in the Senate who has such a difficulty, as you would see, they are installing the lights.

Let me give some figures so that the impression would not be created that it is party groups and only for the PNM constituencies. I have already clarified that by virtue of the fact that two of the three recreational facilities are in Opposition constituencies. These are the numbers installed to date.

Location	No. of Lights
Malabar	1,899
Arouca	469
Barataria/Malick	539
Belmont	57
Brazil	116
California	37
Carapo	298
Carlsen Field	31
Caroni	443
Caroni	88
Cascade	68
Chaguanas	908
Chaguaramas	8

*Aranguéz Savannah*  
[HON. P. BECKLES]

*Tuesday, June 27, 2006*

Champs Fleurs, Bamboo,	
Mount Hope, Mount Lambert, Petit Bourg	262
Charlieville	379
Claxton Bay	394
Couva, Tortuga, Preysal	732
Cumuto	526
Cunupia	2,365
Cunupia	266
D'Abadie	885
Debe/Barrackpore	934
Diego Martin	1,171
El Socorro, Aranguéz	163
Enterprise	374
Felicity	387
Freeport, Chase Village	2,039
Fyzabad	964
Glenco	261
Goodwood Park	8
Gulf View	302
La Brea	247
Las Lomas	128
Laventille	436
Longdenville	231
Lopinot	57
Piparo	1,962
Maraval	66
Mayaro/Biche	711

*Aranguéz Savannah**Tuesday, June 27, 2006*

Moruga	865
Morvant	328
New Town	7
Penal, Siparia, Chatham, Cedros	2,499
Petit Valley	207
Piarco	80
Point Cumana	30
Point Fortin	1,365
Port of Spain and environs	1,437
Princes Town	2,279
Rio Claro	1,260
Tabaquite	1,099

The list goes on. The truth is that many areas that have not had street lighting and electricity are rural communities. I will not read all here. We have focused in a sense on delivering much to those areas that seriously need.

I thank my colleague for filing this Motion and giving me another opportunity. From time to time the Opposition has said that we do not come to Parliament to report. That is why I made the statement that clearly outlines what we were doing in the areas and the number of lights so that the Upper House can have a clear indication of what the Government is doing.

In closing, I assure him that when we are officially commissioning the lighting at the Aranguéz Savannah, I will ensure that I invite Sen. Wade Mark. As has been the custom, I will invite the Member of Parliament who would be Mr. Gerald Yetming to speak.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Senate adjourned accordingly.*

*Adjourned at 5.57 p.m.*

**WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION****Immigration Department  
(Rejected Applications)**

**57. Sen. Wade Mark** asked the hon. Minister of National Security to state:

- (a) How many applications were rejected by the Immigration Department and subsequently approved by the Ministry of National Security?
- (b) Could the Minister of National Security provide the Senate with a detailed breakdown of both sets of applications?

**The Minister of National Security (Sen. The Hon. Martin Joseph):** The question cannot be answered until the hon. Senator states exactly to which applications he is referring.