

Airports Authority (Amdt.) Bill

Tuesday, January 23, 2007

SENATE

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The Senate met at 1.30 p.m.

PRAYERS

[MADAM PRESIDENT *in the Chair*]

AIRPORTS AUTHORITY (AMDT.) BILL

Bill to amend the Airports Authority Act, Chap. 49:02, brought from the House of Representatives [*The Minister of Works and Transport*]; read the first time.

HERITAGE AND STABILISATION FUND (NO. 2) BILL

Bill to provide for the establishment and management of the Heritage and Stabilisation Fund and for matters related thereto, brought from the House of Representatives [*The Minister in the Ministry of Finance*]; read the first time.

FINANCE (VARIATION OF APPROPRIATION) (2006) BILL

Bill to vary the appropriation of the sum the issue of which was authorized by the Appropriation Act, 2006, brought from the House of Representatives [*The Minister in the Ministry of Finance*]; read the first time.

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

Question put and agreed to.

PAPER LAID

The Administrative Report of the Arima Borough Corporation for the period October 2004 to September 2005. [*The Minister of Local Government (Sen. The Hon. Rennie Dumas)*]

CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION (AMDT.) BILL

Bill to amend the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act, 1999 [*The Attorney General*]; read the first time.

ARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

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

Agreed to.

FINANCE (VARIATION OF APPROPRIATION) (2006) BILL

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

That a Bill to vary the appropriation of the sum the issue of which was authorized by the Appropriation Act, 2006 be now read a second time.

Madam President, it is a requirement each year that the Government close accounts and this is usually done at the end of January. When we came to the Parliament at the level of the budget debate, we indicated that there were some provisional results and what we are seeking today—is after the Ministry of Finance went through its exercise for the period and looked at all the transactions, it is now necessary for us to close the books so that the Auditor General can in fact start the exercise that is required. Therefore, our exercise today is simply to advise the Parliament on a number of things.

Madam President, the Finance Committee of the House of Representatives met on Wednesday, January 17, 2007 and agreed and approved a number of proposals with respect to the accounts for fiscal year 2006. The proposals broadly encompass the following:

1. Variation of the 2006 Appropriation;
2. Write-off of losses approved by Cabinet in fiscal year 2006;
3. Transfer of funds between Sub-heads of the same Head of Expenditure.

The Variation of the 2006 Appropriation in the sum of \$81,435,697—which is what the variation was—relates to five Heads of Expenditure:

Decrease in Head 42—Ministry of Local Government—\$81,435,697

Increases in Head 13—Office of the Prime Minister—\$32,000,000

Head 18—Ministry of Finance—\$17,561,509

Head 46—Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs—\$21,886,434

Head 55—Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs—\$9,987,754

Madam President, the purpose of this variation (of the 2006 Appropriation) is to bring to account by way of retiring warrants issued for advances from Treasury Deposits to meet expenditure for which funds were not allocated in the 2006 Budget. These advances were made to the Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, and Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs.

The increase of \$32 million to the Office of the Prime Minister is to bring to account expenditure funded from Treasury Deposits to reward the 24 members of the national senior football team, 3 assistant coaches, 9 members of the technical staff and 14 members of the squad who were not selected for Germany for the team's performance in the World Cup in Germany.

In the case of the Ministry of Finance, the increase of \$17,561,509 is to bring to account expenditure funded from Treasury Deposits to meet Government's indebtedness to the National Petroleum Company Limited for the supply of petroleum products to ministries and departments, as at September 30, 2005.

National Petroleum had decided to terminate the existing arrangements for the supply of petroleum products for government-owned vehicles due primarily to inefficiencies in the system, including difficulties experienced by the company in submitting bills promptly to its clients.

As a consequence, it outsourced its debt collection system to a firm called Manufacturers Credit and Information Services (MCIS). This firm, in collaboration with Scotia Bank, introduced a motor vehicle expenses and fleet management system called the Scotia Bank Fleet Card Facility using MCIS propriety software called Advance Systems. However, as the necessary legislative amendments were not in place for the Advance Systems to be implemented in the public service, Cabinet in February 2006 agreed that as an interim measure, an advance of \$17,561,508.12 be made from Treasury Deposits to clear all arrears due to National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited as at September 30, 2005.

The \$21,886,434 increase for the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs is to bring to account expenditure funded from Treasury Deposits to meet expenditure incurred in the preparation of the National Senior Football Team for the World Cup in Germany 2006. This support was given in accordance with a decision taken by Cabinet in March 2006 to financially support the Trinidad and Tobago National Senior Football Team in respect of its preparation and participation in the World Cup 2006 in Germany.

The increase of \$9,987,754 for the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs is required to bring to account expenditure funded to support a contingent of 129 persons who participated in cultural activities associated with the World Cup in Germany over the period June 07 to 22, 2006.

In May 2006, Cabinet agreed that a Trinidad and Tobago contingent of 129 persons, comprising of six public officials, cultural practitioners and technical support personnel, participate in cultural activities associated with the 2006 World

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Cup held in Dortmund, Nuremburg and Kaiserlautern, Germany, over the period June 07 to 22, 2006. The sum of \$9,987,754 which was required to cover the cost of participation of the cultural contingent was sourced from Treasury Deposits.

The Finance Committee agreed to fund the retirement of the four warrants by transferring the amount of \$81,435,697 from the Ministry of Local Government where funds are available. What this basically means is that on the basis of the allocations that were provided by Heads as at September 30, 2006 when the financial year closed, these were moneys that were not expended and therefore we refer to those as savings.

Savings are available under the Ministry as a result of the non-settlement of negotiations between the Chief Personnel Officer and the National Union of Government and Federated Workers (NUGFW) for a new industrial wage agreement for daily-rated staff in the public service. It should be noted that an indicative provision was made in fiscal 2006 in anticipation of a settlement of the negotiations; since then this has been settled.

The Finance Committee also agreed to the write-off of the sum of \$183,845.43. This sum represents:

- (i) overpayment of salary to a former Principal II and former Assistant teacher of the Ministry of Education; and
- (ii) balance outstanding by a retired Public Health Nurse on the sale of Government quarters located in Siparia.

Madam President, I now refer to: Transfer of Funds between Sub-heads of the same Head of Expenditure. No additional amounts were expended, simply a movement between one Head and the other.

With effect from August 01, 1988 Cabinet delegated its authority to approve transfers between Sub-heads to the Minister of Finance when it agreed, among other things, as follows: Requests for transfer of funds between separate Sub-heads under the same Head of Expenditure should no longer be submitted for the Cabinet but can be decided by the Minister of Finance on the advice of the Budget Division.

Consequently, in fiscal year 2006 the hon. Minister of Finance approved the transfer of funds in the sum of \$466,210,912 between Sub-heads under the same Head of Expenditure. It should be noted that the transfers were approved by the Minister of Finance based on notes from the respective Ministers requesting the transfer. It should also be noted that these transfers are requested simply to reflect changed circumstances in ministries and departments and a consequential reordering of priorities. They do not in any way increase the total Appropriation.

A statement showing the transfers approved by the Minister of Finance and explanations for some of the more significant transfers were attached as Appendices of the document that was circulated to Members of this honourable Senate.

Madam President, hon. Members are also asked to note that in September 2006, the Ministry of Finance revised its revenue projection for fiscal 2006 to \$38,687.6 million. Consequently, expenditure was forecasted at \$38,107.5 million, resulting in an anticipated surplus of \$580.1 million; this was what we reported. This position was communicated to Parliament at the time of the presentation of the 2006 Budget on October 04, 2006.

Based on the Ministry of Finance's data on the provisional fiscal outturn for 2006—that is after we have taken into account all the transactions that resulted as a result of the various reconciliations and so on—the position is that overall spending was \$37,231.7 million and total revenue was \$38,759.7 million, yielding for the year just ended an overall fiscal surplus of \$1.528 billion. This surplus is \$947.9 million greater than that projected at the time of the preparation of the 2007 Budget. Revenue exceeded the revised provision by \$72.1 million while actual expenditure was \$875.8 million lower than the revised allocation.

Some of the reasons for these changes are as follows: There were higher than anticipated receipts from:

- (i) Green Fund to the tune of \$62.1 million;
- (ii) Taxes on Goods and Services in the amount of \$312.9 million; and
- (iii) Taxes on International Trade in the amount of \$101.6 million.

However, the improved collections were partially offset by among other things, lower than projected collections with respect to Unemployment Levy to the tune of some \$39 million, other companies of \$30.5 million and non-tax revenue in the amount of \$367.3 million. The improved collections in the Green Fund have been attributed to the growth in the gross revenue of companies in the energy sector as a group, and more so with the oil exploration and production companies.

In the case of Taxes on Goods and Services, the positive variance of \$312.9 receipts, net of refunds, from Value Added Taxes of \$275.4 million, was occasioned by buoyant demand conditions especially in the energy and construction sectors. These companies, of course, have been making significant investment in plant and equipment. Taxes on International Trade exceeded projections by \$101.6 million. This was attributed to the increased activity in the construction industry, which resulted in higher than anticipated importation of heavy equipment and construction materials.

The revised expenditure, on the other hand, was projected at \$38,107.5 million, whereas the actual amount spent was \$37,231.7 million, which reflected a shortfall of \$875.8 million or 2.3 per cent, which can be disaggregated as follows: insofar as Recurrent Expenditure is concerned, \$407.8 million or 46.6 per cent—that is where savings came—and in terms of Capital Expenditure, \$468 million or 53.4 per cent.

In terms of Recurrent Expenditure, the primary areas of lower than projected expenditure were in Personnel Expenditure in the sum of \$69.8 million; Other Goods and Services to the tune of \$140.6 million; Current Transfers in the amount of \$165.3 million; Acquisition of Physical Capital Assets of \$41.6 million and the Tobago House of Assembly to the tune of \$81.2 million.

In the case of Personnel Expenditure, lower levels of expenditure were recorded because: vacant posts were not filled—an annual problem; increments not paid, and administrative delays in the finalization of acting arrangements and settlement of arrears to public servants. Expenditure under Other Goods and Services were lower than projected by \$140.6 million.

The main reasons for the shortfall in expenditure within Other Goods and Services were:

- the late submission of claims to the Ministry of National Security and the Ministry of Public Administration for the Rent/Lease vehicles and equipment. What this basically means is that it is a timing issue and that these things will be paid in the new financial year;
- the non-materialization of the payment of fees for legal services by the Ministry of the Attorney General and the Ministry of Public Administration and Information;
- the late submission of claims by MTS for the security of schools to the Ministry of Education;
- funds allocated to the Ministry of Tourism for publicity promotions and printing in relation to the hosting of the Tourism Park Exhibition at Macoya, while budgeted or allocated, were in fact, not used;
- lower than anticipated expenditure on minor equipment, which was due mainly to continued delays with the implementation of the computerization of primary schools by the Ministry of Education.

With respect to Current Transfers, there were areas in which actual expenditure exceeded the revised projections and others in which expenditure was lower, yielding an overall lower level of expenditure of \$165.4 million.

In the case of Other Transfers—another area—a higher than projected transfer was made to the Regional Health Authorities. The areas in which expenditure was lower than projected were households and educational institutions. Within households, lower than projected expenditure was recorded with respect to public officers pensions and gratuities, old age pensions and social assistance. In addition, administrative delays in awarding contracts under the Textbook Rental Loan Programme and the finalization of the operational procedures for the Higher Education Loan Programme resulted in lower than anticipated expenditure.

Transfers to Statutory Boards and similar bodies were below the projected level by \$42.4 million. For example, the transfer to the Tobago House of Assembly was lower than projected by some \$81.3 million because of delays in the settlement of new salary agreement for the period 2002—2007 and the establishment of the daily-paid pension plan. This was partially offset by higher levels of expenditure in a wide cross section of statutory boards.

The spending under Development Programme was below the projected level by some \$468 million or 8.9 per cent and is disaggregated as follows:

- Consolidated Fund, \$300.5 million;
- Infrastructure Development Fund, \$167.5 million.

The lower than projected expenditure, again, Madam President, was mainly as a result of delays by contractors to submit invoices for verification and contracts not being finalized by the date by which the accounts were closed, September 30, 2006.

The fiscal outcome for 2006 clearly demonstrates that the Government continues to prudently manage the nation's resources. We deposited \$5.75 billion into the Infrastructure Development Fund of which \$3 billion was expended. We deposited approximately \$3.2 billion into the Revenue Stabilization Fund, and we registered an overall surplus on the Fiscal Account of over \$1.5 billion.

Madam President, once these appropriation variations are in fact debated, this will then set the stage for us to prepare the final set of accounts to be audited by the Auditor General and it will form the basis for the annual exercise that we are mandated to do in providing to the Parliament, when next we meet, a detail of actual spent, moneys actually used and explanations of any variations. It is at that time that the details are in fact made available to the Parliament.

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On this occasion what is required is before we close the accounts for us to advise the Parliament of where there were variations; where there were transfers and that the Parliament approves these transactions.

With those few comments, I beg to move.

Question proposed.

Sen. Wade Mark: Thank you very much, Madam President. May I on behalf of the Front Bench warmly extend our congratulations to the hon. Camille Robinson-Regis [*Desk thumping*] on the delivery of two healthy baby girls and we wish the Minister and her daughters the best of health and happiness.

On another note, which is somewhat a sad one, we wish on this side to record our collective shock and horror over the brutal assassination of a young police constable by the name of Elizabeth Sutherland, her husband, daughter and another friend last evening at Pelican Extension. A young child who was in the house, we understand, is still missing. We hope that the death of this police officer and her family and particularly the police officer, will not go unpunished like that of the PNM former councillor, Bert Arlette, where no one has been apprehended to date.

We are living in dangerous times and I believe that the regime continues to be in deep slumber whilst this nation continues to be under the fire of the bandits. We have to be careful that we do not become consumed in an unending cycle of violence.

2.00 p.m.

Madam President, it is against this background that I would like to make my contribution on the Finance (Variation of Appropriation) (2006) Bill, 2007. Madam President, this Bill attempts to vary the appropriation provided for by the Appropriation Act, 2006, No. 29 of 2005 as amended by the Finance (Supplementation and Variation of Appropriation) Act No. 11 of 2006 and the Finance (Supplementary Appropriation) Act, No. 20 of 2006, respectively, and to authorize the utilization of any sums accruing from a reduction in expenditure under certain Heads of Expenditure for the purpose of meeting any liability incurred through the increase in expenditure under other Heads.

Madam President, as you would know, what the Government is attempting to do and always belatedly—we are always in a mad rush to get Government business through because of ineptness, lack of planning, lack of organization and lack of foresight. So we are told by the hon. Minister of Finance that they need to close their books in accordance with the laws of the country and to do so there are certain retirements that must take place and we have seen what those areas are about.

In the first instance we have a shifting of expenditure in order to balance the books from one Head to four Heads. In this instance we are told that the Ministry of Local Government has had its allocation reduced by some \$81.4 million and that \$81.4 million has been reallocated through increases to the office of the Prime Minister in the sum of \$32 million; the Ministry of Finance \$17.6 million; the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs \$21.9 million and the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs, some \$9.987 million. But what is also significant, Madam President, is that apart from the shifting of allocations from one Head to another there is also a significant virement of expenditure of allocation of resources that was legitimately approved by this Parliament, on what we consider to be proper budgeting processes and procedures by the Minister of Finance and the respective Ministers through their ministries, only to be told through this variation that they did not budget properly and what happened is that some \$466 million are now being vired within subheads of ministries.

That tells us something is radically wrong with budgeting in this country, it tells us that there is a lack of planning on the part of this administration. It is not \$100 million; it is not \$50 million, it is almost half a billion dollars. But as usual this is the PNM, this is a Government that operates by vaps, this is a Government that does not pay any attention to the principles of accountability and transparency.

Madam President, I will demonstrate in my contribution today where apart from the Parliament being used as the plaything—the playground of the ruling party—they know they have an inbuilt majority, they know that for instance this Parliament cannot object or vote against a money Bill; we cannot defeat it, so as usual they do not care, they bring it when they want, when they like, they know that the end of the month is a couple days from now and in accordance with the law, they have to bring this to close the books. What we will demonstrate today, is apart from a lack of proper budgetary planning on the part of this Government and I refute completely the inaccurate statement alluded to have been made a short while ago by the Minister in the Ministry of Finance that this Government has been engaged in prudent management. Nothing could be further from the truth and the evidence is quite clear.

Madam President: Are you reading, Senator?

Sen. W. Mark: I thought if I read, Madam President, you will see a big file. *[Laughter]* I am not reading. You know me, I am an old veteran. I have my pointers.

Madam President: All right.

Sen. W. Mark: I have my pointers.

Madam President: Accepted.

Sen. W. Mark: So, Madam President, what is taking place is that we will demonstrate through our contributions that there has been a series of cost overruns on many projects, particularly when we come to the area of virements within subheads, and what that means, Madam President, is that extravagance, waste and recklessness continue to haunt this administration. That is what it means. Scarce financial resources are being used in a most unintelligent manner, I would say.

Madam President, when you misallocate scarce financial resources and there is no accountability, there is no criminal liability; there are no liquidity damages, it is the ordinary people that suffer. I am sorry that the Attorney General is not here, he is always talking about corruption and what it does to the country. Mismanagement and reckless spending, waste and extravagance is even worst than corruption in many instances! You know why, Madam President, it goes unpunished. It goes unpunished! And sometimes undetected, and as I develop my points I will give you some instances of this.

Madam President, I refer you to the actual document that was sent to all of us, as you know we got it, it is a Senate document and I will deal with the first aspect which deals with the transfer from one Head to another Head, involving some \$81 million. Well, I understand it came from the Ministry of the hon. Minister of Local Government ministry, whose ministry seems to be in an over supply mode in terms of poor budgeting. Because if you can extract \$81 million from local government and the pretext is that there was no finalization of negotiations between local government and the NUGFW through the Personnel Department, that is the Chief Personnel Officer, so hence, there was an excess amount of moneys and all came out of one ministry, the Ministry of Local Government—and this is at a time when local government is starved of funds as you are aware.

Madam President, this Government has little confidence in its people, when you look at what happened with the transfer from local government to the following ministries, it will tell you that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago never expected Trinidad and Tobago to even qualify in the first instance, not to mention the fact that we ended up in Germany. It was always the view of the optimists and those persons who were committed to seeing Trinidad and Tobago reach the finals including the players, the coach and of course the advisor to the

TTFA. So here in June the Government of Trinidad and Tobago noted the outstanding performance of the national senior team and through that process they decided to provide them, and it is stated here, Madam President, with rewards and the total sum as you would see amounts to some \$32 million. That was in June 2006.

And, Madam President, you would see to whom they gave the moneys in terms of the \$32 million—nothing for Jack Warner; not a cent for Jack Warner because as far as the Government is concerned he is an enemy of the PNM. So, Madam President, \$32 million to the players, to the coaches, but Jack Austin Warner, the real brainchild, the man who has been in the forefront of this struggle in order to see this country qualify, not a cent, not a contribution, not even a thank you note from this Government. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Dr. Mc Kenzie: What about Bertille St. Clair?

Sen. W. Mark: And what about Bertille St. Clair? Nothing for him, he was in the forefront too. What about him? No recognition, no contribution, selective discrimination. This is what this Government is about. Selective discrimination! Because Jack Austin Warner is a deputy political leader of the UNC and they see him as an opponent of the PNM and therefore they say "nothing for Jack". Make a distinction between Jack Warner, the UNC and his contribution to national development in Trinidad and Tobago! You cannot make that distinction! [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: It is good that Sen. Titus acknowledges the fact that Bertille St. Clair—

Sen. W. Mark: It is good that my good friend—calypsonian “Axe back” he is known as in Tobago but in this Parliament he is known as Sen. The Hon. Rawle Titus—has acknowledged the contribution that Bertille St. Clair has made. [*Interruption*] And I would imagine that by the sounding of the desk he demonstrated somewhat his disagreement with how the Government has treated with Bertille St. Clair. [*Desk thumping*] That is all I can assume from that.

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: Yes, but stand and say what is wrong.

Sen. W. Mark: So, Madam President, that is one aspect of it. We have no objection to our players, the coaches and all the participants in the World Cup finals getting some rewards. We applauded the Government on that, but why leave out Austin Jack Warner? Why? Up to now they cannot give us an explanation. In spite, wickedness and vindictiveness on the part of this regime! Nothing more, that is what it is. [*Interruption*] But do not worry—

Sen. Jeremie, S.C.: Why are you all pointing at me? [*Laughter*]

Sen. W. Mark: Madam President, so apart from the Prime Minister making his contribution we now go to the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance as you saw here got \$17.6 million and that is to deal with indebtedness to NP. I would like the Minister of Finance—where is he? Is he tired? I know he was out until one this morning; I hope Minister Dr. Lenny Saith is taking notes [*Interruption*] or the Minister in the Ministry of Finance is taking notes?

Hon. Senator: We got it down.

Sen. W. Mark: I know you are not contesting election again, you get the message; you are not going. Madam President, I would like to know the names of people or directors in the firm called Manufactures Credit and Information Services; [*Interruption*] we would like to know who comprised this organization; hence where did it come from? We want to get some background knowledge and we hope that the Minister would be able to supply us with that information because they seem to be working in cahoots with Scotia Bank, so we want to know what is the link between Scotia Bank and this company called MCIS. We want to know the names of the directors; we want to know what functions they perform; where did they come from; how long have they been in existence, Madam President.

Madam President, we go on to the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, again \$21 million allocated to them, again bonuses; who can object to that? We are happy for bonuses; why leave out Jack Warner? Why leave out Austin Jack Warner in the bonuses again? I know that you are troubled, my friend. With all the murders around you, you have to be a troubled man. [*Interruption*]

Madam President, so \$22 million, as I said for technical staff for qualification bonuses. Fine! Players got money; technical staff got money, et cetera, et cetera. [*Interruption*]

And then we come to this indomitable “fighter; tireless figure” called Minister Joan Yuille-Williams and I see where your Ministry got \$10 million. I compliment that Ministry for getting all this money to send 129 people—

Sen. Abdul-Hamid: We are proud.

Sen. W. Mark: What I want is a breakdown; we want a breakdown of how this money was expended. We have no problem in a cultural contingent going to Germany, but do not give us any round figure here! We want to know who are these people who went; how they were selected; what kind of money was

allocated to each of them; and we want to know if there was any waste, extravagance and reckless spending in this thing. Whether they went on a joyride and what happened to De Fosto—why did you leave out De Fosto? And it took Jack Austin Warner to provide De Fosto with a ticket to go to Germany. Why did you leave out De Fosto?

Sen. Dr. Kernahan: “The Original De Fosto”.

Sen. W. Mark: It was again, selective discrimination! [*Interruption*] So we want Minister Joan Yuille-Williams to get up here today and give this Parliament proper accountability. We want a breakdown of how this money was spent. [*Desk thumping*] Who went, do not just give me 129; I want all the names of those people; I want to know where they stayed; I want to know how much money they were paid; what was their stipend, everything. Give us! This is what the Parliament is about; accountability! [*Interruption*] And we want that information this evening, Madam President.

Sen. Yuille-Williams: So you are demanding it for this evening?

Sen. W. Mark: “Yeah”. And then I am coming back to you because I see where in the transfers another \$3 million to \$4 million went to your ministry. To do what! Send them on a European tour with Minister Valley; \$4 million. We want some details on these matters.

So, Madam President, here it is we are seeing what is happening with our moneys. As I said, the Government did not expect us to win, that is, to qualify. They did not expect us to do well in Germany and we did well, and the Government was shocked. They rode the backs of the footballers, politically, when they got back to Trinidad and Tobago but they left out Jack Warner. So we want some explanations from the hon. Minister on these matters.

Madam President, may I ask you to look at the second aspect of this matter that is before us. That is the transfer of funds [*Interruption*] and we need to get some answers, in terms of vacant posts that the Government has failed to fill, over \$55 million we have estimated that was budgeted and was simply transferred from one subhead to another subhead in the various ministries that requested transfers through their respective Ministers, close to about \$55 million to \$56 million. You have a lot of posts that you come to this Parliament to seek approval, and before the financial year is complete, the Government, through the Ministers, they vired their resources from one subhead to another subhead and therefore there were no filling of those vacancies, and my colleague says the Public Service Commission.

Sen. Dr. Saith: Do you know why?

Sen. W. Mark: Yes, but I am saying, Madam President, why put every year moneys into this arrangement and you know the Public Service Commission will not approve it? So what are you doing every year?

Sen. Enill: You do not know that.

Sen. W. Mark: Madam President, that is one of the areas that I think we will need to have—that is where several millions were transferred from one subhead to another subhead.

The Ministry of National Security, you would note in Appendix I under Statement of Transfers, you will see where the Ministry of National Security did not—it seems like there is no planning taking place in that ministry.

[*Sen. Joseph steups*]

And that is why he is always sucking his gum and teeth, he does not listen. [*Interruption*] Yes, but \$400,000 was supposed to employ people, he was supposed to employ a director, if I am not mistaken, Madam President, in accordance with the note that we got here explaining these moneys and why they were in fact transferred from one area to another area. Why did the Ministry of National Security transfer moneys? The reason why, they were supposed to recruit an Outreach Manager for the so-called MILAT programme—specialized military youth programme—and they did not do it, so they saved \$200,000 as a result. Then they were supposed to recruit an executive director to deal with Penal Reform and Transformation Secretariat, that again they allocated \$200,000; again, they were not able to recruit this particular director. Why? Was it the Public Service Commission here too, Madam President? Was it the Public Service Commission that prevented you from recruiting your executive director and your outreach manager?

Because you blamed the Public Service Commission conveniently! Was it a public service job here? We would like to know because penal reform is critical in this country and you need somebody to drive the process. You came to Parliament and you pleaded with us to support you; we supported you and one year later you took the money, and do you know what you did with it? The Minister went on a joyride; overseas travels.

Sen. Joseph: For whom, the Minister?

Sen. W. Mark: You! They say some steelband you went with to America.

Sen. Joseph: I did not go with any steelband.

Sen. W. Mark: Did you go?

Sen. Joseph: No.

Sen. W. Mark: You did not go. All right, he said he did not go. [*Laughter*] He said he did not go, he did not go with the steelband; it is some army band that went on some joyride, and he say it is not him. Madam President, ask him, let him give us a breakdown of the \$400,000. How was it spent? All we saw was some steelband army side got a couple thousand to make up to go to America, “Tattoo ceremony”.

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: “Oh” the army.

Sen. W. Mark: The army, and then the rest now, we do not know where it went, so let the Minister rise at the appropriate time and tell the Parliament where the other \$350,000 went. [*Laughter*] Did you travel? Let us know, we need to know.

Then agriculture, they bring down Cubans, I have nothing against the Cubans, but we have excellent farmers here in Trinidad and Tobago. You know what they are doing, Madam President, under the transfers, they took from the Agricultural Incentive programme \$8 million and they transferred it to Other Contract Services. We do not know what they are talking about. What are these other contract services?—\$20 million; and the Sugarcane Research Extension Support Services they moved out \$21 million. Well, Madam President, we now know why they have done that. They executed Caroni in 2003 and they say it is a matter of time, they are talking about an exit strategy for the sugarcane industry. So they canned the workers, they “lick-up” Caroni (1975) Limited and now they are getting rid of the cane farming community. That is the PNM.

Madam President, so whereas we are talking about agriculture and the need for us to plant food in a period where we are talking about a world food shortage, instead of giving the farmers incentives they take the money away from the farmers to deal with what? Other contract services and land acquisition. I do not know what they mean by that. [*Interruption*]

But you did not budget for that? You did not budget for that, Madam President? This ought to be something budgeted! You must plan, you must know what you are going to do the following year; sometimes you have contingencies, we know it, but something like this—land acquisition—you have to come and take money from Agricultural Incentives Programme to give it to land acquisition purposes.

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Madam President, I am really disturbed by this regime and how they go about bungling and fumbling—[*Interruption*] they are in a state of collapse, you know, this is a regime that is in a state of semi collapse. It is almost about to die you know. Only a matter of time for you, you know, everybody knows it! [*Interruption*] The masses are eager to go to the polls and get rid of this albatross called the PNM; they want you out bad—even public officers, I understand, they have started the countdown, they say, “Oh God liberation is around the corner” PNM gone!

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: Even PNM supporters.

Sen. W. Mark: Ask me, you know that! Even PNM supporters are coming to us, they are fed up of you all. [*Interruption*] Yes. [*Laughter*] I hear they already buy you. [*Laughter*]

So, Madam President, when you look at the transfers you will see where matters that we supported, and they told us to support in the Parliament, you realize they did not execute their responsibility. What about the Ministry of Labour, Small and Micro Enterprise Development, Madam President? You saw \$400,000 gone. I have no problem with NATUC and FITUN! [*Interruption*] You looked at it? Four hundred thousand! But that is something that you ought to anticipate because we started that when we were in government, we gave to the trade union movement a contribution every year, we called it a subvention. You will tell me that the Government is in office, Madam President, for almost five years and they did not know that they had to budget an allocation to NATUC and to FITUN.

Sen. Montano: How much you give FITUN?

Sen. W. Mark: So, Madam President, you know what happened? Moneys that were supposed to go towards the training of some 38 health and safety officers because they did not recruit these health and safety officers in order to effect the Occupational Safety and Health Act, [*Interruption*] you know what has happened? They have taken that money away from health and safety and they have given it to FITUN and NATUC. [*Interruption*] I have no problem with giving money to NATUC or to FITUN; all I am saying is plan. Plan properly, that is all I am asking. [*Interruption*] But the poor, hapless Minister of Labour, Small and Micro Enterprise Development he does not understand what this thing is about.

Sen. Montano: You should be ashamed to—[*Inaudible*]

Sen. W. Mark: But anyway, I know he is on his way out and we will send him sailing on his beautiful yacht to South America, just now—

Sen. Montano: You should be ashamed!

Sen. W. Mark:—it is only a matter of time. So, Madam President, I continue whilst I hear mumbling on the next side; [*Interruption*] rumbling and mumbling.

Sen. Dr. Kernahan: How many ministries?

Sen. W. Mark: Yes, he has the dubious distinction of being in five ministries in five years.

Hon. Senator: “Wha”?

Sen. W. Mark: A non-performer!

Hon. Senator: I was not kicked out.

Sen. Dr. Kernahan: And he is talking about you should be ashamed. [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. W. Mark: Anyway, Madam President, so we continue. [*Interruption*] Madam President, let us continue. There are many people in this Parliament who we will not see in the next Parliament. You are one of them, Mustapha. [*Laughter*] “You gone, you know. You think is joke? You gone!” [*Interruption*]

Madam President, may I continue? [*Interruption*] Let us go to the Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment [*Interruption*] and you will see again what is taking place. [*Interruption*] Madam President, you will see where Current Transfers and Subsidies—the Community-based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP)—we are seeing where the Government decided to reduce allocation to this programme by \$2 million and they transferred it to other areas, as you would note in this particular statement of transfers. And you know, one gets the impression that the Government did that because it was the correct thing to do. They did not tell us that the reason they did that had to do with a report that was prepared by the Auditor General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on this very said programme. It was on the basis of this report that the Government was forced to review that allocation that they wanted to put toward the (CEPEP) programme.

2.30 p.m.

Madam President, we believe that the Attorney General who always talks and boasts about being this crime buster, this anti-corruption buster, I think the time has come for us to have an independent forensic enquiry into the operations of the CEPEP programme in Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*] Since this regime came to power, they have been boasting about transparency and accountability,

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but this Government has demonstrated in the last five years an infinite capacity for cronyism, nepotism and corruption of the worst type. Why is the Attorney General not taking steps to address this question?

So, we are seeing where this Government reduced the allocation to the CEPEP by \$2 million. But you know what, Madam President. The Auditor General is saying that between 2002 to the end of 2004, this Government spent close to \$400 million on this particular programme. No accountability, and the Minister in the Ministry of Finance should be taking note of this. Why is the Government not acting on the Auditor General's report? What action has the Government taken to deal with the Auditor General's report on this matter? And you have a Minister getting up in Parliament and in the newspaper boasting to the country that it is a known fact that my father is a CEPEP contractor. I mean to say, that is so disgraceful. You think I could be a Minister in this Government or in any government and employ my father? You know what Sen. Dr. Lenny Saith would say? You know what Minister Martin Joseph would say? Nepotism, corruption, jail Wade Mark! Now you have a Minister in the Public Utilities Ministry beating her chest and telling the whole world, "It is a known fact that my father, Mr. Lionel Beckles is a CEPEP contractor."

Madam President, where are we going with this? This is corruption to the highest order. This is nepotism! This is using your public office to advance your private interest, which is against the Integrity legislation in our country. You know what is sad about it? It is not just the Minister of Public Utilities, it is not only her. We got information from under the Freedom of Information Act because we were having difficulty getting the information from the Ministry itself. So we went directly to the Freedom of Information Act and we made an application as to what is taking place between 2003 to 2005. Marva Bostic, a San Fernando councillor. She is a councillor or some alderman or an activist.

Sen. Yuille-Williams: On a point of order. I just want to correct you; Marva Bostic is not a member of the San Fernando City Corporation Council.

Sen. W. Mark: Is she a PNM activist, Madam Minister? Madam Minister, could you tell this Parliament if Marva—[*Interruption*]

Sen. Yuille-Williams: She is not a councillor or alderman or anything like that.

Sen. W. Mark: Is she the assistant secretary of the PNM Women's League? Could you tell this Parliament if she is an assistant secretary? Madam President, all I am saying to you, and this honourable Parliament, this lady who is a top

ranking PNM official, who testified before the Elections and Boundaries Commission enquiry under Deyalsingh, she came there and talked about voter padding, that lady is a manager at LABIDCO getting thousands of thousands of dollars a month. While she is getting that money, she has a contract and she is a CEPEP contractor. Between 2002 and 2003, to the end of 2005, she collected \$4.4 million; it is here in black and white, Marva Bostic.

Madam President, this is a PNM activist. So the CEPEP programme as the Auditor General showed in her report is a slush fund for PNM. Because no tendering processes, no selection processes, it is Ray Braithwaite, the Executive Chairman, beats his chest and he says, "I am the czar of SWMCOL and I can hire who I want and I can fire who I want." The only people he is hiring, are PNM activists. Another one called Ainsley Matthews. He has a company called, Ansa Maintenance Limited and is a San Fernando West PNM activist. Between 2002 to 2003, he got \$2.9 million. An activist, he got that. I do not even know if I could ever work for that whilst being a parliamentarian here for five years, and a man in two years, he collected \$2.9 million. Marva Bostic is a rich woman; \$4.1 million, Joe. Joe, you could ever get that? Minister Joseph, you could ever work for that?

Madam President: Would you give way, Senator?

Sen. Joseph: No, I cannot work for that. Madam President, on a point of order. Just for clarification, the Senator is giving the impression that these CEPEP contractors individually are getting approximately \$4 million or \$2 million. There are teams of which it is that employees and companies, et cetera.

Sen. W. Mark: Well give us a breakdown. We will give you a chance to give us a breakdown.

Sen. Joseph: So to say that an individual is getting that amount of money, is to misinform, not just this House, but the general population.

Sen. W. Mark: Well, let him tell us what is the breakdown.

Madam President: I agree with the Minister. I was coming to the same conclusion myself in that the way it is being put over, Senator, you are giving the impression these people are actually getting that sum of money for themselves, when in fact, it is for contract out of which they have to pay other people, et cetera. I think that point needs to be clarified for the population.

Sen. W. Mark: Yes, thank you very much, Madam. Madam President, the principle is what I am dealing with here. And in the principle, how can you employ without a proper transparent process? How are you able to employ only

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PNM activists to gain access to the CEPEP programme? So, whether you get a million, half a million, 3 million, 4 million, that is not so much the issue. The issue is how come you only have CEPEP contractors employed and they are activists of the PNM?

Sen. Dumas: [*Inaudible*]

Sen. W. Mark: You will get a “Stretch”; you would thief into my time now.

Sen. Dumas: Wade, you know that you are always disobedient sometimes.

Sen. W. Mark: Madam President, these are the things that we want to get information on. And if the hon. Minister of National Security, who seems to be in the know, could give us a breakdown of all the costs before we leave here this afternoon, we will be very happy. We will ask the Minister to do that for us because he seems to have more information than we have, so could you kindly get that for us, Sir, because we have been trying very hard and we cannot get it.

Kathy Ann Cardinal Austin, PNM San Fernando activist. Madam President, if I may, 2002/2003, \$401,000; 2003/2004, \$1.2 million; 2004/2005, she got \$1.3 million; in all, \$2.9 million for the period in question. That is what we have here.

Alvin Reyes, Madam President, through you, Sen. The Hon. Joan Yuille-Williams. Alvin Reyes, IC, San Fernando City Councillor, PNM. Over the period, he collected on behalf of his company as a contractor which will include payment to employees, he collected \$3.0 million; \$3 million this person collected. He is a PNM councillor, employed as a PNM councillor and he has a CEPEP contract. What is Sen. Dr. Lenny Saith doing about this? What is Sen. Dr. Lenny Saith doing about it?

You have Maniedeo Persad, his brother is a big High Commissioner in India having a great time. I am happy for the “fella”. But you know while he is having a ball in India at our expense, his brother is having a ball here. His brother is having a big party in Trinidad, you will think he is big head, a swaha. You understand, Madam President? Look at him.

Derva Enviro Limited, Prakash Persad, \$1.8 million in three years and that does not include 2005; it does not include 2006 and 2007. So by the end of 2007, he would have doubled that, and he might go home with about \$3 million at the end of the day.

Horace Gordon, the husband of PNM Marilyn Gordon, former Minister in the PNM government. He got a contract and at the end of 2005, his company collected on behalf of himself and his employees, \$2.9 million in three years.

What is going on here? Sen. Dr. Lenny Saith, this is crookery; this is theft; this is corruption, you need to investigate this matter. You need to send somebody to jail; somebody must get locked up for this. [*Desk thumping*] It is too much corruption. Poor people are dying in this country. They cannot get food to eat; they cannot get proper hospital facilities and you have one person “making mas”.

Madam President, you as President, and I as a Senator will never in 17 years, I could never gain that kind of money that those people gained here. I mean to say, I was a Senator for so long, I was getting \$4,000, they now put us up to \$10,000, that could feed people? “Like they want we come CEPEP contractors, too”. [*Laughter*] To get rich in this country, all you have to do is get a CEPEP contract and you would get \$5 million just so, or join the PNM and get a party card.

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: And you get a house. You get a house and you get party card.

Sen. W. Mark: Madam President, GP Maintenance Limited, St. Clair Williams, San Fernando East activist from the Prime Minister's constituency. Over the three-year period, he collected \$3 million in three years. Minister of Local Government, you think that is fair? You do not even work for that.

High Place Enterprises Limited, Stanley Butcher, brother of Ken Butcher, campaign manager for Barataria/San Juan, \$4.4 million. Madam President, would you believe that? Stanley Butcher, \$4.4 million.

Perry Eastman from Mr. Valley's constituency, Diego Martin Central. Well, he is small, he is getting pittance, for three years they gave him \$400,000. He is not in the million-dollar league, that is only for San Fernando West activists, but for Diego Martin activists, they are getting \$400,000.

Sen. Dr. Kernahan: Small fry.

Sen. W. Mark: Small fry. Well, I know this “fella” good, he is a good boy. At one time he was a UNC, then he went across to the PNM and then I believe he will become a UNC once we get back in power. He is a “fella” called M&S Community Maintenance Limited, Barataria PNM activist, McDonald Padmore. A nice “fella”. [*Interruption*] Well, he is a PNM because he has a contract here and for the period 2002 to 2003, to the end of 2005, he collected on behalf of his company and his employees—and Madam President, I must let you know, an employee takes home on a daily basis \$64. They take home less than \$700 a fortnight. A foreman gets \$1,125 a fortnight. So when you check the amount of

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money that these ordinary people work for in CEPEP, the contractors are going home with the bulk of the money. [*Desk thumping*] It is millions of dollars they are taking. Mackie Padmore who was once a UNC, turned across to the PNM and I am telling Mackie to come back home to the UNC because he has plenty money and we want some. He made \$2.8 million that he could share with us for the next campaign. Mackie, come back home.

Madam President, I want to ask my good friend, the hon. Joan Yuille-Williams whether she is aware of Marishaw Maintenance Services Limited? This is owned by a lady called Jennifer Marishaw, a PNM councillor in the San Fernando City Corporation. You know what she is going home with? She gone home with \$3 million.

Sen. Yuille-Williams: Why did you ask?

Sen. W. Mark: No, I wanted to know if I am making a mistake because I know that you are there to correct me.

Sen. Yuille-Williams: [*Inaudible*]

Sen. W. Mark: Yes, okay. So you have Jennifer Marishaw, a PNM councillor in the San Fernando City Corporation gone home—Sen. The Hon. Christine Sahadeo, you cannot even work for that in your lifetime.

Sen. Sahadeo: That is all right.

Madam President: Hon. Member, you have gone way over your time, so I have to take it off. Hon. Members, 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. T. Gopeesingh*]

Question put and agreed to.

Sen. W. Mark: Thank you very much, Madam President. New Image Contract and Maintenance Company, Lionel Beckles, the father of Penelope Beckles. 2002/2003, \$1.8 million; 2004/2005, \$2.3 million; between that period \$4.1 million. So Penny is happy, you know. She does not have to work after she leaves that work at all. When the PNM gets rid of her in the next election, she good for life.

Madam President: Senator!

Sen. W. Mark: Sorry, Madam President. She is going to be happy for life. May I tell you, I am ashamed that this could be happening under this administration. This administration that came on a platform of anti-corruption. They accused the UNC of being corrupt; of being engaged in nepotism, favouritism, “we thief”; all kind of things they said about the UNC. The biggest set of thieves you have in this country right now, is the PNM [*Desk thumping*] and they are doing it in broad daylight. Where is the Commissioner of Police? Where is the DPP? Where is the Integrity Commission?

Madam President, you must know this one. Nafessa Mohammed, she has a cousin called Jameel Mohammed or Mustapha, Jameel Mustapha, Sara Maintenance Company Limited. He has gone home with \$3.2 million in three years. So in Barataria/San Juan, we want to recruit him because we need some of that money Jameel to help us campaign in the next election. Oh God!

I am out of breath, I cannot continue, too much. I will have to continue later with this thing—[*Interruption*]

Madam President: [*Inaudible*]

Sen. W. Mark: Madam President, could you imagine one area of the Bill took me so long and I am exhausted and I have to leave about 50 pages to come back later. Oh God, Madam President, it is a shame that we could have this kind of thing going on under the very nose of the Minister of Public Administration and Information. And I want the Minister of Public Administration and Information and the Minister of Finance to go to the Ministry of Works and Transport, there is a slush fund set up in this Ministry and I would like the Minister and the Attorney General to investigate this. I understand that there is a company, Sen. Dr. Lenny Saith, a road paving company.

Sen. Dr. Saith: The one from [*Inaudible*]

Sen. W. Mark: They call it a pothole patching, using patching master thermal bonding. This company is owned by a “fella” called Paul Tuffer. You could imagine less than one kilometre of road—in terms of pothole he has a special piece of equipment just to go and cover potholes and in one kilometre or less, he charged us \$400,000. In fact, the correct figure is about \$336,000. What is happening here? And you know how much he has collected, Sen. Dr. Saith, for the last two and a half years? Over \$5 million. Doing what? He is just covering potholes. This is corruption. We want you to investigate corruption in the Ministry of Works and Transport. What is going on here?

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As I am on the Ministry of Works and Transport, the Minister of Finance in reading his budget speech spoke about buses, 100 buses for this country. While we are speaking about budget, the budget and 100 buses, a “fella” called Harry Ragoonanan has the contract to bring down buses and he has already brought down the buses here, without any tendering. This is corruption! We want an investigation into Harry Ragoonanan. The man is on the payroll. He has a company importing buses when we could go directly like how Sen. Dr. Saith went for the ship, Vesper Tonicroft, he went directly to England and talked to Blair. Why could we not go to Brazil and talk to President Lula so that we could get buses? Why do we want Harry Ragoonanan in the business of the PTSC? And who is this man? I think the Prime Minister must tell us about him because I heard he and the Prime Minister are very close. And we want the Prime Minister to tell us who is Harry Ragoonanan. All right, we will have much more to say about that on the hustings because we are gathering our facts on this matter.

We come to the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs. I would like to know if the Minister could tell us what this \$3.9 million was spent on. We understand that a contingent was organized to go to—we understand Europe. But we did not get a breakdown of this money and I would like to ask the hon. Minister if she can for instance provide us with a breakdown of this sum of money, \$3.9 million under official overseas travel? We call on the hon. Minister to tell us which non-profit institution received \$7.6 million. We want a breakdown of all those non-profit organizations; we want to know if they are registered or they are ghosts; we want to know what each got; and we want to know why they got it; what were they doing to get this? We would like to get that information.

As I am on this matter, I want to know, Sen. Dr. Lenny Saith, if you have two scholarship divisions in the Government of Trinidad and Tobago? One scholarship division is in the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs, it is called the Community Development Scholarship Programme. I did not know there were two sets of scholarships in this country. I thought that for instance, for transparency, equity and accountability, if I want to get a scholarship, I can go to the Ministry of Public Administration and Information through the Personnel Department, Scholarship Division when they advertise. It appears to me that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago is engaged in selective discrimination and they put under the Ministry of Culture, a Community Development Scholarship Programme, and so far, we understand that this Ministry has given assistance to approximately 82 persons according to the information that we have here.

Madam Minister, before I cast any doubt on your integrity, I would like you to come clean and tell this Parliament who are these 82 people? What criteria have you set up in order to ensure fairness, equity and transparency? Where are these people coming from? How many people know of this programme called the Community Development Scholarship Programme? Madam President, how many people know about it? When people come to me and they ask me for help, I send them to Minister Hazel Manning, Minister of Education. I will send them and then off and on I send them to the Minister of—but I really do not know how this thing operates. I do not know and the population would like to know how this situation operates.

The final point I would like to make under the Works and Transport Ministry, I see repairs to the Prime Minister's residence. I would like the Minister in the Ministry of Finance to tell us what part of this Public Sector Investment Programme, I looked at 2005/2006; I looked at 2006/2007, and it is hidden. We do not know what it is costing the taxpayers to build the residence or the palace for the Prime Minister. My understanding is that the Government is spending close to \$200 million to build that emperor palace. Am I wrong? I do not know because you cannot go here and find the information. We understand Shanghi Company was recruited by UDeCott and they only have Chinese, not one Trinidadian or Tobagonian, not one national works with that Chinese company because the Prime Minister does not trust Trinidadians. I want to get facts on the matter. Is he building a 3-storey bungalow? Let us know. Are there bunkers in the bungalow basement, to hide whom, Madam Hazel Manning? Are they expecting war? Is the Prime Minister expecting war so he has to build three basement levels?

So, Madam President, I want the hon. Minister in the Ministry of Finance to tell this Parliament, today, what is the cost of that building for the Prime Minister? What is the design of that building? Why only Chinese are working there and no nationals of this country? I feel passionate about it. We are locals, we are nationals, we put the Government in power and why must the Government deny citizens of this country jobs at the Prime Minister's residence and bring in Chinese alone to work on that project?

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

Sen. Prof. Ramesh Deosaran: Madam President, as a Member of Parliament, one cannot help but seize the opportunity to see what suggestions in addition to criticisms that one can make, to ensure that the last budget and this present request for a variation and the request for authorization of the balances left by the

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various Ministries could bring us the benefits that the population dutifully and rightfully expect. I think that is the major issue surrounding this Bill. I have looked at some of the items in this balancing document, transfers and appropriation and I believe the Government itself as an Executive and as a Cabinet really ought to be worried as to whether the population is getting the services that are required. But in saying so as I have said several times before, it is not necessarily the blame upon a particular Minister.

It seems as if we come back to this question of public administration and the linkages along the way where even if a Minister, through goodwill and sincerity of purpose expects delivery of services, these things really do not reach the people. When you hear about the variation of \$81 million and the other transfers which are quite exorbitant sums, and the Cabinet itself really should be taken back by the daily protests and the threats against the Government for shut downs and matters of that kind. We have to put a stop to this and I will like to make some comments in that regard. Of course, I will be what you can call a bit more introspective than the previous speaker. Perhaps it is my shortcoming that I do not have his enthusiasm and passion, but one of these days, I hope I will reach to that level.

Hon. Senator: You got more voting. [*Laughter*]

Sen. Prof. R. Deosaran: Well, the experience was good. You must try it sometimes. [*Laughter*]

Sen. Mark: [*Inaudible*] I do, from 73.

Sen. Prof. R. Deosaran: But what in addition to that issue of public administration and effective governance, I felt it is my duty to make those comments this afternoon. About a month ago, I spoke the day after the kidnapping of Vindra Naipaul-Coolman and I said what I had to say about national security and intelligence and the inefficiency apparently on the police service. And I referred to the Police Service Commission Reports which have become so startlingly redundant with the same complaints about the commissioner and the police, year after year.

3.00 p.m.

This afternoon I feel obliged to speak, motivated by another story of horror about the assassinations last night. I do not think we can close our eyes to that story; wiping out an entire family which brought back bitter memories of the Dole Chadee assassination in Williamsville. We thought we had passed that stage but, woefully, it does not seem so, not only in terms of the number of people being

killed, slaughtered in the most boldfaced way, but look where it has reached. It has reached the police. Once you start assassinating the police and politicians, we have to be serious enough. No matter what the politics might be between.

The system in which we exist is adversarial and there is always room for an alternative government and the incumbent government would strive to hold its fort; that is a legitimate structure. But our minds should go back to what has happened in Colombia and in some of those Latin American countries, because they are so close to us. The drug trade, gangsterism and kidnappings bring in their wake the spread of assassinations of high public officers. You might call it the domino effect; you might call it the cumulative degeneration of law, but the facts are, whatever name you use, as if the next step might very well be judges and magistrates and then, perhaps, we would be shocked into appropriate action.

I do not want to repeat what I have said so many times except, again, to sound a warning to all those who are entrusted to protect and serve us. But in saying so we have the unfortunate situation that even though they are entrusted to protect and serve us, the police officers themselves are being slaughtered. Those who are responsible for making public policy and looking after the welfare of the country, the politicians, of whatever hue, they too seem to be facing assassination. So the question is: The moneys we are transferring and the variations that we are entering upon, what kind of relief would they bring to such situations as I have enunciated?

I will make a suggestion, because I feel that the Government cannot do it alone and it is sometimes to their own disadvantage that they claim they can do it alone and not expand the space to accommodate more goodwill and those who would like to assist, whether non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or whatever rank or file.

I look at the payment of the money owed to the gas stations, for example, \$17 million, and the variation was to fulfil the purpose of the debt owed to National Petroleum (NP), but when I drive into these gas stations across the country, some of them are like pig sties. They are messy and not only cramped up, but there is grease all over the drains nearby and, worse yet, when you expect to have an air pressure pump to service your tyres, well God help you. I thought, even when the UNC was in power, that these things would have been upgraded with all kinds of Quik shops and this and that renovations. In fact, I am seeing gas stations closing down in several places and there are no replacements. People in Tobago are screaming for more gas stations. When you go to Tobago you have to drive way down to Crown Point for a gas station; the taxi driver would tell you.

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I am wondering, if you are industrializing your country, one of the first things you should do is to have the proper transport infrastructure in your country, gas stations being one of them. But the gas stations in this country are in a mess, with very few exceptions like Morvant junction and Cocorite. We have to say thank goodness for some of those whose owners and operators have a sense of pride and decency to keep their gas stations in such a healthy condition; NP has the jurisdiction to supervise those gas stations that are delinquent.

I hope today that the Minister responsible for NP and, as the line Minister, indirectly responsible for those gas stations, would pay very close attention to the plight the public faces. You cannot speak about \$17 million and go into these hog pens that are called, euphemistically, gas stations. They are not gas stations. Apart from the parking on the left or the right; you do not know where to park. After you park, they tell you, "No, come this side, de pump cyar reach." It is a mess. You might want to know why I am speaking about such trivial matters, but those matters are not trivial. These are examples of what hurts the public on a daily basis. One example is the buses. The word "bus" is a very appropriate word for the Public Transport Service Corporation (PTSC); "dey bus" in terms of service.

When you are giving them almost \$20 million to buy 25 new buses, you have to look at the people lining up all over the road waiting for a bus. I guess we all know the story; it is not worthy of being mentioned except to say that this again is another service that the country is not benefiting from, and that is in spite of all the expenditure. So where are we headed into industrialization when the infrastructure and those in the line of duty and service, be it supervisor, chief executive officer (CEO) or general manager are not doing their jobs and the permanent secretary or the Minister are not holding them to stock? The whole thing looks as if it is a merry-go-round, with some people being afraid to call a spade a spade and take the bull by the horns, in this day and age, or take the thrust towards industrialization.

Local government is another example. I have said before that the Minister is, perhaps, putting a lot of effort into policy framework, but I think we should hurry up with that, because a lot of things at the local level are not being looked after. People are again wondering what all this talk about industrialization is and what all this money is being used for.

I can go on to enunciate from the statements here a number of such instances where services are not properly delivered. I urge the ministers concerned, with due respect, that while a lot of this is not your fault, in the Westminster system

under which we operate the ministers are finally held accountable, if not in terms of dismissal or resignation, in terms of explanation. I did not make the system; that is the system we have inherited and one under which we operate.

These moneys are used, as the Government has said, to industrialize the country; make it prosperous and bring it among the modern States of the world. There is nobody in this country who will not want to provide or become an obstacle to that vision. I think the Government should be encouraged in its industrialization programmes, because there is little or no alternative. Of course, as to what you industrialize or what you mean by industrialization is another issue, whether it is going to be based only on energy or whether agriculture will also be a ground level motivator or whether the service sector, but all these things should be combined. That is part of the blessedness of this country; we have a diversified set of resources and part of the industrialization process should not be unduly located or overwhelmingly located in the energy sector.

I want to speak more so to the obstacles in the industrialization programme, because it does touch on the inefficiencies of national security and some of the ways that we can heal those effects. The World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) reports have consistently delineated obstacles to industrialization. A major one is the breakdown or inefficiencies in your administration of justice and national security. Every single report in every year by the UNDP and the World Bank would tell you that: If you do not have a sense of security in a country and your criminal justice system is not working properly, it means your primary prerequisites for industrialization, no matter what your natural resource base is, will not be effectively promoted.

In fact, and this is the disaster area, the more you industrialize your material resources: the big factories and plants, and the more you have cultural lag, that is, the infrastructure is not properly developed to support this drive, the gap between will attract criminal behaviour. That is the classic explanation for an increase in crime in developing countries towards industrialization. That is why it is called the cultural lag, about which we have to be very careful.

I know that we cannot go into these things in great detail, but some of us have taught these things at university; some of us have studied these things in our programme in criminology. Part of what you call cultural lag can include such things as the reluctance to change from tradition to the modern way. I know there is nostalgia about the old time days; Nappy Myers sang, "Bring back de ole time days", but really that kind of romanticism has to be looked at more objectively in

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terms of what the psychological and social characteristics are to drive this material condition of industrialization. It means, for example, things like respect for property, punctuality and lawfulness, in all respects. Those are examples of the kinds of qualities required for industrialization.

It would be a sad mistake for us to think that industrialization has to do mainly with large factories and tall buildings; those are necessary, but what experience has shown, for those of us who deal with the sociology of development, is that you have to make sure the other characteristic attributes are also developed, otherwise industrialization has the habit of attracting increases in criminal behaviour. It is all over the world. Brazil, for example, has a big industrialization thrust, but the ghettos that have formed and the resentment between those who have and those who do not have are such that Rio de Janeiro and those major Brazilian cities and other such cities in Latin America are contaminated by criminogenic conditions, closely aligned to where those prosperous cities are lodged. Any tourist could tell you when you go there, it is a horror story. The gang warfare in Brazil is at its zenith; horrific, even though the President talks about the development in his country, with the figures: gross domestic product (GDP), trade figures and the per capita income.

I would like to suggest, quietly and respectfully, that the Government steps back and engages itself in a period of introspection by having among its Cabinet Members, PNM members primarily, a relationship between the Government and the other important sectors of the national community; if these moneys are to be worth anything. Why do I say that? I say that because it seems to me that when the Government and even the Prime Minister speaks about industrialization it seems as if it should be and it is, mainly a Government thrust towards moving the country forward. But I stand corrected; he might correct me, but it was Sen. Enill, Minister in the Ministry of Finance who reminded us that this country is run by seven big businesses. He said it in a way that was not literal, but he meant that the clout that these big business houses have in this country is of such that even the Government cannot wrestle its way out and move forward as easily as it would like to.

For example, the Government cannot do anything much about the banks in terms of interest rates or demanding certain things from them. The banks are so institutionalized and they capture so much capital, that governments have to be very careful, even though they would like to do certain things; and this is where the reluctance to deal with food prices comes in too. If you threaten businesses, these various million and one chambers of commerce all over the country and

business associations, they will retaliate furiously, which brings me to another aspect of industrialization. You must have a sharpened prolific inclination for research and development, because whenever anybody speaks against you, especially if you are saying something politically incorrect, you must be able to show them the facts, especially things like food prices. Where are the facts in food prices?

You have a cross current and exchange of accusations. I have an idea where it is, but I have said my piece during the budget debate. I must tell you, I got a lot of blows for it, but I did not mind, because the figures I saw and the logic I used, in my view, was persuasive enough; until a better argument is made. Research and development are virtually absent in this country; you do it as though it is a favour you are doing: you put a little "chinks" here, a little money here.

I was very elated when this new government came into office and there was a Ministry largely dedicated to evaluation. That Minister at the time was Sen. The Hon. Mustapha Abdul-Hamid. I sang my praises about both the Ministry and the job over which he had jurisdiction, because it was a very important component in public administration and assessing the capability and quality of services in several respects. I think we should revisit that issue. I would like this team about which I just referred to comprise some of the thinkers on the Government side, to examine, before they proceed with industrialization, meet with the business sector and let them know what your policy is and where they ought to help, because the private sector can no longer afford to be selfish, self-serving, parochial, otherwise they will all suffer eventually.

Government must explain those things to them and let them understand and support the programme on principle, not on politics. After that I believe you should meet the labour movement and do the same thing and let them know that without their support we will also sink, if not quickly, but slowly. This thing about sectoral wages, one being much, much higher than another sector, I do not know if we can continue with that too much. It does disrupt the national economy and matters of equity. Those are the issues that I believe a team mounted by the Government should sit now at this stage of our thrust towards industrialization and reflect. That is what I mean by my trying to be introspective today and not fanning the flames, as you would say.

Somebody like my good friend Sen. Montano could be part of that team, and Sen. Abdul-Hamid. We have some thinkers along the Government side, Sen. Dr. Saith. There is enough talent there; Sen. Enill. We can no longer run around blaming people; the Public Service Commission; I think that excuse has run out of

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steam. There are some faults, but you cannot put so much blame on them. There are shortcomings. There are too many things that exist now which are not working properly; too many regulations; too many laws for you to say that you need more laws and new regulations; that to me is a cop out.

We should be realistic. The State has a role to play now. The State has a very important role to play in industrialization. Of course, that has been a very controversial topic in the last 40 years. What is the role of the State in economic development? In this case I speak more than economic development; I speak of social development. I speak about the other areas of development: cultural development in its diversified configuration.

There was a time when the State was asked to show leadership. We had all these state companies. You seek ownership of all the commanding heights of the economy; very boastful, proud, nationalism, nationalize. What you did not nationalize, you created; that was a moment. After that they tell you the private sector. One particular report by the World Bank called "The State on the Market" said that no private sector and government should be a facilitator. Well, all right; so Government said that it would liberalize the economy. They stepped back and allowed the free market and private sector to have their way, with some successes. It was not a total success. The question of equity became important. Where the business community did not refuse it was reluctant to let the wealth trickle down. So the trickle down perspective failed, because selfishness and profiteering dominated conscience and the quest in a democratic society for equity, especially among those who were have-nots to begin with.

Then we talked about partnership; both the Government and the private sector should form a partnership. I think we have gone through all those models. It is time now to reflect. Let us not run down the road and talk about industrialization without having a proper intellectual platform, if I might say so, on which to articulate the point. PNM, UNC and COP members should really be educated to know what this industrialization thing is about, because it is inevitable. Any government that comes into power will have to continue in that pathway. We should tell our members what industrialization is all about and what it involves: self-responsibility, delayed-gratification, respect for people's property, lawfulness and a range of things; so they themselves would feel an inevitable part of the process, rather than industrialization merely meaning a smelter plant here or a factory there. And they would say: Where am I?

They have to know that they are part of the process, because that is what a proper sociology of development would tell us, based on the experiences that we have been facing all across the world. If you do not do it, you would have what one textbook calls, "the agonies of industrialization". Industrialization is movement in a hurry. When the investor comes, you cannot tell him, "Wait till we prepare our people, our labour capabilities and our legal infrastructure." We have to do things in a hurry, and ministers know that. That is why some of them get caught up in a whirlwind of legislation and policymaking, because they have to move very quickly.

Countries like ours have been said to be countries in a hurry. We cannot wait. The challenges are fast and furious among us, therefore adding greater expediency to preparing your population for the intervention that we call industrialization. It is not only a government thrust; that is what I said earlier. The partnership should not only be between labour as a sector and business as a sector, but if you have the opportunity, as the PNM has had, to talk to its members in a collective way, you should explain to them a little more deeply and with some elaboration, what industrialization means for all of them and what their role in this thrust should be. Perhaps we may get a more lawful country, because they would see that by becoming more lawful and by possessing and practising the virtues which I have just mentioned, it would be to their benefit too.

Many a country has drifted so far down the route of industrialization, that people kept wondering, after the fact, "Well, what is happening?" One of the consequences of that is the rich/poor gap, not only in terms of income and prosperity, but a psychological divide, which is worse than the digital divide. The psychological divide has to do with important attitudes and what you call a state of anomie, lawlessness, no respect for the norms and public rules of conduct. So it brings us back to some of the allocations mentioned here about how to develop a society. [Interruption]

Sen. Enill: Madam President, I am listening to Sen. Prof. Deosaran and I have just one question. Does he have a view, for example, on how does one deal with the issue where the obligation for performance cannot be transferred? I understand you to say that the Government cannot blame the Public Service Commission and those kinds of entities, and we can find creative ways to do that, and I agree with you, but the issue for me is how do you deal with the issue where the constitutional power rests with an officer whom you really and truly have absolutely no control over and that is the power around which the thing works? How does one deal with that in the context of the statement you are making?

Sen. Prof. R. Deosaran: The Minister's intervention is appropriate and valid. I said that the Public Service Commission could not be totally blamed. The word totally was used deliberately, because I know and I agree with him. I do not know how far I should go into this, but I know the chairpersons of all these commissions, personally. I am venturing out; this is not a matter of undue disclosure; I will not call the name—but just to let you know how valid your comment is. He was doing something with an officer in a ministry and I asked him, "What will happen when you send the letter and nothing happens?" He said, "Boy, I really do not know; I did not think about that", which means that they themselves do not know how public administration operates. I do not want to bring the President in here, but choices for such offices, as long as they exist, I think maybe the Government should have a say. This is dangerous waters, but I know that there is statutory independence and functional independence. The right persons have to be chosen, with some knowledge, until such time as they review the legislation.

In response to the hon. Minister, I know some of the disappointments he faces. For example, sometimes he has six officers and he would ask them to do certain things. When he looks for delivery of the policy or paper they have gone to somewhere else; that happens frequently in a lot of ministries. I think the Public Service Commission should be more sensitive to the needs of ministers in the first instance, in terms of public policy. I can tell the Minister that he needs a review of the legislation. I think you have dealt with one, the Police Service Commission, but this should be part of the reflection I am speaking about.

About three or four years ago I suggested to the Government to go on a retreat. I do not mean the kind of retreat that the leader of the COP meant; a retreat in a cowardly fashion. I mean in a reflective way. I was happy when they went on their first retreat and then a second one. I think these are some of the issues that the reflective minds in the party ought to attend to. Once you have the consensual framework properly done and the partnerships outlined and you go to the public with that, it becomes less political and more of governance. I believe it can be done.

Every time we hear from a minister—some much more than others, when we ask: What are you doing about this or that? I say this with the greatest respect: they tell you how much money they have spent on this or that. "We allocated \$20 million to this and we have \$6 million for that," or "We bought this equipment," or "We hired so many other persons". In public policy and in the delivery of services to a country that is so bothered by the lack of services and by the mounting fear of crime, that is not enough.

What you are delineating here, like money, more officers and more equipment, are what you call the "independent variables", meaning that these variables are supposed to lead to outcomes; what you call the "dependent measures". It is the dependent measures this country wants to hear about, such as on some occasion when my distinguished colleague, Sen. Seetahal, S.C. asked the Minister of National Security, "You are telling us about so and so, but what about the results?" The result is the dependent measures that we are looking forward to. The quality of service is another example of a dependent measure we are looking for. You are not giving us a proper answer yet; you are only telling us about the independent variable which has to do with money allocated, equipment bought, manpower hired. But what is the result?

That you can call a more scientific way to implement public policy to the satisfaction of what is now becoming a suffering public.

I would like the Government to consider, and the business community more than the Government to consider—let me repeat that, because while we expect the Government to do this and that, in terms of hardships, the private sector on the basis of the amount of allowances and space and concessions they are given, I think they ought to do more for this country, bringing greater comfort and a better quality of life for the population. They have to work harder at it.

We have a set of old time economics. I will not say old time economists, but we have old time economics practised in this country. The modern thinking in developing countries like ours, which are still striving to maintain our democracy—If we keep faltering, the ideology of President Chavez will soon overtake us, because we will be witnessing a virtual collapse of compassionate capitalism. To put it another way, our practice of capitalism will become so vulgar and selfishly driven that the case for socialism will once against raise its head.

This is a book called *On Ethics & Economics*. [Prof. Deosaran shows book] I know I bother you, Madam President, when I walk with these books, but sometimes I have to ensure that my articulation is well grounded. So if you do not believe me, believe Prof. Amartya Sen; I use it often. The title of the book itself suggests what he is trying to tell the world. He is a Nobel prize winner in economics. He studied farming in Bangladesh and how to measure and reduce poverty. After years of study, reflection and research, he has come up to a point where he said that without ethics in economic matters, beyond just the simple law of supply and demand, you will always have depressed people, a wide margin in the rich and the poor, as long as you rely on supply and demand. If there is a shortage you raise the price; when it is plentiful, you sell cheap without having regard to the actual cost of the product.

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To get an ethical base in economics, especially since we are dealing with food prices and houses—housing in this country is a nightmare for poor people. Whatever deficiencies there might be with the Government programme, I think Dr. Rowley and his team ought to be congratulated for the haste with which they are moving into this housing sector. [*Desk thumping*] Whatever problems there might be, logistical and financial, but as public policy I think the exaggerated construction of houses is welcomed. I will ask, however, that the supply side be looked at. Are we having too many members in poor families? Is the production capacity in the poor homes a little too high for public policy to manage? But as you know, you are the Minister of Social Development and you have to wrestle with the family planning issue.

What you call rational economics, supply and demand, the principle of utilitarianism; those things have failed. They have succeeded, but for the rich. They have brought prosperity, but for the wealthy and powerful, but the argument in such books and consideration by those who know, is that you cannot develop a country properly unless the business sector modifies its stance on profiteering and self-interest. That is why it is called "compassionate capitalism". Have your capitalism; have your profit; modulate your prices, but be a little more reasonable; be a little fairer.

Prof. Sen asks:

“Why should it be uniquely rational to pursue one's own self-interest in economics to the exclusion of everything else?”

That one sentence tells you about the whole book. You need the insertion of conscience and ethics, where the prices you set should be reasonable. Are we having reasonable prices in housing? Several times I have cited some examples where the Minister in the Ministry of Finance, Sen. Sahadeo, has told us that she has given concession to the hardware dealers. I do not know how they interpret these concessions, it is like putting fire on gasoline, and it jacks up the prices suddenly. You give these concessions to a number of other things; maybe the Government ought to supervise these concessions a little more closely. I do not know if we are going to come into the instance of a prices commission. That is why I said that you do not deal with it as a big stick. You talk to them and tell them what the problems of the country are; not the Government's problem. Tell them, "Look, the country is facing some serious problems, for example, food prices, houses and other such matters," but it must be put within the framework which I enunciated earlier on.

This is another book by a prominent economist. These are economists with a conscience. They are not looking at the mechanical model of profiteering, making money, "making a kill" in the market. They look at the challenge and the imperative of looking after poor people in such a way that you could make your profit, but put some reason and conscience. This book by Prof. Vickers is called, *Economics and Ethics*; it tells us how to frame public policy along the way to industrialization.

I say so because obstacles to industrialization come in many forms. Madam President, you see this squatting syndrome, this PH practice and the vending all over the place—I pause for your own intervention. [*Interruption*]

Madam 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. R. Deosaran: Madam President, this is the difficulty governments have had, and this one as well. Even if there is a new government, it would face the same problems and I am prepared to say that I am not sure what it would do with them: squatting, PH vehicles and vending all over the place. Do you know why? I think too much consideration is given to the votes of these people rather than the lawlessness they practise. In other words, many of us in this country have had to sit by and see political expediency encourage lawlessness. I say so without fear or favour. It is a difficulty, a dilemma, because to be in government you need votes. So we had what was called "regularizing the squatters," a particular Act. I always find that funny; how do you regularize something that is illegal?

I always wonder about the genius of our people, especially our politicians. Just break it down and then you build it back up, but you are regularizing it when it is on the move, as they have done nothing. And you are paying homage to what they had been doing and you say that you want to walk hand in hand with them. That is absurd. These are just some forms of lawlessness that we have encouraged as policy makers. That is why I support Dr. Rowley. Lawlessness must cease; look where it has reached. They are selling state land that is not theirs, and not once; there are cases where these squatters have sold government land twice. [*Laughter*] We cannot encourage that under the guise of looking after the poor. You do not look after the poor by encouraging them in lawlessness; they would degenerate further into more lawlessness by feeling that everything comes easy. They have to put some effort.

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That is why the initiation of the industrialization movement started with what you call "the Protestant ethic"; savings, thrift, punctuality, diligence, obedience to law and order, parenting. We did not have any parent programmes in those days; parents knew exactly what they had to do; that was as recent as 40 or 50 years ago. Now you have parenting programmes; you have to teach them how to do this; how to handle their child, because the child has rights; you have to negotiate; how to handle the child in the classroom. That was caused by somebody called Benjamin Spock in the United States, a country which has regretted the permissiveness that it encouraged, transferring all those permissive ideologies lower down the Caribbean and we are gobbling it up lock, stock and barrel, without knowing that for industrialization you need discipline—even Choc'late had to tell us that—and responsibility. Why is it hard to understand, or is it just political expediency, if we do that all the transfers and variations here will be brought to naught once again?

Two things obstruct the progress of a country; one of them is that you deny we have a problem. We have a serious problem of lawlessness and that is why the youngsters grow up feeling they could get away with anything they do. In fact, they are proud to be gangsters in their community, because that is where they get their rank, fame, recognition and place in the community. How are we going to deal with that if you encourage squatting, chaotic vending and you have PH running all over the place without regard to protecting the passengers?

The irony in these three examples is that they do serve a public purpose; people like to buy things by the pavement; so there is a public service in that. People want to travel in PH vehicles, because there is a lack of transportation, so people will not vociferously object to PH taxis; it serves the public. Some squatters need a place to live; this is why I said that the Government should put up a team. Put Sen. Montano as well, because I think he understands the private sector aspect to this thing. The private sector should take a more congenial, conscienable role in housing.

Four years ago a townhouse cost \$600,000; today I see it for \$2.6 million in the same district, even though the house is older than the last time. So this form of capitalism that we are practising is really not compassionate or virtuous capitalism. It is vulgar capitalism, such as what Sparrow said, "Capitalism gone mad". That is why I brought for your kind attention the discourse on ethics in the marketplace. We are going down fast and furious, and the need for housing would become more acute without the private sector playing what I think should be its rightful role.

We also have a culture of resistance. Every time you make a proposal to insert discipline in the community, classroom or discipline among parents, you get all kinds of objections, as if there is now a higher level of disorder, a culture of resistance to law, order and discipline. Let me draw your kind attention to something that happened last week. Scientific approach begins by making some keen observations and then testing your hypothesis to gather the data. By my keen observation and by information from other keen observers, they said that when people drive with their cellphones in their ears and they bend down to call a number, for that four or five seconds, anything could happen, as I am sure, quite plausibly, accidents happen.

Even if an accident does not happen and we are lucky enough that cellphone use or abuse has not caused any accidents, by the share logic of the situation, by just taking your eyes off the road for a few seconds, that in itself could cause serious accidents. Why wait to gather all the statistics to prove that 25 persons died, when we could enunciate a policy to prevent 25 persons from dying on the sheer logic of the situation I explained, by the keen observation of many persons in this country?

I like to read the *Newsday* editorials, they always counter culture; they always have a different view that is quite refreshing in this country where commonality is so commonplace. In the editorial of September 20 it said:

“In the Senate this week Independent Senator Ramesh Deosaran described cellphones as perhaps more dangerous than drunk drivers. The Senator asserted that persons speaking on these phones while driving were the cause of many accidents.”

I did not say it was the cause, I said that it could be, but he is saying that I have no evidence to back up this claim. I do not want to wait for the evidence, even though there could be evidence gathered, as I would ask for in another sense, but I do not want to wait to have people killed and then to tell you, “Solve that.” I want to prevent that.

More than that, lower down, to show you the culture of resistance we have, how people scramble to deny and to subvert a proper policy, either from the Government or anybody else, the same editorial goes on to say:

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“In Trinidad and Tobago the danger is that emphasizing trivialities...”

He calls this a triviality:

“will cause the authorities to gloss over the larger causes of crime such as the drug trade and the disbursement of government patronage to criminals.”

Hear his or her claim:

“...over the larger causes of crime such as the drug trade and the disbursement of government patronage to criminals.”

But I have seen no evidence here for that claim. So the same way you want me to present evidence—and I welcome the request; I think it is a dutiful request—he does not produce any evidence; but it is wrapped up in a culture of resistance; that is the message.

The editorial starts:

“When it comes to crime too many persons tend to see the trees instead of the forest...”

I would say to such an editorial, not in any offensive way, just as a matter of exchange and discourse, that such persons tend to see the forest and not the trees. So while you accuse people for seeing the trees and not the forest, some people commit the opposite fault; you need to see both; that is proper public policy.

This article in the *Express* of January 17, gives PH taxis the red light. I support that; that means change the policy. Regularize them if you do not make them legal, but do something in the meantime as a step towards removing PH taxis from the road. I could give you a whole discourse as others could give you about how PH taxis form part of the criminogenic environment. We should take such steps to heal ourselves by taking the bull by the horns and make public policy, even when sometimes it is not politically correct.

Let us look at a column by Lennox Grant in the *Sunday Guardian* of January 07 on page 25:

“The images of illegality and illegitimacy have fallen from PH cars.”

It means they are now clothed in illegitimacy. PH practice has been effectively decriminalized by the practice and the acceptance of it. So every time you see a PH car, a law is broken. If there are 35,000 PH cars in this country, so many laws are broken repeatedly, each time a car is used. When you ask about the crime rate in this country you have not begun to count yet. He went on to say:

“New respectability has come to old illegality.”

He was saying that we have practised lawlessness so much that even that which is lawless is now acceptable and legal.

People are desperate and you have all these cries of desperation about how to deal with crime and make the society safer. Some call for a state of emergency. I do not agree, because we have enough institutions and capability to deal with the crime problem without having to call for a state of emergency. Another one says, “Shut down the place; shut down the whole country.” That might be a bit too drastic. I think there are other means we can use to create a safer society; not yet; I do not think that is a proper way to do it.

I feel a lot of us are very worried about the country, but we would like to see what we can do and what we can offer to help make it a more civilized and peaceful place.

Thank you.

The Minister of Local Government (Sen. The Hon. Rennie Dumas): Madam President, I thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this debate. Sen. Prof. Deosaran reintroduced us quite easily to what was the profession he just recently retired from, lectureship and teaching. He introduced us first with this piece of reading that he suggested we do. Of course, the reading for leisure which he can now enjoy does not really fit in with some of the time constraints some of us have, so I hope he would excuse us if we are not as widely read as he is on some of these matters.

I think we also have to look at why we are here. If anybody listened to the Leader of the Opposition Business here he could be quite confused as to why we are here. I want to share a few thoughts on that issue with the Senate today.

Unlike the claims that have been made by the Senator, the Government is following the highest tradition of parliamentary procedure by coming today and suggesting that there have been changes made from the allocations made at the budgetary time and that account is being given of these changes and why they were made. From the largest change that is identified here of \$117 million, in the case of the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) and its programmes, to the smallest change of \$50,000, in which expenditure for training was suppressed, every single change was accounted for and the Government has placed itself before the Parliament. Therefore, for this argument of non-accountability, et cetera, the only word that can describe it, is stupidity, nonsense or dotishness. It is those kinds of words you have to use. [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. Dr. Kernahan: Do not get carried away.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: You could say what you are saying; let me say what I have to say.

The reality is that the Government is placing on record what the changes were between the Heads that were given and what the changes were within the Heads and the subheads. The argument which the Senator scoffed at was that we did not complete negotiations; not the Government. Between the Chief Personnel Officer (CPO) and the National Union of Government and Federated Workers' there was no agreement and, therefore, the money became available given that it was a provisional allocation to treat with the results of an expected closure to the negotiation. The negotiations were not closed and that was how the money became available.

What was the expenditure? I heard no objection to the expenditure. There were no objections to the expenditure in supporting the activity of the World Cup; there were no objections to the expenditure for NP and the supply of petroleum products; just a number of wild accusations.

There was this charge of not understanding what was required to plan for a year and, therefore, these changes were a demonstration of the ignorance of the process of planning, et cetera. I want to suggest that nothing is further from the truth.

4.00 p.m.

Madam President, the change between Heads represents .01 per cent, in fact, less than .01 per cent of the entire annual budget. That kind of variation demonstrates that this Government was quite adept at planning and executing the programme. Check the figures yourself. If you have a change of \$81 million in one instance, what is the percentage change against the expenditure that the Parliament approved? The net position between the Heads is a change of less than 1 per cent of the total budget. Does that demonstrate a Government or an administration that does not know what it is doing and is not capable of managing its business?

I want to suggest that in very few organizations you have that low level of variation. In fact, what we should note is that the change occurred in five major areas. It demonstrates it was about reordering of priorities, it was an organization that was demonstrating the best principles of change where they were being made to bring longer term adjustments, better provision of goods and services to take up where the Professor left off. When you see what is being changed, you will see it is all for the best effect.

Madam President, I invite you to examine the report that is placed before us and if you start by the second item, what is being treated with in the Judiciary. The implementation of a comprehensive security system as against a trade off of other transfers, and as you go through the demonstration here, in fact if you go through the report, take up the Ministry of Education, what is the major change? Grants to secondary schools? That is a bigger change from where the money was coming in terms of minor purchases. It was empowering the secondary schools and principals in a better system.

The information I am giving is not secret, it is in the explanation and if you go through programme after programme you will see. In the Ministry of Health, the change was to provide drugs and other services. You come to the Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment; the changes were production and delivery of bulk requirement; the Water Sector Three-Year Modernization Programme; the development of disaster preparedness capabilities in WASA. These are all changes which would bring long-term benefit to the country as changing expenditure which could have been possibly less beneficial. This is not a demonstration of ineptitude; it is a demonstration of long-term thought and prudent placement of the country's financial resources. I want to suggest that the thesis as laid down by Sen. Mark is totally destroyed if you examine the kind and quality of changes made in this period.

I want to suggest further there is one of course, with the URP that demonstrates caring of the Government when it is treating with unemployment.

Hon. Senator: Caring?

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Yes, read it and see what it says. Providing the funding to carry the programme for a certain period and do construction which provided infrastructure in certain of our communities. It is all there.

Madam President, you know the opportunity was taken to examine this \$2 million change from CEPEP and the non-examination. I want to make it clear that the Government supports the concepts of accountability, et cetera as laid out by the Auditor General. As to the merits or demerits of what is placed there is not for us to answer now. What is for us to answer now is whether the CEPEP programme was proper Government policy.

I want to suggest that the introduction of that programme was proper Government policy, and some people on the other side suggested that there was a group of people in our country who could provide no beneficial service to the national community, and this Government was able to design a programme

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delivered and managed by people coming out of the various communities across Trinidad and Tobago, employing people from within their community to treat with the issues of environmental management in those communities and that rationale is as good today as in 2002 when the programme was set up, and it continues to be valid. If the report suggests that there are administrative and financial things to be done, then they will be done and the programme would be improved, but certainly, it does not merit the view that the programme should be thrown out as seems to be expressed by the Senator.

Sen. Mark: Nepotism and corruption.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Madam President, I was afraid a while ago and quite happy that the UNC is not in office, because I saw Sen. Mark with a piece of paper in his hands reading out the names of people. If you are a member of the PNM; if you are a friend of the PNM; if you are a brother of a member of the PNM; if you are a father of a Member of the PNM; if you are a cousin of a member of the PNM; Sen. Mark has your name on a piece of paper somewhere. [*Interruption*] I want Sen. Mark—he is always calling on us to do things—to assure me that he has not placed any of my children’s names on any piece of paper, perchance the UNC is in office, and I can expect my children to be victimized by a UNC government. I want that.

Sen. Mark: On a point of order.

Madam President: Sen. Mark, you know better than to stand up when a Member is speaking without clarifying whether you are standing on a point of order. You did not say point of order.

Sen. Mark: Yes.

Madam President: What is the point of order?

Sen. Mark: I want to inform the Senator that his children’s names are not on it.

Madam President: That is not a point of order.

Sen. Mark: I also want to inform my colleague that this listing was provided to us by the Ministry of Public Administration and Information under the Freedom of Information Act and he can get a copy if he so desires and check to see if his children’s names are there.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Madam President, I am just suggesting whatever the source of the information; the use of it is what I am afraid of. When I sat here, I got the feeling that there will be a lot of venom against these people. My name

does not have to be there, I am dealing with a principle, Madam President. I am saying if the UNC is collecting the names of every party member and every associate of every party member or person who has any relationship who is in the PNM with the intention that the possibility is that person can become a victim of the UNC wherever they exercise authority. That is what I want to know.

Sen. Mark: Only the corrupt ones.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: I do not know what corruption is. Madam President, I want to go to this allegation of corruption—the CEPEP. You see, there is a date on which the last local government election was held, and there was a date on which the election by which this administration came into office in 2001—2002—

Sen. Mark: What date is that?

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: We will deal with that. When this administration came to office, there was an argument which said that there should be a practice of civil disobedience and any programme of this Government that was placed on the national forum, the UNC and its supporters did not support. In fact, they stood in active opposition and discouragement of participation in all public programmes run by the PNM. That is the reality. If they did not apply, did not participate, and did not seek to be part of this programme, on what basis today when there has been no change in this cry of selective discrimination?

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: Corrupt.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: The reality that you called Marva Bostic's name, this one name and the councillors' name, they were not councillors on the date they got the CEPEP contract.

Sen. Mark: That is not an issue.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: That is the issue because you are trying to make a juncture between they being PNM councillors and receiving a contract and, therefore, that is nepotism and corruption.

Sen. Mark: That is corruption.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: That is not correct, Madam President. I want to suggest that if they were not councillors at that time, they were able as any individual to pursue a public contract that is on offer.

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: There was no advertising.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: The advertising was in the newspapers and I brought that time after time and laid it on the table.

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: That is what the Auditor General said, you are quarrelling with that?

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: The advertisement was in the newspapers and the procedure and process were there. You will have your time.

Madam President: Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh, you will have your time.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Madam President, I am not defending anything, I am just giving you the information. They asked the questions and the answers were brought here. This is reading from a statement that was made in this House. It details the expenses and receipts of different companies. There are companies that have six gangs and so forth.

The average payments to manage the operation, \$51,933; the average monthly VAT payment they have to deliver, \$21,867; the average monthly payments to manage the operation, \$30,066; the estimated total for operational expenses including office and salaries, \$16,545; the balance available to meet salaries and overheads, \$13,521.56.

Sen. Mark: How much the contractor takes home?

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Madam President, the goodly Senator sought to link the individual contractors with massive amounts of money with the suggestion that they were receiving the money and transferring it to their own use. Nothing is further from the truth. That is a demonstration on how to lie with information. I am sorry, I should have said statistics.

Sen. Mark: Pitiful! You cannot defend corruption.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Madam President, I continue to make the statement that when we come to the Parliament we have a responsibility to the wider population, and part of the question of ethics of democracy says that where we seek to load a certain value judgment on public officers and that becomes the current and widespread view, it becomes a justification for the murder of public officers. Too often, when we come here we load a certain perception that suggests to every young man out there, that every single person who puts on a suit and comes to this office is a criminal and a thief.

Sen. Mark: Who said that?

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: I am suggesting, we better be careful of what we do.

Sen. Mark: All corrupt elements will be exposed.

Sen. Dr. Saith: Is this a debate?

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Madam President, I assure Sen. Mark, through you, that wherever he finds corruption, he will find support in rooting it out. I suggest to him that he better be careful that his words do not call down a fire and brimstone that he is not aware exists and how it is managed, because when we all walk out of here, the distinction between UNC and PNM could become quite blurred.

Sen. Mark: Now what you mean by that? Tell us what you mean by blurred.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Madam President, there is another issue I want to deal with under this arrangement because it keeps coming up. I want to know whether we are making it public policy that no father, brother, sister, no friend of a public officer has a place, has any right, has any access to Government programmes, has no right to access public goods and services, no right to public contracts, no right to public opportunities. Is that the model we are laying down in terms of public policy?

Madam President, I ask if the winning party in an election and the people who constitute the party are activists in that winning formula repudiate all rights to public opportunity. Because you see the UNC's position seems to be that every PNM should starve and die; every PNM should make sure he or she has no access and no benefit from winning the election. Is that the position?

Sen. Mark: We want everyone to live. We want to end discrimination, that is what we want.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Madam President, we have our personal experience. When the goodly Senator was wrapped tight in the arms of Hochoy Charles, I am suggesting to you that some of us could have screamed personal discrimination because some of us went through a massive disadvantage; in fact, some of us were no longer able to practise the profession for which we were trained. When the goodly Senator was wrapped in the arms of people who had responsibility for public policy, some of us were denied access to scholarships and programmes and so forth. We can point it out and demonstrate through personal experience.

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I want to suggest that this Government today demonstrated a clear understanding of the parliamentary rules and over the past year that the management of public funds was exemplary against the budget which we came here with. [*Desk thumping*] This Government has demonstrated and demonstrates again today that every single activity was explained and placed before the Parliament in full accounting. This Government again comes to the Table with the role of mobilization behind this programme, mobilization behind the programmes that the Government went to the population with and suggested it would put in place once elected. What we are treating with here today is the variations that arose because of the passage of time, new information, and changed circumstances, and that is what we are asking the Parliament to support.

Madam President, it will be a great day in Trinidad and Tobago, just as we can rally around the team that went to Germany and I know that Sen. Mark has good feelings about the team, he only had one problem. We have serious difficulty in separating. Let me ask Sen. Mark this question through you, Madam President. By what justification would the Government of Trinidad and Tobago place a reward in the hands of a gentleman who had the responsibility to organize the whole international work-out programme. He is an officer of the organization which organizes the international work-out programme? That was the responsibility he had. He is an officer of the organization which is organizing the international programme and you want us to be party to making a contribution to him to carry the national team. It is a direct conflict of interest. The Government cannot lend itself to that.

Let us be very clear that what you are pursuing is an improper act which you are asking the Government to do. It is an improper act. We must give Jack Warner monetary reward for assisting or advising the team where he could not even take an official position of advising our team without falling into a conflict of interest with his activities in the FIFA. [*Interruption*] The Government cannot lend itself to an immoral and improper act. It cannot do it. Let us be clear on what we are asking. You see we get clouded when we do not follow proper rationale based on clear and uncluttered thinking; we run into treating with personal interest and confuse public policy with our personal affection.

Sen. Mark: That is sad.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: We cannot do that. You cannot decry the whole award system and contaminate it with a plea for a personal argument. You cannot do that.

Sen. Mark: I want to know if that is Government's policy or your personal view.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Madam President, the movement of Trinidad and Tobago through the process of development has to take place on very many dimensions. I am sure that the Government and Trinidad and Tobago as a whole which this Government has done such a good job in representing, and continues to do today, will be quite grateful to come to the realization and understanding. As Sen. Prof. Deosaran said, the industrialization programme which we mobilize and around which most of Government's activity is built is so critical to our further development that what we have to do in terms of public education is—and his advice is quite good—the return to the study of the social economy of Trinidad and Tobago, that of laying down continuing adjustments to the national development policy and plan, the whole adherence to the Vision 2020 programme and the massive work which was done in bringing it to its present state including the draft national development strategy.

Sen. Mark: That is a failure too, 2020 is a failure.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: We want to assure you, Madam President, that we are clear that the benefits of the programmes of this Government include the employment opportunities that are created at all levels, whether they are at the lowest level in terms of the social consideration, or at the highest levels. We have—and when I say we here, for the first time in the history of this country, we can say we and in a way that includes everybody. The country is deriving the benefit of employment opportunity in all parts of the country, and where the reach for industrialization has not yet taken place, the Government is reaching out to those communities. It reaches out to all the rural communities and I consider Tobago a rural community in the context of Port of Spain being the capital.

The reach of industrialization is reaching for Tobago as well as the northeast the southwest, wherever in Trinidad and Tobago. The need is there for creating opportunity to leave people where they are accustomed to living and feel a part of, and their heritage is there, the industrialization programme is reaching into those places.

It is no longer true that you can only envision participating in the industrialization programme if you are willing to dislocate yourself from where you are living, or where you have grown up. The supporting educational programme that is designed to support this process of industrialization is open to

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all and is reaching into all corners; whether it is the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) and its programme of expansion—and that goes again to Tobago—or the University of the West Indies in its struggle to match the strides that UTT is making.

Sen. Seetahal, S.C.: What! I thought it was the other way around.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Yes, its struggle to match the strides that UTT is making. The University of the West Indies has been a closed egg for too long, it is time it starts being a growing flower and take the nutrients from the environmental unit. That is what it has to do.

Madam President: Talk to me.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Madam President, we know that it is difficult for us to see it differently, and see it in a new way. The University of the West Indies is an institution of which I am proud, and I always like to participate. In fact, when I leave here I will try to ask the goodly Senator to see if I could find some place at the feet of one of the chairs at the university.

Sen. Mark: Shortly, in a short while.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Madam President, I want to assure Sen. Mark that some of us come to serve for a while and move on. Some of us do not intend to dominate the landscape as he has done so successfully on that side.

Sen. Mark: That is a good confession. You are beginning to smell defeat, it is coming.

Sen. The Hon. R. Dumas: Madam President, the charge that is given to local government to support a regional focus to development ensures that we do not have to have the fear that is sentimented by the Senator. Every part of Trinidad and Tobago is expected to have a regional development plan with an impact into every community, home, and in the life of every individual. In that wise, we are quite confident on this side that this Government will return to office, so that is not the issue. The issue is that we must build sustainable communities and we are suggesting that in building these communities the industrialization process is there, the commercial and administrative structures, all will have to be put in place and that is what we are trying to do.

Madam President, family incomes are quite important, and when they are derived through industrial, commercial, or agricultural activity the likelihood that an appropriate, national average family income can be put in place has to do with

a number of parameters and this Government is quite clear that the focus on the family and the ways in which it can have access to the national income is quite important.

The recognition of the direct as well as the indirect housing programme with its facility in terms of mortgages, support infrastructure, and redistribution of opportunity to access land and so forth, we are quite confident to date that we could meet the target set and reduce the pressure on families in terms of the rentals and the exploitations that we think are happening in that market. But certainly, it would take some effort and it is one of the medium-term to long-term activities of the Government although we are seeing change.

Madam President, we tend to pay little regard to community incomes, but again the policies and programmes of this Government pay attention to those aggregate flows into family incomes that make up the incomes of the various communities which we have to work with and certainly, I am saying that any assessment will show that there is a marked change in community incomes today than there were four or five years ago.

The whole question of the deeper levels of investments by individuals, families and business across the country are quite in evidence by all measures. National sustainability we want to suggest, as a focus of Government's activity is here and we are working to enhance that.

Madam President, we seem to ignore also that technological transfer is part of that model we must build, because we have to admit that while we are quite capable in some things, although we are exporting labour to all parts of the world to do all sorts of things that some of us do not acknowledge we have the skills here, we still have to have that question of adoption and adaptation instead of transaction that lead to technological change in the country, most of all, the improved labour welfare in the country.

I suggest that it is quite a feat for the Government to manage the economy, to manage a budgetary allocation of \$40 billion plus and only come here with a variation of less than .1 per cent in some instances, and less than 1 per cent. It demonstrates a measure of management capacity that few countries could match.

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President: Hon. Senators, we shall now suspend for tea and return at 5.00 p.m.

4.30 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

5.00 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Sen. Harry Persad Mungalsingh: Thank you very much, Madam President. Before I begin my contribution, there are just about three issues which I would like to clear up which were made by Sen. Prof. Deosaran and Sen. Dumas. With respect to Sen. Dumas, he indicated that the percentage variation was less than .1 per cent. In fact, total variation is 1.25 per cent. But the value, 1.25 per cent, is in itself not of substance; it is the quantity which, as a percentage of the total expenditure, is quite substantial.

Secondly, with respect to CEPEP, he justified CEPEP on the basis of a good idea. In business you just do not jump at every good idea you get. You build an infrastructure around good ideas before you implement it and that is why the Auditor General's report was so damning with respect to that programme.

Thirdly, I listened very carefully to him and I found his ideas, when they were correct, were quite soft and disconnected so I could not fully follow exactly what he was trying to get at.

With respect to Sen. Prof. Deosaran, the issue I want to raise is the question of lawlessness, because he has been raising these issues for the past, I think, two sessions, and just to caution him and to, perhaps, direct his research in the area. It is that lawlessness is, in fact, not a national pastime which he may infer, but lawlessness is, in fact, confined to specific geographic communities and if he can track it in that direction I think his research would be quite substantial.

I want him to also be very cautious with respect to his praises of the hon. Minister of Housing, because some of the Minister's plans and programmes are deeply flawed in terms of the location of some of his projects, et cetera. But then again, as Trinidadians and given the nature of our culture, it is either that something is absolutely black or absolutely white, and whilst an idea might be a good idea, there are flaws which is our right and our purpose here to correct and to indicate. So it is just those four issues I wanted cleared up.

Madam President, I would not be reading but I would be referring to my copious notes, so you will see me looking at my copious notes. This Bill is about the movement of \$81.4 million from the Ministry of Local Government to the Office of the Prime Minister and three other Ministries, and the movement of \$466 million within existing Ministries. If you study the Bill itself, it refers only to the variation of the appropriation of \$81.4 million and not the transfer of funds between the subheads—not the subheads of the same Head of expenditure of \$466.2 million.

I would think that both should have been referred to in the Bill as they both represent variations of expenditure. It represents the transfer of savings from one Head or subhead to increase the expenditure in another Head or subhead. This concept is foreign in business. A savings on one budgetary category goes to profit and that department is granted bonus incentives. Increases in expenditure in another budgetary category demand good explanations and most times require a change of a manager.

However, under our current system of politics, public administration and budgetary practices, all of which, in my opinion, require serious overhaul, the skills required to survive and succeed in the public sector are completely different from those in the private sector. Under the current system of planning, executing—and I had two years experience at the Ministry of Finance—reporting and accounting, the Prime Minister was dead right when he said that only common sense was required. What he inferred was that there was no need for specific skill requirements in developing and executing public policy. This is an inside view and what works to sustain power.

Power in perpetuity can only be sustained by short-term ideas. The Auditor General's Report on CEPEP was therefore quite out of place as it demonstrates so clearly all that is wrong about what society defines as government. It is an outside view and cannot work unless, of course, what is defined as government is changed. This can only be done by constitutional reform. What use is the Auditor General's Report when nothing can be done or will be done, when no one is censured or brought to account? Just look at this as an institution, after four years what have we achieved? Just change the rule on term limits for MPs and the Prime Minister and how the Prime Minister is elected, not by MPs but directly by the people, and you would see how fundamental changes in discussion and decision-making is done.

What is wrong is not the individuals or even the defective political culture, but the system and there is something real as the system. In business the system is defined in manuals of procedures. The culture of a business is defined in its human resource manual and its operations manual. The culture is defined and derived from it. So you have an Ansa McAl culture; you have a Neal & Massy culture; you have a Royal Bank culture and it is the same people in the Government that you transfer into these companies and the culture becomes determinant. How that becomes determinant—so my academics at the back of me can understand—it is defined within manuals of operating procedures and manuals of human resource management. That is the practicality of it.

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Business or even political culture is a derived characteristic and not a determinant one, and I do wish my colleagues in the inexact science at the University of the West Indies would grasp that fact. However, the voices of those in the inexact sciences dominate those in the exact sciences. Having worked in the Ministry of Finance, what are the structural financial weaknesses of the current budgeting model in the Ministry of Finance?

- (a) Inadequate financial justification, planning, execution and control. Politicians claim it is the exigencies of politics, or whatever that means. Up and down the Caribbean, it is the same.
- (b) Poor decision-making processes and at times simply poor decisions. These are distinct concepts. This includes poor prioritization which is a tremendous weakness of this current administration. In business there is something as a correct decision-making process. It is well-defined in books, in operational research, in stochastic modeling. It is well-defined what is a good decision-making process and what is a bad decision-making process.

That is why in a business there can be delegation without chaos. In other words, you could have a manager in Rio Claro and can expect profitability from the business operations way out in Rio Claro, but not in government; you do not see that in government.

- (c) This is very important: A complete misunderstanding of social welfare—and this is what I have found over 26 years—and a mix-up in the concept of social welfare and a human development plan.

I have not seen anything that has come from the University of the West Indies which could have assisted the government of the day, whether it be a UNC government, a PNM government or an NAR government, which would have helped that government in power to delineate what is social welfare and what is a human development plan. What is required in most of the communities where the crime statistics originate is a human development plan.

- (d) This is a tremendous weakness that we have, especially in the Caribbean: Trying to tie public policy into a voter machinery, not understanding and with the level of training that everyone has in this Senate and in the lower House, we should be able to understand—certainly we have the education which would provide a certain thought process, but we do not yet understand that we have a weak electoral and governance model.

So when you tie public policy into voter machinery, what that leads to is biases, fixed statistical biases. I hope I am not trying to go over the heads of too many of my colleagues. So trying to tie public policy into voter machinery, not understanding that in a weak electoral and governance model as defined in our 1976 Constitution leads necessarily and sufficiently—and that has definition in statistics; what is a necessary and sufficient condition—to fixed statistical biases. I will give you an example. Because of our weak electoral and governance model in which we live and base our governance; how we elect our leaders, 270,000 votes in one category means 19 sure seats and 260,000 votes in another category only means 15 sure seats. If anyone needs to have it, I can email you the proof of that.

There are three other specific weaknesses in this current administration as follows: It is financing and growing the economy far too quickly. I have gone on television, radio and in paid newspaper advertisements saying that given our current human and physically-formed capita, research and development capabilities, with the physical state of the private and public sectors in terms of production and distribution capabilities, we should grow the economy between 5 to 7 per cent with a Government expenditure of between \$30 billion to \$33 billion. I have also indicated that the domestic budget—and this is something that I do not hear anybody talking about, but it is there in the textbooks—of approximately \$10 billion should be cut in half as the domestic budget deficit is a driving force of inflation—not what the society is being told. We are being told that the producers are not producing enough; it is flooding; there is this constraint and that constraint, but the truth of the matter is, the force that is driving the inflation rate is the domestic budget deficit. It is far too large and it has to be cut.

This administration is playing with statistics. It is my sincere belief that it is playing with the weights in the inflation basket in order to contain, quite understandably, the huge public sector wage demands, a public sector wage bill they propelled in the first place. My estimation of inflation is in the vicinity of 18 to 23 per cent, not 9 or 10 per cent as what is being claimed. I submitted a question just today to the Clerk of the Senate asking the Minister of Finance to give the exact weights of the basket of goods and services, the items and the percentage thereof.

The third specific weakness of this administration is its public sector expenditure and its social welfare programmes towards its source and fountain of its power and its voter machinery are not sustainable and have no long-term productivity or production opportunity. In fact, it has backfired big time. Surely

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there could be more thought and creativity with respect to production and productivity in these programmes, forgetting their lack of fairness and equity or even accountability, as indicated in the report by the Auditor General.

With respect to this specific Bill, I wish to make the following points. The funding of sports and culture should be done as it is in Great Britain as follows:

- (a) Corporate sponsorship with Government twisting the arms of big corporations;
- (b) Media rights, local and international, and the Stanford 2020 competition is a good example of where the sale of media rights covered the huge purses for the players.

Alan Stanford, a USA businessman and A. J. Warner, represent the future of what sports administrators should be. But local sports administrators must be a mirror reflection of the Ministry which governs them in the same way children reflect their parents. I therefore call for a new attitude and approach to the financing of sport and culture.

- (c) The National Lotteries Board—and this is what they do in Great Britain. First and foremost this board should not be appointed by politicians under any circumstances. In my opinion it should be headed by the CEO of one of our leading banks and include stakeholders in sport and culture, including the permanent secretaries for sport and culture. The funding of the national football team, the cricket team, pan, calypso and chutney development, drama, art and dance, should be the mission of the NLCB.

Madam President, as a society, please let us change the focus of the NLCB and its mission.

The second specific weakness of this administration to this Bill, we are transferring \$81.4 million from regional corporation services to meet expenditure in football of \$63.8 million and a gas bill to NP for \$17.6 million. Firstly, \$10 million of the \$63.8 million was a joyride. Secondly, if you add up all the gas bills of all the publicly traded companies which are collectively bigger in employment than the Government, their gas bill is not more than a quarter of that of the Government.

Thirdly, the regional corporations are starved for funds for capital development. The Penal/Debe Corporation does not have funds to fix roads where constituents are burning tyres. This is profound. In Somalia, where the national

pastime is firing guns at each other, they burn tyres to signal the presence of militia men. Does this not remind you of Trinidad?

Sen. Dumas: You wish that to happen.

Sen. H. Mungalsingh: Certainly not.

Sen. Dumas: Then do not talk “stupidness”. Somalia shooting guns, that is what you want here?

Sen. Dr. Kernahan: How far are we from that?

Sen. Dumas: Shut your mouth over there. That is “stupidness” all the time.

Sen. H. Mungalsingh: Capital development and formation in the agricultural and rural districts are more of a priority than the low-productivity URP and CEPEP programmes whilst absorbing the exact labour. That does not mean to say to kill URP, but this must be focused on single mothers and the immediately unfit for normal employment or educational opportunities, such as those coming out from prison and deportees, et cetera.

Whilst we must trust the commissioners of the Elections and Boundaries Commission, I sincerely hope that the expenditure on the upgrading on the electronic voter registration and the election management system of \$4.2 million, which was a shift of expenditure, does not lead to further statistical biases. How can this happen? Very easy. This system must be firmly bound to the physical authentication and any registration or deregistration movement from one constituency to another must be authenticated, physically.

This is especially important in the seven marginal constituencies—and there are seven, not 10. The statistical bias was further exacerbated by the housing drive and the allocation of houses to party supporters within these constituencies. This is a straightforward reality.

There was the transfer of \$29 million from sugarcane research and agricultural incentives to contracted services and the acquisition of land for non-agricultural purposes. No wonder the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources was voted the second worst Minister by a weekly newspaper. But that is not the main point. The main point is to look at our approach to research as a nation; not a word from the academics. In Trinidad and Tobago the best ideas never see the light of day due to the constant search by everyone for publicity. No wonder our researchers and academics have become newspaper columnists rather than seeing their ideas through to reputable journals.

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In education we spent \$29.0 million in teaching and learning strategies and I do hope we will see the effect of this in the SEA, CAPE and GCE results, especially in the East-West Corridor. Education opportunities are the main pre-emptive strike against a criminal culture on the East-West Corridor. I make the call again that schools be run exactly as the successful model used by the religious bodies. First and foremost, we must separate boys from girls, as we have an above-normal sexual activity. The Minister of Education is aware of the data. Seven in 10 girls are sexually active in the age group 14—18. If it is more than one in 10 in the religious schools, then we have plenty.

I see we are still subsidizing WASA and T&TEC. I thought that T&TEC was not subsidized by Government and the recent rate increase was just for that. WASA is another story of gross incompetence and mismanagement, and not a word from the Independent Senators, the public or the media. That statutory body was on its way to viability when the entire management was changed *carte blanche* because they were UNC.

Let us put a stop to this foolishness, as a society. BWIA would have been flying the skies directly to London if Mr. Duprey was still in charge. He was personally committed to the success of that airline, and we must recognize that. We must recognize that it is people who make the difference. You go in any private sector company and they go for the best people, because people make the difference. But as a Government, after 50 years we still do not believe that. We believe that parties make the difference. Should the UNC assume government, we will not make that mistake. Let us start by hiring and firing on the basis of competence, never political affiliation or race. This could only change if we are to change the rule that MPs cannot be Ministers.

I see that we would be no longer spending \$36.6 million in drainage. Drainage is an absolute priority for everyone: Indians, Africans, White, and Chinese of this nation. Yet we cannot come to a consensus that this is a priority and this is where we should be spending money. Every year for 50 years Port of Spain floods; every year for 50 years Caroni floods; every year for 50 years Penal/Debe floods and somehow I cannot understand, with so much intelligence here and intellectual power, why we cannot solve it. Yet we have soft ideas that come to us like paw-paw balls from Tobago.

I sincerely hope that the new allocation of \$68.5 million for roads and bridges is not what I am told it is, that is, it is another CEPEP-type arrangement—

Sen. Dumas: Stay away from ethnic, religious and regional arguments.

Sen. H. Mungalsingh:—for pavements slipper drains in the marginal constituencies.

In addition, if you are going to define data, you would see that \$16.0 million went to MTS, of the \$51 million in new allocation. Remember in September I said that a lot of the CEPEP arrangements would be funded off balance sheets through the Ministry of Works and Transport.

Finally, this Bill represents impure budgetary expenditures and controls which are practically not beyond our intellectual capabilities. The society expects better. Let us, as a Senate, attempt to change the rules. That is the only way it would become better. If we are to change public administration and political culture we must:

- (a) Change the electoral and governance model.
- (b) Enact legislation governing political parties in the same way the Companies Act exists to govern business operations and the Freedom of Information (FIA) exists to govern financial institutions.

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

5.30 p.m.

Sen. Basharat Ali: Madam President, I join the debate on the Finance Variation of Appropriation (2006) Bill, and I intend to make a pretty short contribution. As the Minister in the Ministry of Finance said, this really is a formality to close off the accounts of 2006, so we should not have too much to say.

Madam President, I am still grappling with some of the revenue side of this. Most of the things we have dealt with are expenditure items, but I am still grappling with revenue as it relates to the price of crude oil. I would not even bother about the gas at this stage.

I went back a bit to the year 2005, to look at what the parameters were for revenue calculation and where we ended up. The original 2005 fiscal budget estimate was for a revenue stream of \$23.093 billion with a crude oil price of US \$32.80 per barrel; that is a benchmark of the crude oil price. The actual revenue at the end of fiscal 2005 is \$28.701 billion at the benchmark price of US \$47.75 crude oil. For a differential of \$15 on the crude oil price, there was an increase in revenue of \$5.608 billion.

Moving to 2006, the original budget estimate based on US \$45 crude oil was \$32.599 billion. The actual for 2006, as far as I understand from the hon.

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Minister's presentation is \$38.760 and the price of the crude oil for that year is US \$63 per barrel. So a differential in 2006 between original estimate and final of \$18 yielded a difference of \$6.161 billion. Let me reiterate, in 2005, a differential of \$15 yielded \$5.608 billion, in 2006 a differential of \$18 yielded \$6.161 billion.

When we come to the estimates for 2007 the budget figure there is \$35.126 billion at price of US \$45 crude oil and that the probable or possible return in 2007 revenue is \$37.880 billion at crude oil price, estimated price of US \$60 per barrel. Once again, a differential of \$15. But the difference in revenue is only \$2.754 billion, and this I still cannot understand. I posed this question earlier and I am glad the hon. Minister in the Ministry of Finance is just walking in as I say that because I would like to know what has happened, that with the same differential and pretty well the same crude oil production, that differential is down to that limit. I know that those are all estimates for the 2006/2007 estimates, our final figure comes from the Appropriation Bill statement as presented to the Senate, and it comes from page 48 for those who would like to have reference to it.

Madam President, looking also at this same summary, called "a Fiscal Summary Analytical Presentation for the Year 2006" there was a capital expenditure of \$2.073 billion going into the PSIP and \$3.148 billion going into the Infrastructural Development Fund that was increased by supplementation by a further \$2.7 billion. In fact, during 2006, we added something of the order of \$5.75 billion into the capital expenditure budget to the Infrastructural Development Fund and a further \$2.1 billion into the PSIP. One can do the arithmetic—about \$7.8 billion in terms of expenditure.

Looking at the hon. Minister's projection for 2007, the IDF is \$2.992 billion, the PSIP is \$3.400, billions of dollars again, and the interesting thing is in 2007, if the crude oil price goes to US \$45, there is no transfer to the Heritage and Stabilization Fund. And if it goes to US \$60 the transfer to the Heritage and Stabilization Fund will be \$1.653 billion but there is still a further transference into the capital expenditure budget of 1.21. We seem to be catering to spend rather than to save.

I will reserve any further statement on that because I am seeing that the Heritage and Stabilization Fund Bill has been laid in the Parliament and which I know has been amended to quite a large extent in the other place. I will wait until we get there to see how all of this fits together, our spend pattern as against our save pattern in terms of heritage and stabilization. That is really my comments with respect to these numbers and I go now to the other aspect of the budget and that is what we are here to discuss.

Madam President, on the Variation of Appropriation (2006) Bill, the transfer from Head 42 of \$81.431 million to Other Items, the principal of which, in fact, is under Head 13, Office of the Prime Minister for \$32 million is listed as a reward for the World Cup 2006 National Senior Football Team, and I want to emphasize National Senior Football Team—for their performance particularly at the finals in Germany.

I think it is a most deserving reward for the 24 individuals, but we have been over enthusiastic in terms of our awards because, in a state of euphoria, we also awarded 24 individual Chaconia Gold medals to the recipients.

Madam President, I go back to what the medal is supposed to be. I will read from a document which I downloaded from the Nalis website:

“The Chaconia Medals—Gold, Silver and Bronze—is limited to ten (10) recipients each year, though the number may be less.”

It goes on to say who the awardees are and for individuals really and I quote:

“...the award is for long and meritorious service to the country or the community in their respective organizations.”

It is my humble view that the award to these footballers is premature at this stage of their career. They have not had any sustained period of success in the country. I think, in a way, giving those people the second highest award of this country as individuals, depreciates the award to those people who have received the award by virtue of their long and meritorious service. I have talked to some of the persons who received a Chaconia Gold Medal and they agree with me, in a way, that it is a depreciation of their position.

The precedent is there for giving team awards and that is what I would have done if I thought we should give them the Chaconia Gold Medal. It could have been a team award. Team awards have been given to some of the steel orchestras. I am sure the Minister of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs would agree with me, and that is where we should have been and not giving these individuals awards.

I think Shakespeare said that “what is done cannot be undone”. I ask, beseech, I beg the many young and not so young awardees to be always conscious of the great honour that has been bestowed on them and that they will be living role models to the upcoming youth of this country. And the same holds good for the other young awardees of the Humming Bird Gold Medal. We have in our midst here a seasoned Humming Bird Gold Medal award winner, Sen. Ato

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Boldon who, deservedly, has won that medal. I asked him today, in fact, what medal he had. I thought he had received a Chaconia Gold. One can understand Sen. Boldon literally with his track record receiving the Humming Bird Gold.

In 2005, the Humming Bird Silver was awarded to a young Mini-Flyweight Female World Champion in boxing, and one year later she announced her retirement from championship. I believe it was in a fit of pique, that she proceeded to place her title belt in a waste paper bin in the presence of cameras and on TV. I thought this was a terrible performance from an awardee of one of our Humming Bird Silver Medals. I do not know what she is doing right now but the same thing that I say should apply to people with a one-off win in some championship or other being honoured. I hope that we will continue to look at such matters in the context of awards which are to come and people who are being looked at.

Madam President, I draw the attention of this House to the British system whereby an honour can be annulled. This happened in the month of June where in the BBC news it states:

“Ex-champ Hamed stripped of honour”.

It says:

“Former world boxing champion Naseem Hamed has been stripped of his MBE after being jailed over a high-speed crash in his sports car”.

He was sent to jail because it was a crime that he committed, dangerous driving; 90 miles an hour in a McLaren-Mercedes supercar as they say. He collided with another driver who has been gravely injured. The judge had no problem at all in giving him a custodial sentencing. He is out of prison with an electronic bracelet I believe, and I quote—The notice in the *London Gazette* says:

“The Queen has directed that the appointment of Naseem Hamed to be a Member of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, dated 31 December 1998, shall be cancelled and annulled and that his name shall be erased from the Register of the said Order”.

Madam President, this is something I believe that we should do. We should amend our laws to provide for the recovery or annulment of our awards to people who fail to meet the requirements. After all, the Constitution provides for us Members, if we are sent to jail for more than a year, that we can no longer sit in this House. There should be the same sort of thing. These people are supposed to

be our role models and we know for a fact that one Chaconia Gold Medal holder had been jailed, and it will be a cautionary measure for those who continue to hold the medal.

Madam President, I put that to the hon. Attorney General to have a very serious look at that so that we put people on notice that an award is given in recognition of what you have done and, it also can be annulled and one's name can be removed from the list of honorees. That is one of the things I wanted to bring to the attention of this House.

The second point I bring to this House relates to a virement of \$19 million in the Ministry of Health, under the heading of Procurement of Additional Pharmaceutical and Non-pharmaceutical Supplies. Nineteen million dollars, I believe represents about 9 per cent of that allocation of about \$210 million. I would want to say in advance that this is where CDAP comes in. CDAP has been welcomed by many citizens as is evidenced by the list presented by the Minister late last year, and by the fact that if you go to a pharmacy you know there is an increase in the number of people accessing that system. But I must say also that there have been complaints. I have spoken to a couple of doctors on that matter—and Madam President, you may be more qualified than I am to this—there has been a complaint about the efficacy of the drugs that you get under that programme.

That may be related to the fact that these are generic drugs and that they are produced by various manufacturers. If that is true, then it is possible that there is a problem of sourcing from a wide variety of suppliers. Some pharmacists have also told me the same thing, that people come in and complain, that they are taking two tablets instead of the one to get the same effect.

It appears to me that we may need to look at the whole procurement process for this item which is accessed by many, and which we would like to see done in such a way that it is reliable and that we are indeed getting value for money.

In that context, I wanted to raise a matter related to the anaesthetic that has been used in this case, the fatal surgical procedure of Faith Williams.

Madam President, I happened to be looking at the television programme, “The Big Story” last Wednesday I think it was, when Dr. Anand Chatoorgoon was being interviewed by Shelly Dass. My friend, the Minister seems to know better than I. I look at the TV.

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In looking at this programme I heard the word, halothane mentioned time and time again. Right through the programme Dr. Chatoorgoon was speaking of halothane which evidently was the anaesthetic being used.

I am inquisitive when it comes to chemistry so I did go to find out what halothane is. We know chloroform was the old one, and that was taken off the list and is banned virtually because of the ill-effects on the system and because of the high chlorine, I think it is.

I went on the web and found courtesy Wikipedia, what halothane is. It is a long name and I would not say what it is. It is an inhalational general anaesthetic and the systematic name is there, a lot of bromo-chlorine fluorine in a molecule. So it is what you call halogenated hydrocarbon which I suspect because of the name halothane.

Madam President, let me read from what Wikipedia says:

“Halothane became popular as a non-flammable general anaesthetic replacing other volatile anaesthetics which is diethyl ether and cyclopropane. Use of the anaesthetic was phased out during the 1980s and 1990s as newer anaesthetic agents became popular...

Halothane retains some use in veterinary surgery and in the Third World because of its lower cost.”

Let me read that sentence again.

“Halothane retains some use in veterinary surgery and in the Third World because of its lower cost.”

Further into the article it says:

“Since the risk of halothane hepatitis in children was substantially lower than in adults, halothane saw continued use in pediatrics in the 1990s. However, by the year 2000 sevoflurane had largely replaced the use of halothane in children.”

Madam President, I have asked through some of my medical friends and they say that halothane should not be used on children. What surprises me is that with this vaporizer that is in question it is supposed to be a new one. I am wondering if we are still using halothane, where have we procured this and how much of it is here. Is it that we are being used as a dumping ground for this chemical which is no longer used in the First World evidently? I would like to see that this item particularly, the whole procurement process be part of any investigations. So far,

all I have seen are the questions posed to or the accusation to Dr. Chatoorgoon from the Medical Board. I have not seen and it may be that the web is wider because I believe—I have not seen the report but what was reported by an independent anaesthetic specialist from the UK who came down is that these vapourizers should be commissioned by the supplier. That is one thing which needs to be investigated. When evidently from what I have from listening to the programme, there was no calibration of this particular vapourizer and it was delivering 11 or 12 times what it should and certainly caused the death of this child.

There are two things here. Whether it is in the procurement policy we are making provisions for goods to be examined.

Secondly, we must see whether halothane and why halothane has not been withdrawn from our markets, if these statements from Wikipedia, a reputable encyclopedia, are true. I saw the *Sunday Express* asked for an inquest. I think that is a waste of time. We must find some other mechanism to investigate this case.

My fellow Senator, Dana Seetahal, S.C. in her Sunday article said she had read where the biomedical people were also culpable. The biomedical people are the ones who would be responsible for handling the procured goods and for testing it and so forth.

I would like to ensure—and maybe, that can be conveyed to the Minister of Health; I do not think the Medical Board is the authority to do all of this. The Medical Board will handle doctors but not the rest of it. [*Interruption*] To me, it is a key item and I would not wish this to appear as a witch hunt against Dr. Chatoorgoon who claims that he has 31 years' experience in anaesthetics. I do not know whether it is true or not. I listened to him and I feel that he should be given a fair hearing. That is the other aspect that should be investigated.

Madam President, I do not have any other problem with the Bill before us, and I am quite happy to support it. Thank you very much.

The Minister of National Security (Sen. The Hon. Martin Joseph): Madam President, I am pleased to participate in the debate, the Finance (Variation of Appropriation) (2006), Bill, 2007. In my contribution I will focus on the contributions made by my colleague, Sen. Wade Mark and Sen. Prof. Ramesh Deosaran.

With respect to Sen. Mark, one would notice during his contribution that I got up because I felt that Sen. Mark was giving the wrong impression not just to this honourable Senate, but by extension, to the national population.

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Madam President, there are two things about the whole issue of CEPEP that Sen. Mark focused on that I think needs to be corrected.

The first and unfortunate one is that Sen. Mark has given to the national population the impression that some of the CEPEP contractors whom he identified were making millions of dollars.

Madam President, for the records, CEPEP contractors are responsible for either one or two types of contracts. There is what is called a 6-team contractor for which there are 60 persons. I think there are 10 persons per team and then there is a 4-team contractor which means 40 persons for the record of this honourable House. I think I need to put in the record the question about the average payment to a 6-team contractor.

The monthly payment to a 6-team contractor is \$183,682.58. Of that \$125,888.78, some 68.05 per cent goes to wages for the team. Let me repeat that: \$125,888.78 or some 68.5 per cent of that \$183,682.58 goes to the payment for the workers. [*Crosstalk*] But you are impatient. Then wait.

Madam President: Members, in a debate a Member is allowed to rebut what was said by another Member and I would like you to please give the Member an opportunity to do so. He is replying to questions and to matters that were raised by other Members. But you are not giving him a chance to speak.

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: Madam Speaker, thanks for the protection. The contractor operations fees, same 6-team—All the information I am currently giving is for the 6-team contractor—

Monthly Payments	Monthly Amount \$	Percentage of Total Payment
Contractor Operations Fees		
VAT Payments	23,958.60	13.04
Equipment Repair and Upkeep	3,000.00	1.63
Rent	1,200.00	0.65

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Monthly Payments	Monthly Amount \$	Percentage of Total Payment
Contractor Operations Fees		
Operational Supplies	2,400.00	1.31
Travelling	1,575.00	0.86
Insurances	1,435.00	0.78
Other Business Expenses	4,083.00	2.22
Contractor Administrative Salaries	15,000.00	8.17

That is with respect to a 6-team contractor.

Contractor administrative salaries in the only category I have, is \$15,000.

6.00 p.m.

The monthly payments for 4-team contractors

Monthly Payments	Monthly Amount \$	Percentage of Total Payment
Contractor Total Payments		
Wages	124,579.87	
Employee Wages	83,925.85	67.37
Contractor Operations Fees		
VAT Payments	16,249.55	13.04
Equipment Repair and Upkeep	2,500.00	2.01
Rent	1,000.00	0.80
Operational Supplies	1,600.00	1.28
Travelling	1,050.00	0.84

Monthly Payments	Monthly Amount \$	Percentage of Total Payment
Insurances	1,268.33	1.02
Other Business Expenses	3,558.00	2.86
Contractor Administrative Salaries	9,000.00	7.22

That is the information and, as a result, the impression given that these CEPEP contractors—[*Interruption*] That is the first thing. The impression is given—and I hope I am wrong—that the Minister of Public Utilities and the Environment, who has responsibility indirectly for CEPEP, gave a contract to her father. Madam President, the reason I can say this is that when CEPEP first came into existence, it was under my portfolio. At the time, I was the Minister of Public Utilities and the Environment, so lock me up. It was at that time that all of the contracts were issued. It is wrong to give the impression that the current Minister is responsible for giving her father a contract. Those are the two points that I wish to make. That is it for me and Sen. Mark.

My colleague, Sen. Prof. Deosaran, in making his contribution talked about the cultural lag as it relates to industrialization and as we move towards industrialization, there are certain issues that the Government must be concerned about. I listened and I want to let my colleague know that sometimes when I do not speak I obtain the *Hansard* and go through it to see the comments made and how they can best be implemented. The Senator talked about the reluctance to change, the period of introspection, research and development and sectoral wages.

The part that motivated me to speak this afternoon is the part where he talked about dependent and independent variables and said that we focused so much on the independent variables. Invariably we come here and talk about how much we spend, et cetera, and as a result we do not really deal with the outcomes part. He said: What is the result? We deal with the independent variables and what are the results.

I want to spend this afternoon talking about some of the results. As I get to them, I will identify them. A statement was made also, when we talked about Vision 2020 and I heard someone across the floor say it was a failure. This Government, as you all know, has made bold its intention to make Trinidad and Tobago a developed society on or before 2020.

When we first talked about Vision 2020, it was the year 2000. It was 20 years away. Now, when we talk about Vision 2020, in 2007, it is 13 years away. I have always said that it is my intention to live in a developed society without moving out of here. With God's help, I expect to be living in a developed society in 13 years' time. I know you are calculating. Hopefully, God will help me to be around.

We have said that the fundamental objective of Vision 2020 is to improve the quality of life and standard of living of all our citizens towards what obtains in other developed societies. All of us have had experience with developed societies. We have either lived there or visited there; if not, we have family or friends who live there. If none of those, we have seen, whether in the movies or elsewhere, what obtains in a developed society.

There are those who feel that this is a nice dream, but visions are really dreams and they now have to be translated into action. We have said that we will achieve developed society status by focusing on five development pillars. They are as follows:

- nurturing a caring society;
- developing innovative people;
- governing effectively;
- investing in sound infrastructure and the environment; and
- facilitating competitive business.

The developmental parity for which the Ministry of National Security has primary responsibility is governing effectively. This is not the only Ministry with primary responsibility. In that sub-area, four components are identified. These are:

- administration of justice;
- governance and institutional structures for development;
- law, administration and legal affairs; and
- national security and public safety.

The Government, through the Ministry of Planning and Development, has developed an operational plan for 2007 to 2010, for which certain objectives have been identified. For national security, 10 objectives have been identified. Permit me to recall them:

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- significantly reduce crime by using a holistic, sustained approach that addresses the root causes of crime;
- reduce the involvement of young people in crime;
- increase the homicide detection rate;
- reduce recidivism through the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders;
- instill a culture of law and order and respect for human life among our citizens;
- restore public trust and confidence in the protective services;
- create an integrated national security infrastructure which ensures that the issues of crime, public safety and national security are addressed on a holistic and sustained basis;
- protect the borders of Trinidad and Tobago from illegal entry and exit of people and products;
- secure Trinidad and Tobago's interest through international, regional and local defence efforts; and
- protect all citizens from the hazards of natural and man-made disasters.

They go on to identify the targeted outcomes, and some 17 targeted outcomes are identified to be achieved during the period 2007 to 2010. For completeness, I think I should also identify the targeted outcomes.

- The number of serious crimes, especially murder, reduced and we have to indicate the percentage by which we propose to reduce it in 2007. I boldly say that we have indicated that we would like to reduce it by at least 10 per cent;
- The homicide detection rate increased—and later on I will talk about that;
- Gang-related activities reduced;
- The number of youth offenders reduced;
- Recidivism rate reduced;
- The number of domestic and industrial accidents reduced;
- The number of road accidents reduced;
- Illegal entry of goods and products reduced;

- An integrated national security system in operation;
- New fire stations constructed—and we identified the various areas in which they are to be. Let me read them:
Sangre Grande, Couva, San Fernando, Rio Claro, Mayaro, Arouca, Tunapuna, Four Roads, Point Fortin, Siparia, Princes Town, Belmont, Chaguanas, Black Rock and Plymouth;
- New police stations constructed at Carenage, Matelot, Manzanilla, Maracas Bay, Oropouche, Matura, Moruga, La Brea, Arima, St. Clair, Roxborough and Old Grange;
- An anti-terrorism unit established;
- A new prison complex in Tobago constructed;
- A multi-level correctional complex established in Central Trinidad;
- The national disaster plan revised;
- A public education campaign on disaster preparedness conducted; and
- A machine-readable passport system implemented.

Madam President, with respect to 2006, you will recall that the three major concerns in the national population were as follows:

- bombings;
- homicides; and
- kidnappings.

Statistics is still the barometer by which we measure the effectiveness of law enforcement. Understandably, for families and victims of families who have been traumatized, statistics are of little solace. That goes without saying. However, by the same token, there must be some ability to measure performance. The Professor was saying the same thing. What are the results?

For all of 2006, there were no bombings. For 2006, homicides decreased from 386 to 369. It was a small decrease, some 4.6 per cent, but a decrease however. I have said—and I hope the Senator is not too annoyed about it—that last year the only person who I heard say something about the changes they started to see in the homicide statistics was Sen. Dana Seetahal, S.C. I am not saying this to butter her up. She said in a debate last year that we were starting to see a reduction in the rate of increase. When we said that, people said that was no solace, but that is where it has to start. It has to start somewhere, Madam President. Any reversal

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requires some change. You have to start to reduce or to stop the rate of the increase before the change can take place. She was the only one. I know it because at the time it was not popular to say that. I guess the population was so anxious, and perhaps rightfully so, that they wanted to see results right away.

Kidnappings, especially kidnapping for ransom, have decreased. They decreased in 2006. There were 51 kidnappings for ransom in 2005 and, in 2006, there were 17. Unfortunately, coming to the end of the year, there were three kidnappings, the last being a high-profile kidnapping in the case of Vindra Naipaul-Coolman, about which law enforcement and everybody are very concerned. Notwithstanding that, there was a reduction in kidnappings for ransom and in overall kidnapping.

Notwithstanding the fact that we had a minor reduction in homicides, we had another high-profile homicide, taken to another level, in terms of one of our councillors. Then, again, last night a situation occurred. I hope the commissioner and the Senate do not mind me indicating what the commissioner said at a press conference he had today. I quote, Madam President, with your leave:

“The facts are that at 8:15 p.m. last night (January 22nd) armed men entered the Sutherland’s home at 4 John Street, Redhill, Pelican Extension in Morvant and shot Mrs. Elizabeth Sutherland, her husband Ivan, daughter Anika and Kevin Serrette, a visitor to the home.

I wish to denounce in the strongest possible manner the nefarious acts perpetrated on the family of the Sutherlands. Elizabeth Ann Sutherland, 48, joined the Special Reserve Police in 1997 and later became a police officer in 2001, and last served in the district where she lived. Her last assignment was at the Morvant Police Station where she performed routine office duties.

I wish to correct the information that has been circulating in the media regarding Mrs. Sutherland’s involvement in a recent court matter and alluding to the fact that her death may have been linked to this. She was not a party to any matter before the court and had no reason to give evidence. The information therefore is misleading.

Senior officers including two Assistant Commissioners visited the home and began an intense enquiry.

As Police Commissioner, I am taking this as an attack against myself and the men and women who serve under me. This crime is heinous and I am using all my resources to bring the perpetrators to justice.

I am imploring citizens to become more aware of what is happening in their surroundings and to report any strange activities to the nearest police station, or call 555, 999 or Crime Stoppers 800-TIPS (8477).

Commissioner of Police Trevor Paul”

Madam President, we do not like to hear that there are certain circumstances in the environment that continue to propel crime in Trinidad and Tobago. When we say that, people figure that the Government is making excuses. It is not about making excuses. If we do not have a good handle on what is causing the crimes, then any effort we make to treat with it will go to naught.

We have said over and over that our location, smack in the middle of the drug-producing countries and the consuming countries of the north, fuels what is taking place. Part of the strategy is to reduce, since it is not likely that we can eliminate, the drugs and guns that come to our country which play a major part in the crime. The technology that the Government is utilizing is designed to help us treat with those things as we continue to provide law enforcement with the type of capabilities to treat with it.

Madam President, let us look at some of the overall statistics for 2006. The reason I am doing this is that my colleague asked where the results are. The professor would be the first to say that this is reported crime. I can only treat with what is reported. I would just be guestimating what percentage of the crime goes unreported. This is the reason why, in all police jurisdictions, homicides are used as the barometer of police performance. That is the world over. Sen. Prof. Deosaran may be better able to say why because he is a criminologist. I am not.

We have talked about the reduction of murders by about 4.6 per cent. Let us look at how we compare with the Caribbean. The professor said something here today that made me smile. I will be talking a lot about the professor because he talked about the fact that this was a global phenomenon. However, when my Prime Minister talks about what is happening in crime as being a global phenomenon, they want to crucify him.

Notice that I do not talk a lot. [*Interruption*] He used to say that I am the silent one. [*Interruption*] Yes, because all I am concerned about is making sure that the agencies perform.

Madam President, let us see how we compare. I can do all this because Sen. Prof. Deosaran has provided me with an entrée and for that I am most grateful. I do not know when I will get another opportunity. Jamaica had a reduction in

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2006 of 20.3 per cent. Their homicides went from 1,674 in 2005 to 1,335 in 2006. Only last week, at this very time, I had to run away from the Senate because there was a meeting of the Bureau of Ministers of National Security and Law Enforcement. I was talking to my colleague, Dr. Peter Phillips, and he said that even though he had such a good performance, the year started bad for him. They murdered seven of his police officers in Jamaica during the month of January. He said that the only comfort you could get, if there is any comfort, is to realize the vagaries of what we are into. Jamaica recorded the highest reduction.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

The Minister of Public Administration and Information and Minister of Energy and Energy Industries (Sen. The Hon. Dr. Lenny Saith): Madam President, I beg to move that the Senate continues its debate on this Bill until it is completed.

Question put and agreed to.

FINANCE (VARIATION OF APPROPRIATION) (2006) BILL

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: Of course, in the comparative statistics to compare murders, they normally say per 100,000. Jamaica even with those figures is 50.5 murders per 100,000. St. Kitts/Nevis had a 112.5 per cent increase in 2006—35.5 per 100,000. They moved from 8 in 2005 to 17 in 2006. Belize had a 16.7 per cent increase—32.2 per 100,000. They moved from 78 to 91. Of course, Trinidad and Tobago had a 4.6 per cent reduction—28.6 per 100,000. St. Lucia had a marginal 5.4 per cent increase—24 per 100,000. They moved from 37 to 39. Guyana had a 7 per cent increase from 142 to 153 or 20.4 per 100,000. Puerto Rico had a marginal increase, less than 1 per cent—18.9 per 100,000. The Bahamas had a 15.4 per cent increase. They moved from 52 to 60 and their rate is 18.7 per 100,000. The British Virgin Islands had a 33.3 per cent increase; Antigua, a 300 per cent increase. They moved from 3 to 12 and their rate is 15 per 100,000. St. Vincent is the other country with a reduction. They had a 50 per cent reduction. They moved from 26 to 13. Grenada had 1 per cent; Barbados, 4 per cent; and Dominica had a reduction also. They moved from 8 to 3.

So, Madam President, this gives us an indication as to how we are doing. Even though it is just a miniscule reduction, it is a start. Someone said that the journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. So we are seeing a reduction and we are confident that we will see a reduction in 2007 as the measures that are being put in place bear fruit.

Let me say something about detection in the context of what is being set for the Ministry of National Security. When we set up the Homicide Bureau of Investigation in this very Senate in 2005, I had indicated some of the measures we were putting in place. We talked about staffing it. We had also indicated what would be some of the performance measures.

We were targeting a 30 per cent reduction rate between November 2005 and January 2006. From February 2006 to April 2006, we were expecting a 35 per cent reduction; May 2006 to July 2006, a 40 per cent reduction; August 2006 to October 2006, a 45 per cent reduction; and November 2006 to January 2007, a 50 per cent reduction. Unfortunately, in 2006, there was a 25 per cent reduction. So we know we are far off, but again, given the presence of the UK officers, given the training, given some of the other things that are also taking place, we will also see an increasing reduction.

I know that people keep saying that there are three issues with respect to crime that we need to look at. We need to look at:

- (1) the prevention of crime;
- (2) the detection of crime; and
- (3) conviction or prosecution.

Unfortunately, we are having challenges with respect to convictions and you know why. We have to move from reliance on eye witnesses and confessions and those other types of things to more scientific methods. This is where the question of DNA and other training will help. The challenge we face, given the problems we are having with respect to detection and conviction, is to pay more attention to prevention.

Now detection and conviction, as you know, help prevention. As people realize that if they commit a crime, they will be caught, taken to court, tried and convicted, it will serve as a deterrent, but in the absence of that the challenge is to increase prevention. Therein lies the challenge. When we look at other jurisdictions and see increases in certain types of crime, you put the resources there at the time, et cetera, so that there can be prevention. It requires a mind shift. It requires the training and all those other things necessary to bring about those changes. We are seeing some of those changes.

I will make the point again; I will make it over and over that the answer is not, whether here or in a public forum, to ridicule law enforcement. That is not the answer. Even though there is the temptation—yes, Sen. Mark says you are under

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pressure; yes sometimes you feel that you are under pressure and yes, you have to resist that urge to hit out. You could hit out and say it is not me; it is them who are not doing this and that. That is not going to give us the result in the long run.

We have to continue to identify the weaknesses that exist; how we provide the resources so that the weaknesses can be addressed and law enforcement provisions provided by the Government. If we want good law enforcement, we have to have good law enforcement officers. We have to remember how we got to where we are. We did not get here overnight.

Sen. Mark: You were in bed with the criminals; that is why we are here.

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: Madam President, I am saying all this because the Government, as the Executive, has a responsibility to provide our protective and law enforcement services with the resources necessary. We are talking about training, human, physical, equipment, et cetera, to get them to be high-performing organizations.

Let me say one other thing. I need to put it on public record. The Prime Minister has come in for a lot of licks as it relates to the proclamation of the police Bills—the Constitution (Amdt.) Bill to deal with the whole question of the commissioner and the Police Complaints Authority, and the Police Reform Bill.

Madam President, one of the reasons we took almost a year—it took a year before the Acts were proclaimed—is that it was necessary to ensure that all the regulatory and administrative things necessary to make the Acts operational were put in place. We went to Cabinet and got approval to establish a senior planning group comprising experts in various areas. I think I said that in the Parliament before. It took a while to get that planning group. When we got the senior planning group, we underestimated the length of time it would take to make sure that all the things that are supposed to be in place were in place.

They are now in place and as a result the Bills have now been proclaimed. People are asking what are some of the immediate things one can expect with the proclamation. While we have had a large measure of success in terms of kidnappings, we are constantly reviewing how to deal with them. We have an anti-kidnapping unit. I believe that an anti-kidnapping unit must, as far as possible, stop kidnappings from happening and not just kick in when a kidnapping occurs.

I have to be guided in terms of what I say here now because I do not want to pre-empt anybody. We are reviewing the way in which law enforcement treats with kidnapping and pretty soon you will see some major changes as it relates to that.

My friend talked about what happened in Colombia. We are very mindful of that. We have a security cooperation agreement with the Government of Colombia and we are the beneficiary of some of their expertise. We also have some of the expertise from the UK officers here. I do not want to say anymore, but pretty soon you will see changes in the way law enforcement treats with kidnapping.

6.30 p.m.

The other thing is that the law now allows for police court prosecutors to be sergeants and above. The thinking is that sergeants because of their position will bring a certain level of competency in terms of the ability to prosecute, because there have been criticisms with respect to police prosecutors lacking the competence and the capabilities to successfully prosecute cases. So that immediately what will happen—and again, I have to be careful that I do not say too much. Clearly, you are going to see some immediate results as it relates to that change. Ability to also establish a legal department where we are going to bring the lawyers, et cetera, and then immediately we are going to start doing some training to bring up to the capabilities and we have all those dots lined up.

Also—let me just back up—the commissioner now is given complete autonomy for the running of his police organization, but of course, answerable to the Police Service Commission in different ways. Now, clearly through an assessment process that is now being established, the commissioner will be in a better position to make sure that he has the ability to identify competence and be able to promote competence so that you have the most suitable persons in positions to ensure the performance of the organization, and a performance assessment centre is now going to be put in place to allow him to do that.

He has to be able to do that before he can exercise something else that the new legislation now gives him, the ability to bring people from outside the organization into the organization. It will do tremendous damage to morale if you bring persons from outside and the competencies reside there. So you have to find ways and means of making sure you can now promote the most suitable people to positions that would improve the performance as I said. Then where you have gaps you now have the ability to bring people in.

The legislation also contemplated what happens in the defence force. In the defence force there is the ability to bring in a cadre of officers, people who come in at the officer level and train; the commissioner could now do that. That was tried before, not with the new legislation and it was resisted because it was felt that you must come through the ranks, et cetera, et cetera. The Bill will now allow some of these developments to take place in a short order.

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Also, the better and swifter implementation of disciplinary measures will also come about. Both the Police Service Commission and the Ministry will have a new remit with respect to the governance of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. It is expected that the Police Service Commission will now have an appeals body responsible for hearing appeals of the commissioner's disciplinary and promotions decisions; a research and evaluation bureau responsible for evaluating the performance of the commissioner, deputy commissioners and the police service according to criteria set forth by the Police Service Commission; a public education bureau, responsible for communicating with the public about the results of the commission's efforts to evaluate the performance of the commissioner, the deputy commissioners and the police service. The Ministry will have a new governance unit tasked with ensuring that the police operate within the context of the strategic policy directions and the overall budget control.

There is a lot of expectation as it relates to the transformation of the police service, the transformation is taking place, and we are starting to see the results. Let me just indicate, 1,200 officers have been beneficiaries of the high impact supervision seminar, leadership skills, motivation techniques, employee counselling, customer service. Some 300 officers have received police executive training which provides executive officers with practical skills for thinking differently about policing. It involves an inductive and cumulative approach to knowledge building that culminates in a comprehensive management model designed to assist the officers with future organizational management challenges.

Homicides. Officers have been introduced to modern crime scene management methodologies and techniques that are today being used by the Homicide Bureau of Investigation, the Forensic Science Centre, pathologists and the district medical officers. These officers' experience and expertise in the collection of forensic evidence at crime scenes will allow us to move from the sole dependence on eyewitnesses' testimony to an increased use of forensic evidence in court cases.

Additionally, there is a more professional approach to the securing of crime scenes and the collection of evidence. The introduction of family liaison officers in serious cases has served to improve the relationship between families and investigators. I have said something already about kidnappings.

Madam President, let me just indicate one other thing, because I know it has been a pet peeve with my colleague, Sen. Seetahal, S.C. as it relates to forensic. Let me just say, again, results; what has been happening. In the Forensic Science

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Centre, the Integrated Ballistic Identification System, (IBIS), which we have indicated that has been up and running, from October 2005 to December 31, 2006, 1,635 cases have been entered into the IBIS machine. There have been 45 hits as at the end of December 2006. This information has been passed on to the police for case matters. There are now three IBIS operators as of October 2005. When they talk about a “hit” it means they have been able to match—okay, I see Sen. Seetahal, S.C. nodding her head.

Firearms. For fiscal year 2005, there were 229 reported. This means that the evidence process has been completed and a report generated. In fiscal year 2006, with the assistance of the consultants for the Forensic Science Service of the UK, who were in Trinidad and Tobago for a period of three months, 612 cases were reported. For fiscal year 2007, three personnel have been contracted and two additional local officers were appointed Scientific Officer I, bringing the staff to eight. This has resulted in a total of 504 cases being reported in the first quarter of 2007. The backlog has been reduced by 20 per cent and is expected to be eliminated by the end of fiscal year 2007.

In terms of narcotic cases; in January 2005 there was a backlog of 489 cases. As of today, there are only 50 cases from 2006 awaiting processing of which 25 were received in December 2006. This was facilitated by increasing the staff from two analysts in 2004 to six in 2006. The turnaround time has been reduced to one month for narcotic cases from three months prior to fiscal year 2006.

With respect to the immediate issue raised as it relates to the \$400,000 that Sen. Wade Mark tried to make big issue out of—and I think my colleague, Sen. Dumas put it in perspective—in any case you are talking about \$400,000 out of a budget of approximately \$3 billion, and what are the reasons for which it is—Well first of all, I did not go with any band, I mean it is so irresponsible—and he is telling me I am setting up my face, I must set up my face— When he talked about the fact that the reason for transfer, an additional \$400,000 was needed to meet the estimated cost of \$892,000 for airfare and related expenses for the Defence Force Steel Orchestra's visit to the United States from April 27, 2006 to May 2006 to perform at the Annual Military Tattoo Ceremony and other plans overseas.

Madam President, Trinidad and Tobago is supposed to be known as steel band, chutney and calypso, but steel band is first and we have a proud tradition. When our military is invited to a military tattoo—a military tattoo is a big thing, and for us to be invited. This year we are grappling; we have gotten invitations from six countries to come and perform in military tattoos; that is because of the professionalism and the competence and we should all be proud. [*Desk thumping*]

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

Motion made, That the hon. Senator's speaking time be extended by 15 minutes. [*Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh*]

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: We love to hear him.

Question put and agreed to.

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: Thank you very much, Madam President and thank you colleagues; I doubt I will be using all of the 15 minutes.

The second one, he talked about the question of the specialized youth programme. I would be the first to admit that the Ministry of National Security has been having no end of challenge as it pertains to bringing in MILAT, MYPART and military service. If I am to be evaluated on that alone, I will be fired, because it has been around since I became Minister of National Security. The reason we are challenged with it is in light of all of the other programmes that the Government is providing, we want to make sure—You are the first people who asked for value for money and we are trying to make sure that you get value for money. My Prime Minister does not even like to hear me say anything about MILAT and MYPART again, because it has been so much on the cards. I think we have now made a breakthrough and this is after consultations with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education, the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs and the Ministry of National Security, that we are confident that we are going to be able to bring a programme in place to treat with—because you remember part of our objective is to reduce the young people involvement in crime. And we believe that those programmes, if addressing some of the hard core likely criminals might be able to bring about some level of relief.

Sen. Seetahal, S.C.: What about the outreach manager?

Sen. The Hon. M. Joseph: The outreach manager might have been a position within the whole specialized youth programme.

Madam President, I hope that we have been able to indicate to my colleagues on the other side what are some of the measures which the Government is in fact putting in place to treat with the unacceptable levels of crime and criminal activity. We are not satisfied and we are confident that law enforcement as we continue to progress in 2007, will provide us—us, citizens of Trinidad and Tobago—with the level of security and safety that we so need, desire and expect.

Thank you very much, Madam President.

Sen. Ato Boldon: Thank you, Madam President. I promise to be brief this evening; first of all in the interest of us not going over the midnight hour and also because speaking at this point there have been so many very interesting and I think very valid points made with regard to what we are debating this evening.

Before I get into what little I have to say, I do want to address what my friend from the Independent Bench, Sen. Ali said, and just to refresh your collective memories, he made the point about the Soca Warriors and them perhaps being rewarded too much based on what they have accomplished.

You can look at it from that perspective, but my concern is always—as the calypso goes—"how it go look". In this case the importance of rewarding excellence by young people, especially in this day and age—I heard Sen. Dr. Mc Kenzie make a statement in this Senate last year. [*Interruption*] Well, you know it had to be last year, 2006. She talked about how difficult it is for law enforcement to stem the tide of what is going on in terms of crime; she made the reference to, it is like trying to mop the sea.

The statistics that the hon. Minister of National Security referenced, I think are directly related to the number of young people who, because they have nothing else that can occupy their time and energy end up, I believe, on the wrong path. I could not very well make any contribution this evening and not say that I as someone— I was asked by the Senator what medals I have; I believe it is Humming Bird and Chaconia, but it does not matter, the bottom line is that it was for those young men last year, because of the historical significance of what they did.

Yes, they did not necessarily win the entire thing, but I just want to respectfully disagree with the Senator and say that [*Desk thumping*] when young people do something like that, I believe you have to reward it, because if you say, okay, you do not want to go overboard, as we tend to, and reward them too much; I would always be concerned that the next generation coming would look at that and say, wait a minute, nobody really made a big deal about this great achievement and therefore why should I even bother, because it is not going to be made a big deal of and the one thing that I can tell you is that athletes do not mind being acknowledged.

Sen. Seetahal, S.C.: They love it.

Sen. A. Boldon: Yes, well, some of them. I needed to say to the Senator that sometimes a different perspective has to be taken about things like that.

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He also made the point about removing an award once it is given. First of all, I do not know if I could be objective about saying something like that, but for example, we have had national athletes in this country who have had great success and then subsequently fallen on hard times. I can tell you—I think I was in high school last of everybody that is in here—that even if the story does not end the way we would like a fairy tale athlete ending to in fact conclude, the inspiration, not just the inspiration, but the example that that person was at that time, once that award or reward is given it is something that should not be then taken away if life deals them an unkind hand, because I think the medal is given because of a particular achievement at that time and I am very familiar with the case the Senator referred to.

He happens to be one of my favourite athletes, now that his career is over he has been a little reckless, I do not think that takes away from the number of British young people that that person has in fact inspired. I do not know if I would necessarily second; I understand what he is saying because we do have a tendency to go a little overboard when something happens, but at the same time I am always first and foremost concerned with, how is this going to look to someone who is following in that path or who would like to be where that person is in a few years or in another couple of years.

In some of my casual conversations with my colleagues from the Government side, I am admonished at times, they say, you know Ato you are new to this thing, which I will concede. They say that governance is not easy; it is easy to sit on the Opposition side and essentially pick the things that you are in disagreement about and bring them. They try to push home the point that governance is not easy and I will concede that simply because I have no prior experience in doing that.

However, Madam President, I could not sit and listen to the contribution from Sen. Dumas without registering my own opinion. In the discussions that we have had this evening, the good Senator—who unfortunately is not in the Senate at present—talked about a conflict of interest in terms of them wanting to reward the people who were associated with the Soca Warriors and in particular, Mr. Jack Warner. Also mention was made of Bertille St. Clair, but I will come back to that, because there is no real conflict of interest there.

The concept of conflict of interest is one that I am glad that he raised, because as I said at the outset, I do not claim to have a ton of experience, but I believe I am smart enough, when I look at this report by the Auditor General that clearly this Government has not exactly been the champions of conflict of interest. You know the Academy Awards nominations came out this morning and as someone

who likes movies I am into that, I would probably want to submit the good Senator's name for next year because I do not understand—

The hon. Minister Chin Lee as well as Minister Yuille-Williams, will tell you that I was one of the first people to come to them last year, and in particular Minister Chin Lee because I felt that given what his budget constraints were, I believe he did a very good job of promoting the Soca Warriors and Minister Yuille-Williams did a very good job of it as well. But I think that in the same sense that sometimes we have to put aside, as we pray every day, prejudices, I think that sometimes we come here and we forget that part of what is supposed to happen in here and there is no way you can stand in this honourable Senate and talk about the fact that—*[Interruption]* Okay, you do not want to reward someone because of a conflict of interest, but let that be something which is consistent in your actions.

When you look at how this programme is being run, I do not think you can say that they are being consistent across the board and here is my example. The hon. Minister said, it was his contention that this side wants to see everyone who is PNM affiliated starve or the fact that by virtue of being affiliated with anyone who is in the party that we on this side do not want that to happen. I would counter that that is not true at all. I am happy for those who are benefiting from these contracts, but I think if you want to talk about conflict of interest and deny charges of nepotism, then there needs to be, to a simpleton like me, someone who looks at how the contracts are being awarded and to whom they are being awarded. Where is the equality there?

In other words, I do not have a problem with the hon. Minister Beckles' father being affiliated, but when you see one and you see another one and then we see three, four, seven and eight, at some point you have to be honest and say okay, do not talk conflict of interest if everyone in the party is somehow in breach of that whole system of conflict of interest, when it is clear that people affiliated with the party are being given preferential treatment where these contracts are concerned; let us be honest. *[Desk thumping]*

But the reason—I am glad to see the hon. Minister is back—I think that bothers me because I am always concerned with what our image is and that relates back to some of the dealings I have on a level as it refers to sports. I had a very lengthy conversation—it is my opinion that this is the best athlete ever born on these shores, he now represents the USA. Without breaching the confidentiality of our conversation, his reason to me for not wanting to be involved in representing his country is because there is a perception that things here do not always operate

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aboveboard. We forget sometimes—because it becomes us versus them versus the other, as the case may be—that there are young people looking on; there are other countries looking on; there are potential visitors looking on and when we see things happen and the result of it is a report which shows clearly that things are not being run properly—we talk about brain drain, but there are so many—to take it back to the football side of things. [*Interruption*] Yes.

Mention was made earlier about the fact that there was a coach, Bertille St. Clair who was involved in this team; he did not see them the full way but I do not think anyone can discount his contribution to where the team came. I look here and I see the 129 persons who were taken to Germany; I met most of them. As I said, I commend the Minister because I thought he did a good job. Do I think they could have done a good job for less than \$9 million? Probably, but that is not really what I am here to debate. As far as I am concerned, they did a good job. When I see this figure and the figure says almost \$10 million, then I say would it have been so difficult just as a show of good faith to improve the image of how we look, both to people who are interested locally and abroad. You are trying to tell me we could not have made a little special something for Bertille and say, you know what, Mr. St. Clair—

First of all, and I am sure the Tobagonians in the Senate will agree with me; Tobago, whether or not we want to admit it, always feels slighted. You know what? I do not blame them, Madam President. Sometimes we do forget about our sister isle in more ways than one. Our captain Dwight Yorke is from Tobago, but given that this Tobagonian gave so generously of his services, even if he was not the man to take us all the way, would it have been so hard, when you see a figure like that, to have given him something too? What happens if the next great anything, but certainly the next great coach is going to come from Tobago, where is the incentive for that person to keep going? Is it not easier for that person to say, well look at what they did to Bertille; why am I going inside of there? It would be a lot easier for that person to do that.

Sen. Dr. Saith: Jack.

Sen. A. Boldon: We will get to Jack, because you all love to bring up Jack. It will be so much easier to do that.

Sen. Dumas. Do not talk about Bertille.

Sen. A. Boldon: Do not talk about Bertille?

Sen. Dumas: I just want to put a piece of information on the table.

Sen. A. Boldon: Sure, no problem.

Sen. Dumas: I would just want to suggest that before you go speaking as to what should be offered to Bertille or whether he should be taken and so on, that you find out whether he wanted to go, given the treatment that he had received from the leadership of the TTFA before hand.

7.00 p.m.

Sen. A. Boldon: Madam President, my reference was not to whether Mr. St. Clair should have been taken to the World Cup, that was not my reference. *[Interruption]* I made no such reference.

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: He was forgotten.

Sen. A. Boldon: My reference was to how he was treated after the whole thing was over. It may be that he did not want to go, and I will concede that I know there were—through you, Madam President, I know that there were issues between him and how he was, as some said, unceremoniously dumped.

Hon. Senator: By whom?

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

Sen. A. Boldon: But we will get to that, we will get to that. *[Interruption]* Mr. Vice-President, in going through the security checkpoint recently, I saw a young man—looking about, maybe 19 or 20 years old—with an immense ring on his finger, plenty diamonds and it occurred to me, okay he does not look like anybody I know from entertainment so I decided that I would ask him the nature of this huge thing on his finger. Mr. Vice-President, what he said to me was amazing, it kind of blew my mind and I think it is relevant here in that he is a towel boy—I know there is probably a better term for it. *[Interruption]* I do not want to say towel boy, but he is a—*[Interruption]*

I have to explain to you what he does. When someone falls on the floor on an NBA game he goes and he wipes it.

Sen. Dr. Mc Kenzie: Yes.

Sen. A. Boldon: Big Miami Heat championship ring. *[Interruption]* It occurred to me in hearing the discussion, there are times when you have to put aside, as I said before, the prejudices. And I say that to anyone who is in power now and will be in power in the future. I say it to anyone because I believe it is the one time—if you want to come and talk about the statistics of crime and why it is that we have—

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We do not have a clue! I turned 33 years recently and I can tell you that I listen, I read and I look at what is happening in the schools and I cannot relate to it. I listened to Minister Hinds in the House yesterday, talking about what their level of deviance was as it came to—the things that young boys do when they are in high school. And to me, I think what I did, was maybe closer to what he was describing but I do not have any sense of how it got to this point or how much more we can do. What have we done as a society; as parents and as leaders? Maybe, as Sen. Prof. Deosaran said, Mr. Vice-President, we have given them too much freedom. We have given them entirely too much freedom and now that they sense that they have gone totally clear. I said that, to say, we have to be extremely careful with how we are seen by these young people. Because of that when we have a chance to reward someone who has done well for the country, I think that is the time at which we need to put away everything that divides us and be guided by the one thing which unites us.

And to get to what they have been waiting for which is Mr. Jack Warner. I do not in any way, shape or form agree with every decision that was taken as a sports person with that team, but regardless of whether I was COP, UNC or PNM I think that I can see enough to know that because this is not “his team” and because at the end of the day the people cheering Trinidad and Tobago at these cultural contingents in Germany, they were not cheering a party, or myself, or you, Mr. Vice-President, or anyone; they were cheering the country of Trinidad and Tobago. Therefore when it comes time to reward, you reward the same way; you reward those who contribute to Trinidad and Tobago—to be quite honest, I do not, for one second, believe this argument about conflict of interest.

I believe that despite what happened provisions could have been made such that everyone, Mr. Warner included, could have been rewarded and given a slice of the pie, whether monetary or otherwise, such that it would indicate, not just now or five years from now, but to anyone who would be interested in pursuing that field or in pursuing any field where they felt like—I want to represent my country in—fill in the blank—that they would look and say even though Jack Warner is a political opponent of the Government; even though Bertille St. Clair was unceremoniously let go from his post, and probably was not entirely thrilled that they did so well without him, put that aside because the most important thing that we have are the things that unite us and give us a level of visibility and increase and raise our profile to the outside world, because whether or not we admit it, that is what young people want to do.

When I started as an athlete I had a specific goal and my specific goal was I had someone like Hasely Crawford, Wendell Mottley and so on to look up to and I said, look at what they did—BWIA has long since shut down but I remember the plane, and that was a big thing for me. You can make the case and say, well, what Hasely did or did not do, the bottom line is he was rewarded as someone who did yeoman service to the country and because I could see the reward it became attractive to me, so let me pursue that because the reward will be there. We have to be extremely careful, Mr. Vice-President, with how we reward and how freely we reward.

As a result I just want to, in closing, make an appeal to whomever is in Government, now and in the future that that is the one thing that the political hands have to kind of come off because you never know who you are going to affect negatively or positively.

Mr. Vice-President, I thank you.

Sen. Dana Seetahal, S.C.: Thank you very much, Mr. Vice-President. Let me say at the outset I want to extend my appreciation to the Minister of National Security for his enthusiastic and informative contribution. Let me also say—you know, nothing comes freely—[*Laughter*] that I would have appreciated it, speaking for myself, if the ministry or the police could have prepared what I have asked for every budget presentation: an annual report of the police service officers, as now happens in the Bahamas, for instance, which is quarter the size of our population, they have had annual reports for years, and the state of Florida. So that for example, if we had an annual report it would demonstrate the curve in homicides from 1997 going upward and 20 per cent increase from 2000, actually it was like this—[*Draws in the air*]—an actual—

Hon. Senator: Slowness.

Sen. D. Seetahal, S.C.: Not just slowness of the increase but it actually went to a balance during the months of July and August and it came slightly down, and that would have been more dramatic than the Minister, in my respectful view, making his statements. [*Interruption*] If we had had that kind of report, and I strongly commend that to the Minister because in that report you can also have pie charts which show the information that the police now obtain. It should not be a secret, but it is still a secret that I cannot even get it when I ask for those statistics and I do not know if it is that they are not sure whether or not I will use it in Parliament, which should not be an issue, but I am just saying so. You can say so many murders and so many robberies and then you can have detection; you

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can have the percentage in terms of age, the percentage in terms of race, all of these things, so people would not loosely talk about these things whether it is on the radio stations or anywhere else, they will have the report right there and they can use it. You can use it as a tool in the detection of crime and the prevention of crime, it is used worldwide.

The second point I wish to make in response to the Minister's contribution, Mr. Vice-President, is he talked about the Scotland Yard officers and units. Now my information is, from having what someone called a “roots” connection to the police down there is that many of these officers in the outlying stations are—what is the word—not pleased is putting it mildly but they feel ignored because they feel that a lot of resources go towards these specialized units; they do not think—and I am telling you directly, Minister through you, Mr. Vice-President—that there is openness in the selection to these units. Everyone wants to belong to these units because you get special allowances once you are in the unit and of course most of them are detectives. I do not know if Members know, but I imagine just by looking at TV they may know that being a detective is a special thing in the police service, you get to be in plain clothes for instance, you get to be called detective, it is even better to be a motor cyclist than to be a regular police officer because you can come and say I am a police motor cyclist, so any unit you belong to is an up. I think that is something to be taken into account by the Minister and maybe use it as a kind of reward and not just however it is done or have some openness so people can know that they can look towards it.

As Sen. Boldon said, if you know that there is a reward—now I do not necessarily think monetary reward is the thing but for some people it might operate—but in this case if you know that you can get into that unit if you perform or if you do these things or whatever it is, then that will create some incentive for officers to do well and behave themselves as well.

The last point in response to the Minister—not my last point, but the last point to him—is the Police Complaints Authority which is the new authority set up. That new authority has a host of powers and I will like to know at some point, not necessarily today, when things are going to be put in place for that authority to function. For instance, you would have a director, deputy director; you are supposed to have under that authority, Mr. Vice-President, a whole investigative team of people, but there are none now. So when the Minister said that they were putting things in place I guess he meant appointing a lot of prosecutors as sergeants and other things in relation to the other Acts but it is not so with the Police Complaints Authority, and before people who are there now choose to

leave very quickly I think we need to put things in place there. This unit, if properly handled, can really control or curb misconduct in the police service, if it is used as in the United States and other countries, as in New South Wales, I am told, where the authority itself has all these investigative powers and you do not have police officers functioning to investigate police officers at that level. Of course, police officers must always investigate murders, rapes and so on, you cannot bring in civilians, but in terms of disciplinary and other matters.

So those are my responses and of course, thank you for the information that the DNA thing is on stream and I hope that the Minister comes back to us when we have the new—what kind of unit they called it the whole unit that is going to be transported from abroad and put in place?—sort of mini forensic centre.

Mr. Vice-President, I come to a couple of matters raised by my colleague, Sen. Prof. Deosaran, and just a couple of them I want to mention, really. The Senator talked about what he called the slaughtering of police officers and his opinion was that, where have we reached, where are we going and so on, but it is my view that sometimes when we go down that way it could really create a kind of panic, because it is not really the first time that this has happened. Police officers are citizens too like everyone else and oftentimes they may be killed because they are citizens and not necessarily because they are police officers, although we have had police officers who have been killed by virtual luck.

We have had, for instance, a prison officer who was shot in Laventille sometime last year, we do not know why, maybe the authorities do, I do not know. We had a police officer who was shot somewhere in the airport, there was a police station there and there was some kind of incident; then you had the police officer attached to former President Robinson. You have had these kinds of incidents, so it is not exactly to say that we are now slaughtering, and I do not know if slaughtering is the right word. Those things when you are talking about assassination and things that might have been so in Colombia. What I think is happening here is that you have in certain environments certain kinds of activities going on and we need to find out what is the cause. In this particular case we do not know yet what is behind that incident, so I think until we know; it is not a good thing.

Why I say this, Mr. Vice-President, is not to unduly criticize my colleague but sometime last year or was it two years ago there was this talk of a hit list and I was one of those persons mentioned in that hit list. I think I was the middle picture and my colleague, the Attorney General, was also, I think he was to my right in this compendium of five people. So, Mr. Vice-President, at that time people might have, if they had taken this seriously, it might have been said that

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we have reached the ultimate or the bottom where we are now looking at lawyers, prosecutors, politicians and that sort of thing, if it had got out of hand. It is important not to panic, not to see every little attack like that as an attack on an institution then, that is what I am saying. So when we are talking about this police officer and her family or whoever that was shot, it may not be an attack on the institution. Even if it were, I think, I am speaking for myself, that if someone is to make any personal attack on me and it has happened, whether verbally or otherwise, it would be an opportunity or a time for me to dig in further, and not let anyone get that satisfaction.

I remember some years ago when they were talking about security in UWI I talked to the person who was in charge there of the security and I said there is a whole line with no lights on the western side and he said “yes” we are deliberately doing that. Why? So that students would not walk along there. I said that is the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard because you are keeping the place dark so that the criminals could walk in the dark and the students would not walk there. In other words, you are saying take over, take control criminals, I have given up, all of the students must only walk in one path and you are controlling the rest, and that is what happens when we allow anyone, whether they name us on a hit list or they say whatever they have to say, or make implied or direct threats that they will do that and you immediately cower and get into your home at 6 o'clock or whatever time and say “I do not go out in the weekends”. For everyone it is information. That, certainly, is not me and I do go out every weekend. The point I am making is this should not be—

Hon. Senator: I know; I see you. [*Laughter*]

Sen. D. Seetahal, S.C.: We obviously go out somewhere together, Mr. Vice-President. [*Laughter*] So when you see stories like a kidnap victim story and so on in the newspapers, these are matters that I have heard in the courts before, these kinds of incidents. I have to say not with the kind of drama that is relayed but this is like evidence, so it is not something new that one sees reported in a Sunday newspaper, suddenly this kidnap victim story. It is not right but that kind of thing could create fear in the society and it may very well be designed for that. If you want fear or you want to hear what is going on, go to court and you will hear these sorts of things and then you will know what measures to take, all sorts of things and you will know what is happening. But the kind of reporting, the kind of dramatization of some of these things would really result in this fear and people locking their doors and getting inside, and then we will have that spiralling of crime.

I think it should be the reverse, the unravelling of this, no fear; the other side should be the one to be afraid. If I am going to court—and I do not like to speak about myself—I want the accused to be afraid of me not the other way around. And so far, the other way around has not happened. [*Laughter*] [*Interruption*]

Mr. Vice-President, on the question of cellphones, people have been talking about this and what we can do. I do not know if the Ministry of National Security has investigated it, but if someone drives while using a cellphone, implicit in that is careless driving. You do not have to cause an accident to be charged. A police officer could and should just stop that person and charge him. The mens rea for that offence is basic negligence and the fact that they are using a cellphone, you are concentrating on it and you are taking away your attention from your driving in itself, it speaks for itself, that is careless driving. I would recommend—free legal advice from here, Mr. Vice-President—that the police be aware of that power that they have and exercise it. They do not, sometimes and too often, exercise other powers they have.

I mentioned somewhere that I travel to Arima at least once a week for a work business and I see parking on both sides of Queen Street which is 150 metres from the police station and not a police officer in sight. So they do not need vehicles to do that, they can walk and they just have a book, and I believe all uniformed police officers carry or should have one of those traffic ticket books. That is my understanding of what operates in the police service. So it is really a lack of enforcement and some of these police officers should be slapped up properly and made to do their duty, whether it is figuratively or literally. I think that that might assist.

Mr. Vice-President, I just have three of my own points. The Judiciary: I noted that one of the reasons that there was a savings of \$1.745 million—and I find it sort of ironic that you call this a savings; it is really no savings, you know, it meant you did not spend the money so you really cannot call that a savings. A savings is when you allocate \$1 million or \$1 billion and something cost less. That is what a savings is. This is not a savings! What it means is you did not spend it for what you said you were going to spend it and you gave it to somebody else or some other department.

Here we are talking about the CAT Reporters or Computer-Aided Transcription reporters, and the posts were not filled of Case Management Officers and CAT Reporters by the Public Service Commission because suitable candidates were not found and those who were found opted for contract positions elsewhere. I know the Attorney General might say well moneys are allocated to the Judiciary and they are managing it and this is not my concern, but I know he is much more responsible than that to excuse it by just saying that. The fact of the matter is, there is a great

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shortage of these CAT reporters, so much so, that those of us who have matters and we want notes for appeals we are told there is a tremendous shortage, one reporter is ill, somebody has cancer, all of these things and it is depleted, and of course, the Court of Appeal takes precedence, so the rest of us have to be hanging on there and then your clients are in prison or somewhere else. Those are the few cases of course where there are people convicted that you might represent, but these are the ones who really need it, so you have to be waiting and waiting. It is not fair and we will have a delay in the administration of justice again, and the whole point about having CAT reporters is so that we would not have it and what is happening here, they are getting better money elsewhere or the posts are not filled.

Why is the UTT or somebody not producing these trained people? I know the Attorney General is not too familiar with the operations of UTT and I say this because last week when I mentioned the UTT he appeared to be somewhat surprised at the concept of another university other than the University of the West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago. [*Laughter*] But it is mandated to do that kind of training and I would want to know when we can have that kind of reporter. I believe there were scholarships given, but we really need some more and I think you should speak to the Hon. Sen. Abdul-Hamid and find out about this other university.

Mr. Vice-President, in general, I think too much money has been saved by the non filling of posts, vacant posts. There were allocated positions and the positions were not filled, so they just took the money and they spent it, and what it means, is that in the public service right now you have a depletion in all of these because you did not fill the posts. [*Desk thumping*] I am speaking something that is obviously, right, but the thing is it will continue like this. I see that some of the posts right here in Parliament [*Interruption*] a Marshal, or Assistant Marshal, a Parliamentary Clerk II, all of this so sometimes when we do not get things done as quickly as we want [*Interruption*] you want to blame people, it is because you have all these vacant posts not filled.

What about EBC for instance, Computer Operations Registration Clerks, we have elections coming up this year, when people start saying I cannot get what I want, I want to do these things, what will happen? You start talking about voter padding—people do not understand the concept of voter padding—they just say you are voter padding and when you get down to what you think it is, they have no clue like if you go and stuff votes somewhere. It has nothing to do with that. The point that I am making is when you do not have the staff, you have this kind of creation of this panic; so you need to fill it.

Someone made the point, I think more than one person, that it has to do with all of these public commissions. We have a kind of a vicious circle here, we have the Public Service Commission, the Police Service Commission, all of them and they are to be appointed by the President to be independent. You know we want independent bodies; nothing is wrong with that and I agree with it, after all, we are all independent and were it not for that concept probably none of us would be here. In other words, I cannot see either party, either side, possibly, appointing any one of us, we may violently not agree with the party position. [*Laughter*] [*Interruption*]

Sen. Mark: They may have to remove all the Independents. [*Inaudible*]

Sen. D. Seetahal, S.C.: This is right, that is true; the fact is, there is a proposed Constitution with no independents, so that is to tell you. So I am in agreement with the independence of the commissions but the point is these commissions are responsible for appointments, promotions and so on, okay. In order to remove them you need to rely on a report from the Permanent Secretary which is in the Ministry, so you have this kind of Permanent Secretary must do certain things, bring it before the commission and only then the commission will act. If the Minister finds somebody is not functioning he has to tell the Permanent Secretary because he cannot interfere. I have heard people complain that that is why public servants do not function. Then you have the public servants on the other hand some of them saying that there is an interference from different—I am not speaking about anyone in particular but it has been said—Ministers.

So you have this catch-22 situation and unless you have a Minister who can bring all of these people under his fold in some way you will have that problem, and you will have a continuous blame for the service commission saying “they are not appointing, they are not doing their jobs”. But why are these commissions not permanent? If you have these people who have to put aside their personal business and come once a week or once a month, or if not permanent, they should be made to sit once per week so that they can deal with appointments. They have staff, Mr. Vice-President, but at the end of the day they have to look at complaints, a lot of things they have to do themselves. [*Interruption*] Something must be done—and I do not mean to remove their independent status—about the commissions.

Mr. Vice-President, there is the matter of the live proceedings of Parliament where there was a re-allocation of funds and I think that is one of the best things that has happened in this Parliament: the televising live of the proceedings. That is something that was brought before Parliament by my colleague, Sen. Prof. Deosaran, and we all know this, but all of us at different points agreed with it. Right now as

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we speak, of course, we may not want to always have everything we say, every error we make or every slip of the tongue where every green verb is shown.

But the fact of the matter is, Mr. Vice-President, the number of people who have told me that they looked at the channel and they see me, or they see this one or that one and they come and ask: “so what did so and so say that caused that one to respond”. They really want to know, they find it is entertaining. [*Interruption*] [*Laughter*] They also find it is interesting. Someone has actually said to me that if they did one of those checks or surveys that they do in the Unites States, probably it might be the number one channel, [*Laughter*] because the popularity is increasing.

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I do not know why, but it is truly one of the most looked-at stations. And people can tell you that it is not just the parliamentary proceedings, it is all of those historical things. Someone was able to tell me about something in the House of Lords—a lot of different things—and the committee stages here, things I did not even know they actually showed. But I sat down myself on Sunday and I decided to look at it and I was able to see how others from the Senate were shown. So I think that this is a tremendous educational tool now and contrary to what people have said, it seems to have brought respect, in my view anyway, from what I have heard, for the Parliament. [*Desk thumping*] People also tell me that they look at it more than once because they might have missed something. It is really strange to me that that could be that interesting, but there it is. So, \$1.3 million well spent.

Insofar as CEPEP, Mr. Vice-President, much has been said and I will not repeat anything that has been said, except for one thing, that if what I have read is true that there have been no audited accounts of the programme, it is time that there were and it is time that we get them before, I would say, the end of March. That is a reasonable time; soon enough.

The final point alluded to by the Minister of National Security, the MILAT and MYPART programmes; I recall in 2003 we talked about this. It was said then, that those programmes would come into effect in 2004 and then I mentioned it again and I saw one lone bus marked MYPART. I have been keeping my eyes out. Why? Because the idea behind these programmes was great. If you listen to the radio stations you will hear people taking about: Should we have national service; should we have an apprentice programme, all of these things. Is this not what this is supposed to be something about? Like you have these young people and you give them a kind of military training in the army; they feel like men in the uniform. But in any case they get the discipline and ultimately that will lead to curbing of the crime.

Mr. Vice-President, the point is, in this country you find that the most crimes are committed—like everywhere else in the world—by men. But take out any of those serious criminals, 80 per cent of them cannot read or write. I say this, but people do not really believe it, but they really cannot read or write. They tell you: “I can sign my name.” Like, real big deal. Or somebody would say, well: “I could read small words.” Seriously, that is the kind of thing, but their girlfriends can read and write. What does that say? It means that somewhere in the school, they do not have the interest; probably it is however people train their boys. A lot of time these boys do not have fathers or they live with their grandmothers, most of them; a lot of times.

So, fathers have a big role to play; fathers have some fault in this. Do you know what they do in Minnesota with fathers who do not pay their maintenance and do not visit their children? They take away their driving licence. It goes towards their driving licence. They do not jail them, you know. And do you know how many of those people pay up? Because they cannot take not having the manly status of driving a car, so they pay their maintenance and they go and do their visit. That is one step in the right direction, I would think.

Anyway, getting back to MYPART and MILAT, anyone, I think, at the age of 18 who is not employed, should be immediately sent to this programme and have, in the first year, an intensive programme of education. It should be mandatory. If they have to leave, they should be treated as a deserter just like in the regular army. Otherwise you cannot say: “Well, if you do not behave, I will kick you out.” Kick you out to do what? Go back and traffic drugs in the street? No, the punishment should not be kicking them out; they should be treated as deserters and sent to jail. I have strong views about it. I think it is time.

It talked about state of emergency and so on. When you know what is the cause of the national emergency, deal with that and we cannot afford to be too soft. I could be soft, you know, Mr. Vice-President, one may not believe it. I have my sympathies; people who are poor; people who are born without all their limbs; or who are otherwise mentally retarded, backward or disabled or any challenge. But when you are a healthy person with everything and you have the capacity to engage, and you have the capacity to earn and you go and fool around with crime, drugs and so on, then you ought to pay the penalty. You ought to be made to do national service or whatever it is and there is no softness there, because we want to have people in this country who are not dependent. When you train your children, the yardstick should be: Are they being trained to be dependents? Too many young people are dependents and not independent.

Thank you very much, Mr. Vice-President. [*Desk thumping*]

The Minister of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Joan Yuille-Williams): Thank you, Mr. Vice-President. This evening I came to this Chamber thinking that I would not be making a response to anything, but I think my friend, Sen. Mark, sort of prompted me to do so, and even though the Chamber is cold, I am not 100 per cent me, I will try to respond very briefly. I have also sent to the office to get some information, but after looking at it, Sen. Mark, I do not think I will be able to answer all the questions; it is just too much.

But before I speak to you, let me just, Mr. Vice-President, speak to Sen. Ato Boldon. I want to do it because the last time I heard him in the Parliament, that was during the budget debate, I criticized him for what he had said or what he did not say. That is, I remember saying to him that he was part of the solution and that the opportunities provided to him by the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs and Ministry of Education to go to the various schools and youth groups and mentor to those young people, meant that that activity alone was one of the activities that the Government was using to help the young people. I remember saying that and I said that I felt at the time when he made that comment he never referred to himself as part of the solution.

This evening I want to commend him on the comments he made concerning the awards and I want to do so because, again, he sees and he understands why people do things like this. At this time, regardless of whether he sits on the Opposition Bench, the Government Bench or the Independent Bench, young people will be still looking at him. They cannot help it and he is still their mentor. I do not think the politics would have changed that and, therefore, the fact that he can tell you why it is absolutely necessary to reward these individual persons is essential.

I remember years ago the national netball team had just one medal when they won the world championship. We have moved from that stage, that was then, this is now. As I sat there, I remembered even when the team came back, individual young people had heroes. Even though it was the whole team, they could tell you: "This player is my hero and that player is my hero." You could hear them calling different names. What they would recognize was: "This young man was from my district; he worked hard; trained hard; he went abroad; he was applauded; he represented the country; we all loved him and now he has come back and he got this award." It is an inspiration to them to go forward. That recognition was one of the things that I really appreciated, that you stood up for it and, therefore, others will now understand why it is important to do that. This has

nothing to do with the politics; this has to do with the mentoring and nurturing of our young people wherever they are. [*Desk thumping*] I would hope, Sen. Boldon, regardless of where you sit, that you would continue to be a mentor to these young people out there.

The second person that I would like to make a comment on is Sen. Mungalsingh, when he talked about corporate sponsorship for sport and culture, I could not agree with him more. From where I stand, I know how difficult it is for sponsorship and you said that the Government needs to do something. I remember two years ago in the budget we did; we opened it up and you could have claimed up to \$1.5 million. I want to tell him that it did not succeed in bringing many more people to help to sponsor. Something is wrong. We have to find out what it is.

I want to tell you, the other night I went to a calypso tent. I sat there and I heard someone singing: “The war must go on.” So, I wondered: “The war must go on”? What is it, Iraq, Iran? Do you know what he was talking about? It was the war between two opposing cellphone companies. And do you know what he was saying? When the war was on, as an artiste, they did very well. He noted the amount that these companies gave when the war was going on and named every group that got sponsorship and he said: “The war must go on”.

Then you ask yourself whether or not that had to happen so that you could get the sponsorship this year. The war has abated considerably and I could tell you the funding has gone down considerably and we still do not know where to find funding. So he was trying to see whether he could start another war to assist the artistes or the sportsmen. It is unfortunate that that has happened and we recognize something had to be done because Government alone cannot do it. From where I sit, last week we gave some money to steel bands, but that cannot go very far. Some of the bands are smaller and therefore they got less funding. Sportsmen need money to train. Yes, Government has a responsibility, but the corporate world certainly needs to come forward and assist. What else could we do? The incentive through tax holidays did not work, but we cannot give up. We will continue to try and probably Sen. Mungalsingh might come up with something else that we could do to assist. So thanks again for that.

There was one other area somebody spoke about. I think when the Minister of National Security was speaking he talked about the communities coming together to assist, or someone else spoke about it but I cannot remember. That is going to be absolutely necessary at this time. I remember when we used to have those watch groups—the Neighbourhood Watch, as they were called—they became

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vigilante groups and as a Government we could not really sponsor those groups. So we came up with the Community Safety and Enhancement Group where we thought the community could come together to do things to develop the community, to look after the community and more and more I am seeing how necessary that activity is and how necessary that programme is. Each day as I see what is happening, we have to go back into it and try to get them to mobilize a little more. Right now we have about 30 of those groups functioning very well; we have 59 others that we are now working with. The communities must come together to assist.

Crime is not just for the Ministry of National Security; crime is all of our business. Some of us just look to the Minister. We at the Ministry do not, because we know what we have to do. So we are going to continue that programme with the Community Safety and Enhancement Group and if it calls for much more funding to help the communities to look after themselves; if it takes more funding to get the watch groups going and the watch desk going, whatever the programme is, we will have to do it because we think it is absolutely necessary for that conscientiousness to come forward and the communities now take charge of their safety, not in the kind of vigilante way, but in a way in which it will also assist the members to look after themselves; look after each other; look after each other's children; see what is happening; see when strangers are in the community; attend to the community needs. They will do a number of things through that programme and probably we need to put a little more into the programme now because it is certainly extremely essential that we have this Community Safety and Enhancement Programme.

Strange enough, these groups are working fairly well in some of the communities that some of us will think do not need them. Again, it means to say that we have to work with the people for them to understand their role and bring the communities together. Some communities are much more difficult than others to bring together but that is the work of the Ministry and we intend to continue that work so that we will have a safer Trinidad and Tobago. We will not give up.

Mr. Vice-President, when I listened to Sen. Ato Boldon as he started, I remembered when we used to sit on that side, over there on the Opposition Benches and Sen. Wade Mark sat over here. I remembered that every Tuesday evening—and Sen. Danny Montano will remember this too, very well—we came to this Senate prepared to contribute to the debate. When I say, prepared, we went out and we researched, not just who had CEPEP gangs and all of that; we researched the information for the debate that was to come. We did it. I remember doing that. Sen. Dr. McKenzie could remember also.

When we sat there and we made a contribution, we looked at the strengths and the weaknesses of the legislation. The strengths we complimented, the weaknesses we showed. But we also did something extra. We also gave some kind of solution or advanced something that would help to make the legislation better, because that is the work of the Parliament. It is something that you are not seeing at all now. We are seeing people looking at the legislation, or whatever it is, trying to find weaknesses and staying at that point, especially now—[*Interruption*]

Sen. Mark: You all are listening to Joan?

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: I want to tell you that and I want to tell you the strength—what we did and why we are on this side now. Because when we spoke and when we advanced a solution, those people out there recognized that we had an alternative and we had something to contribute. I wanted to advise you that it might be that better to advance solutions. [*Crosstalk*] I listened to what Sen. Seetahal, S.C. was saying. There are a lot of people out there now listening to this debate. They do not just want to hear noise, they want to hear what could be done to help them. If they find that you do not have a solution, they are certainly going to know what to do later on.

I remember in this Parliament I sat here and Sen. Mark made a certain statement against me—a rough statement—I was not hurt; I want to show you the difference—when I went out there the manager of the bank came out very readily and said, that was not so. As I moved around Trinidad and Tobago and even abroad, people called me to give me some support and said that was madness. And the criticisms were levelled at the other side, people do not understand the damage they are doing to themselves. [*Interruption*] They said to me, do not bother with them.

So I just want to tell you that trying to do damage in a Parliament like this is not always to your benefit and I think people need to understand also if you are interested in Trinidad and Tobago and its development, clearly you would try to do things that will help. You cannot continue that way and say you are interested and you love this country, like my friend Harvey Borris, and at the same time all you do is try to destroy and not show how you can help.

This evening I came to this Parliament not feeling very well, not expecting to hear anybody criticize and talk about the cultural contingent to Germany in that way. Let me tell you something. This is the first time I must have heard anybody talking about what happened in Germany in any—for want of a better word—derogatory terms. This is the first time, and I am really saying so, because, to me,

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it was not only Trinidad, but the diaspora, all around the world people spoke very well. What happened out there—the money which we spent here was miniscule in terms of the returns. Whether you went there as a footballer, a manager of the team; whether you went as media; whether you just went to look at the games; whether you formed part of the cultural contingent, whatever part you played, all came together to put Trinidad and Tobago up on that map, and the returns were tremendous.

Sen. Mark: I want a breakdown.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: Therefore, I sat here and I listened to Sen. Mark as he talked about this and I felt a little sad, because this is the first time I have really heard anybody trying to criticize the effects of what happened in Germany. So I had to send to the office to get it. He wanted to know the names of all who went. Let me just tell you something—

Sen. Mark: And why did you not take De Fosto?

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: And all that nonsense that happened.

Sen. Mark: You took De Fosto?

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: But do you know what happened? I had to sit here to listen. What is it that could have caused Sen. Mark to go off like this? Well, somebody told me do not ask that question. Anything could cause it. *[Laughter]*

Sen. Dr. Saith: He is permanently off.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: As long as it is the opposite, he could go, so do not even worry to try, because he has to find something to criticize. When I looked at it, here the Government is accounting for transfers and we could account for the transfers and yet, in accounting for these transfers, you had to ask: “Who went to Germany?” A year later or whatever later: “Tell me who went there.” And De Fosto did not go. De Fosto cried and Mr. Warner took him—listened to his song.

Let me tell you something—before I go into this, I could show you over 20 CDs of persons who wrote songs on the Soca Warriors and each person would have loved to go. They used to come to the office all the time. You were glad about the spirit, but you could not do it. And when De Fosto was crying, he already knew he was going. He told me about it. That cry was only part—he knew he was going. Because if you listen to his song, you would know why he

knew he was going. That was only part of the pretence. He came very happily and told me all that he did there. He told me where he went and what he did, but he was not in the heart of the action.

Many people wanted to go. So you had to understand that. And you come to the Parliament to ask why De Fosto did not go to Germany, so long after. You know, before you compliment those who went to Germany, compliment everybody who went, you are asking why De Fosto did not go. Let me just tell you something. We have passed that stage; the contingent went. But I want to say something that happened.

Prior to this contingent being selected—and you have asked me to say it—another contingent was selected, and probably that is where he got peeved. Another contingent was selected by somebody else for another group. When that person selected that contingent of 141, it was noise all about the newspapers; all those who were selected went and told people they were going and a whole lot of things happened. All of you knew about it; it was in the newspapers. That person came to me very graciously and said: “This is the contingent that has been selected. I have been asked to select a contingent by a certain group and I have come to you and it will cost so much and so much, and I have come to the Government for the money.” I could not believe it, and I am being very honest. The person selected a contingent because that person was asked to do it and then came to the Government to pay. That is a little odd, is it not? Very, very odd! That is why my friend is peeved, you know, because it started from then.

When the Government was ready it decided to select a contingent to go. I want to tell you that it was sport, tourism—tourism was out there quite early—trade and industry and culture. Trade and Industry did not go because we found at some time it would have been difficult in the circumstances to really sell and focus on trade and that is why Trade went late, and I will say something about it. The note said:

“In keeping with the mandate, the committee comprising of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, Community Development, Trade, Tourism and Industry and Foreign Affairs had collaborated to ensure that full advantage is taken of the opportunity to market Trinidad and Tobago in areas of Tourism, Trade and Industry, Culture and Sport during the World Cup games in Germany.”

That is what the mandate was. Of course, as we said, Trade and Industry did not go; Tourism, Sport and Culture.

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What happened in Germany was not by chance. It took money to prepare Germany for the entrance of Trinidad and Tobago. Yes, the football team was going there, but Tourism had to go out early to prepare, to talk to all the people out there, because we were in those three cities where we were going to have the games. A booth was going to be there to showcase Trinidad and Tobago. For culture, we had to send an advance party. We sent persons who would look after our steelband and whatnot. Len 'Boogsie' Sharpe also went out there and did some press conferences. He went to all the cities; he had to do it.

A lot of activities went on before the contingent left, to prepare Germany for the Soca Warriors. It did not happen by chance; we just went in and everybody was in red, white and black. I have to say so because money came from—I had to say that. It was not by “vaps”; it was planning. You raised the cultural contingent, so do not even watch me. It was a lot—[*Interruption*]

Sen. Mark: [*Inaudible*] the trade mission, not the one that went to Germany.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: You did say Germany.

Sen. Mark: No.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: You did say Germany.

Mr. Vice-President: Sen. Mark!

Sen. Mark: No, but she is misleading, man!

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: \$9 million did not go towards—
[*Interruption*]

Sen. Mark: I am talking about the \$3.9 million. That is what I am talking about.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: Okay, I will talk about this one [*Laughter*] to satisfy myself, because the \$9 million which you talked about, you talked about this contingent going to Germany, otherwise I would not have sent to my office for it. You asked for the names. You said 129 people and you asked for the names of all the people who went there. I am being honest.

Sen. Mark: De Fosto.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: You said De Fosto did not go. I know it was a waste of time, but my Leader told me I had to get it so they brought it for me.

Sen. Dr. Saith: Give it to him; he wants it.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: So we went and we did that. I have all the things here where we chartered a plane. If you want me to read it, I could tell you how much the charter cost for everybody who went on it. The reason we did the charter was because we had all these people to carry. We had the steelbands to carry and that cargo could fit into everything, and we went straight for charter. All of that came up here. I do not even want to read all these things that are here. You asked all who went; I will read all who went for you.

Sen. Mark: No, no.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: No, I have to read it because he asked. [*Interruption*] You see, because—[*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Vice-President: You want to read that now?

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: Mr. Vice-President, the hon. Senator asked me who were the 129 persons that went. I sent to my office to get the names of the 129 and at 8 o'clock he does not wish me to read the names. Why did you ask the question?

Mr. Vice-President: Hon. Members, I feel certain that Sen. Mark is going to feel better if he gets the list read to him after some refreshment. We are going to take the break for dinner now and come back at 8.30 p.m. The Senate will now be suspended for dinner.

8.00 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

8.30 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: Mr. Vice-President, I am a little disappointed that Sen. Mark has not yet returned. I hope that wherever he is he is looking at the Parliament channel. Somebody said that “he duck and run”; I did not say so. [*Laughter*] I intended to give him what he wanted: a list of all the persons who went to Germany. I have to do part of it, because I wanted to show Sen. Mark that in spite of what he was saying, we sent a national contingent to Germany; that is important. There was no politics behind it. When I read some of the names, you will understand what I am saying. I think it is important too that we record this, because the persons listed here really contributed and it is good to have their names somewhere about in the record. The Parliament record is about the best place.

Let me just tell you some of the singers who were there and you would understand why some singers were not there. We had Calypso Rose, McArthur Lewis; Morrell Peters, Luta, who was our calypso king monarch, and Leroy Calliste, Stalin. Those are the persons you have known for a long time. Then we

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had our soca singers: Shurwayne Winchester and Neil Iwer George. We had two singers doing vintage calypso: Andrew Marcano and Carlos James. These persons could sing everybody else's calypsoes. They were in the booths that were set up by the Ministry of Tourism. We had two singers there all day just keeping that booth alive for persons who came in.

We had Samraj Jaimungal, better known as Rikki Jai, who was one of our chutney singers, and Kees Diffenthaller. Roy Cape All Stars was our soca band and Phase II Pan Groove was the steel orchestra. They had won Panorama and that was why they were selected, plus the fact that they have an excellent record. They worked very hard and carried, among other things, some European tunes as well, so that people were able to relate very nicely to the band. The pan around the neck was the Defence Force Steel Orchestra that had just come back from the Tattoo. Why did we take them? Because we had a Carnival parade and there were cobble stones in the road, so the traditional bands could not parade; so you had to have pan around the neck. You had to get a strong set of persons who could move those pans in a parade.

We also had tassa; of course, it was a mixed group so we had the Eagle Boys Tassa Group from Point Fortin; an excellent Tassa group. Then we had a number of dancers. I want to read these names, so you could see the spread for the record: Jamela Phillip from Barataria; Tyler Baptiste from Arouca; Susan Badree from Couva; Deon Briggs from Tobago; Donald La Rouse from Pleasantville; Candace Bidaisee from Mc Bean, Couva; Sherma Burke from Siparia; Ian Bains from Tobago; Zeomara Rajman from Tobago. I hope I had the pronunciation right; Sonnel Reynaud from Dance Ensemble; Dalton Frank from Laventille; Keon Sergeant from Embacadere; Raymond Ross from Couva; Aquisea Fredericks from Tobago; Kimmy Stoute-Robinson from Malick; Neera Seenath Samaroo; Sharana Moonesar, Princes Town; Evanee Ramnath, Princes Town; Samantha Flores, Pleasantville; Stanis Wallace from the Caribbean School of Dance; Diana Cobbler, Northwest Laventille; Leon Baptiste, Astor Johnson; Manee Foster from the Caribbean School of Dance; Richard Reid from Tobago and Michael Salickram from Shiv Shakti.

I hope you noticed that we had a spread of persons selected from all over Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*] We also had four drummers; one from Indian Walk, North West Laventille, Malick and San Fernando. We also had traditional mas; we wanted to expose all of it. Some of you have known these persons for years; some of them almost died when they heard that they were going: Mr. Kenon Huggins, who is the only famous dragon we have; Augustine

Telesford was a fireman; Austin Wilson was a king sailor; Felix Edinborough, you know him as the Perot Grenade; Ronald Alfred as the jab jab and Ashton Fournier as the blue devil. Those were characters we took with us. We had contemporary mas: Leroy Prieto; Lionel Jaggassar, Earl Thompson; two persons from Roslyn Gabriel Band.

I am just calling those names to give you an idea that it was a spread. We had our moko jumbies and, of course, the Laventille Rhythm Section, which was a band that was present at most of the games. There was a chartered aircraft and we accommodated them on that day. Unfortunately, you would have seen a negative early report in the newspaper; it was not true. I immediately called Mr. Keith Smith and he had that corrected, but somebody here decided that they wanted to do something embarrassing.

So this was the team we had of 129 persons who represented Trinidad and Tobago. They were paid for their performances. I must say so because I believe that is their profession and they should be paid. Some were paid for four or five performances accordingly, but even though that was so, when they got there, whenever the opportunity came for them to perform, they performed. I remember telling a Senator that I looked at Kees Diffenthaller on the television going through the crowd, going to the booth that night and I said, "He was not supposed to perform there." I asked him afterwards and he said, "I just felt they needed me and I went," but that was the spirit there.

Another important thing about this trip was that we had all these dancers from different groups doing different styles of dancing. Everybody learned every dance; you could not tell whether an African was an Indian or whether an Indian was an African. That was the beauty of that trip; something happened there that does not normally happen. Since then we have decided that for any trip leaving here we would not say, "These are East Indian dancers or African Dancers." The dancers learnt every dance and they really enjoyed it. You would have seen some of them perform at the Oval when the Soca Warriors came back.

In fact, I always looked at Kees Diffenthaller as a young man; he is very, very, very patriotic. It was an emotional time when he turned to tell me, "Some of these people I never knew," because they were of a different cultural genre and he never related to some of them. It was the first time he met Boogsie and Phase II and he said, "I have to sing with them." He said that the experiences he got from mixing with the whole group were so good. Major Best from the Regiment spoke to me and said that Laventille told him, "You do not talk to us." He said he recognized that he had to, because they were seemingly upset, and they started

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talking. He said that he started beating iron with Laventille. Some men collected money in a hat, because apparently over there that is the way it is done, after you perform they collect “something”.

This tour cost \$9.8 million. We had to have a tour provider, somebody who was there on the ground. [*Interruption*] We paid the artistes, but they had a tour provider and they serviced us. We moved from three different cities and each time they had to rebuild the booth and get it going. It took some money, but it was money well spent. When the Defence Force was in Germany, somebody saw them and we got a note asking them to go to Austria. We quickly did it and they went across to Austria, spent two days and came back.

People are coming here for Carnival and other festivals because of this tour. We made our nationals outside of Trinidad and Tobago feel proud of themselves. So the footballers were on the field doing what they were doing and the artistes were performing. These persons went to perform; none of them had tickets for the game. They knew before that the game was out, that they had other things to do and they did them very proudly. I want to record my appreciation and thanks to them for what they have done for Trinidad and Tobago. We could hardly repay them.

I had to let you know that, because I was slightly disappointed that you did not see the real value of what had happened. Sen. Boldon, if you listened to this, as I always say there is a national award scheme and persons must nominate other persons for it. If you feel that there is somebody who has contributed significantly in any field in Trinidad and Tobago, nominate him. The requests are in the newspapers every year. It does not mean to say that it is only at this time somebody could be nominated; it is open. I told the people in pan who told me, “We not getting the recognition,” I asked them, “Did you nominate?” They said, “No.” You must nominate.

Following the success of this trip, a trade mission went to Europe; it started off in Germany, so there was a link. A small contingent went with them: Exodus Steel Orchestra and about four artistes. All this was sent to me on trade missions—[*Minister Yuille-Williams shows document*—]but I will not frighten anybody with it. All the details are inside here. I do not want to keep Senators back tonight; it is already late, but it was a very successful trade mission.

If you had looked at the paper you would have seen, “Culture inspires trade”; that was how they did it. Those who were there had the cultural programme before the seminars and they also had a chance to go outdoors to places like Trafalgar Square for the first time; in Germany, in front the Rhinestaad; Norway and Sweden. Wherever they went, the culture went before and then the trade

mission came after. It was an experiment, Sen. Mark, to see whether we could use the culture to help us with the trade and investment. That was the first time we had done it that way. The Ministry has been sending out cultural contingents all the time, all during the year. As I told the Senate before, we have sent people all the way to India to be part of carnival. It was the first time we sent such a large contingent with a full steel orchestra moving with a trade mission; that went after the Germany tour and it was planned that way, and we wait to see the reports from it.

Those are the main areas on I which I would want to respond. We are going to continue using the cultural activities to do inspire our trade, et cetera. *[Interruption]*

Sen. Mark: There are two other areas I would like answers for.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: When they sent the Minute to me I stood back and looked at the name clearly. It is not a scholarship, but really assistance for our students who have found themselves in difficulty and from the mostly depressed areas. It is to help persons. There are a number of students who have left our shores to study and found themselves in difficulty; so that is one area. It is not a scholarship really. What I have noticed is that after students do the SAT examination, they are offered partial scholarships. Our people seem to go for these very quickly; but partial scholarships mean just that. Sometimes it is just some part of the tuition. Sometimes it is the whole tuition and then you have fees and boarding.

I have been talking to parents; they have to look at these things very closely, because when you are out there you may find yourself almost stranded. Some persons here who were disadvantaged and started off studying just before we offered full free tertiary education, needed some help. There are certain disciplines which persons try. I always feel proud of these two or three persons who applied; they were working and studying to become pilots. That is a discipline that not many of our people are into. They stayed here and did the work with helicopters, where they paid \$100 for the lessons in commercial piloting and then they went abroad.

They got there and it was something entirely different when they started the programme. You have to almost rent the plane. It was very expensive; they did not know that before. So a lot of counselling has to go into this. The name scholarship—I would have to look at it again, as I heard you talk about it. It could be misleading. It is really for those persons who need that financial assistance.

Sen. Mark: Give us an idea of the programme like for the last five years or so.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: I will give it to you, because you asked for it. I cannot give you all the details, but these are really deserving persons.

Sen. Mark: I have no problem with that. What about the criteria? [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Vice-President, this might be a laudable objective and goal. All I want to know are the criteria available. If for instance someone in my community is desirous of accessing assistance on a financial basis, I do not have a clue as to what are the criteria. This is the problem that we have; we want to know how the public of Trinidad and Tobago can access this programme. Do you have a booklet you can send to us, so that all of us would know or is this a secret programme? That is the kind of thing I am trying to get clarified.

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: It is not a secret, because I could give you a list of persons who have come in, even from your area, and asked for assistance. With the number of persons, the committee has to go through all the names to see whether they are deserving cases. Listening to you, probably you need a little more exposure, because we have hundreds and hundreds, but it is not a secret. I have gotten requests from your colleagues who ask and the committee looks at them on an individual basis. There is the means test which the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education use now. We have been sending out to applicants to see whether or not they deserve it.

We need to look into counselling our students even before they leave the country. This is something I believe should happen to stop the kind of embarrassment when they get out there. They need to know what happens out there. When you are at home it is something else; you are still here and we could help; the fees are different. When you are out there and you spend a year or two and you cannot work, it is not only expensive, but some students have had to come back.

So, Sen. Mark, it is not hidden; it is open to everybody; it takes a little while, but it is really for those who deserve it. I appreciate what you said. I am sorry some of your colleagues did not tell you, but, clearly, if you feel others want to know, I will do that.

Sen. Mark: Is there a category called “national service”?

Sen. The Hon. J. Yuille-Williams: National service came to the Ministry as a name, but at the time we were already doing civilian conservation, building drains and all of that. In the Ministry we wondered how we could use that to develop young persons. It is just that the name here is confusing. That is the programme under which the Geriatric Adolescent Partnership (GAP) falls, where young persons get into that relationship with older persons and the older persons mentor and nurture them, plus there is the placement service out there where we pay young persons to assist them. That is the portfolio under national service.

The true sense of national service is mainly physical development; we were using it on human development as well, because we felt we were overlapping with others. It is just a matter of a name; that is what is recorded there and I think it is very laudable, as you would recognize. We try to help a number of our elderly persons who have given so much to Trinidad and Tobago and some of them can no longer help themselves. They do not wish to be put in senior citizens homes, and, therefore, they are home alone without companionship. We have used these young persons to service them. We also felt that these elderly persons would have an effect on young persons in developing them. That is what the national service is about. I hope I have been able to clear up some of the questions, especially yours, Sen. Mark.

Mr. Vice-President, thanks for the opportunity to make my comments. I have listened to what has been said and where I think we need clarification, even with some of the programmes, we will do that. Clearly there is nothing political about the Ministry which I have the honour to lead at this time. [*Crosstalk*] I have to say it, in terms of how we deal with people and we try to make the spread as national as possible. All the officers who have anything to do in terms of selection, they know the criteria. Let me tell everybody that they are free to access any of the services of the Ministry.

Thank you.

Sen. Dr. Jennifer Kernahan: Mr. Vice-President, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to contribute to this Bill before us. Before I begin my contribution I want to look at the claim Minister Yuille-Williams made when she said that we were here to damage the Government. This administration has taken away our job, if that was our job, because they have damaged themselves. This report of the Auditor General on the Community-based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP) is damage enough. You have damaged yourself with this report.

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I find it interesting that this report should have come to light in the year when the PNM is all over the country celebrating 50 years as a party. They boasted that they were the oldest and most experienced party and the only party that could run this country. Therefore, it is ironic that in the midst of all the money they are spending to celebrate as a party—most of that time they have been in power—this is the kind of report that comes out. If we were in power, if we were in government, if we were in office, and a report had come out like this, this country would have called for our collective heads. I find it is quiet out there. I saw an article today in one of the newspapers and it was just a slap on the wrist with respect to this damaging report that surfaced from the Office of the Auditor General.

This administration always likes to speak about transparency and yet the Auditor General has said something very clearly. I know the Minister just spoke about the social programmes and all the help they like to extend to persons in need, but hear what the Auditor General said:

“The goal of any social programme is to improve the quality of life of beneficiaries of the programme. However, such programmes must be planned and organized in a manner that would ensure that expected outcomes and value-for-money are achieved and that there is accountability and transparency in the activities of the programme.”

This is what this country demands; this is what we expect of a party and government that supposedly has all this experience.

I suggest that the Minister of Public Utilities and the Environment send some paper over to the Solid Waste Management Company Limited (SWMCOL). I believe that there is no paper in that office, because there is no documentation. All over this report, for everything the Auditor General says, “No documentation.” They cannot back up anything. [*Desk thumping*] [*Laughter*] Send paper for SWMCOL; that is their problem; they have no paper inside that office and, therefore, they cannot document anything they do. [*Crosstalk*]

This is a national scandal. Somebody or some bodies should be held accountable for what is happening here. We spoke about this before. This is not the first time this has come to the public’s attention. We brought it to the public’s attention. I remember all the documentation on SWMCOL we brought it here to the Parliament and on our fora, but nobody took us on, because we are the Opposition and we always want to damage the Government. Now that the Auditor General has certified what is happening, the national scandal and the misappropriation of taxpayers’ funds that is going on in SWMCOL, heads have to roll for that. We are waiting to see what is going to happen with this report.

Sen. Mark: Attorney General, we await your intervention.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Tonight we are debating this Variation Bill in an atmosphere of deep sadness, concern and anger at the depths of anarchy to which our country has sunk. There are people who are saying that we have not reached the end yet, so do not panic; it could be worse. But how much worse can it get? I know we could get worse, but it is bad enough. We have to panic; we have to press the panic button. We have to alert the people that we are on the wrong road; this is not the road to 2020 and developed country status. This is the road to total anarchy.

When we look at Haiti, we are seeing our future. If we could have a situation where two masked men could walk into a house and gun down four persons indiscriminately, that is slaughter. There is no other word for it. That is anarchy, because they know that they are not going to be apprehended. That is why everybody is doing what they are doing in society and the community with impunity, because there is no detection of crime; nobody is holding anybody, because there is a lot of corruption in the defence force and police service and people are operating with impunity.

I listened to the Minister of National Security; I believe we should take away some of those police escorts with the flashing blue lights, because these people live in the land of Nod. [*Desk thumping*] They do not know what is going on the ground, when they come to us and quote all these statistics. [*Desk thumping*] I will go into that a little more. Those of us who have not become totally insensitive by the barrage of all the bad news every day: the murders, kidnappings and so on, we are still totally outraged, hurt and upset every time we hear another killing.

We read in the newspapers recently of a woman and her 10-year-old daughter who were gang raped by three men in their home. The mother was gang raped in front her little daughter and vice versa. That child is destroyed for life; she does not wish to speak to her mother anymore; she is angry with her mother, because she felt that her mother did not protect her; a traumatized, angry child who may never recover psychologically from that trauma. This is what we are sitting on in this country. And people are telling us do not panic yet, that we have not reached the end?

When I look at what is happening, I am panicking, because I know that if we do not get this Government out of office next year we are on the road to total social anarchy. [*Desk thumping*] We cannot give them another five years. [*Desk thumping*] In Haiti the UN peacekeeping forces are unable to go into certain parts of the capital to deal with the armed gangs battling them. On top of that you have the soldiers who have guns and the bandits who have guns; this is what is happening in Trinidad and Tobago right now.

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I do not know where the Minister of National Security is living; he is not living in Trinidad, because any ordinary citizen can tell you who is the gang member that controls the community. I would not bother to call the name here, but there is Mr. F who controls Harpe Place; there is somebody else who controls Maloney; there is somebody else who controls La Horquetta. Everybody knows who the gang members are. Do you know what is frightening about these gang leaders? Ordinary persons, when bad things happen: they get robbed or raped, do not go to the police anymore; they go to these people to find out who did it and to get some sort of justice.

With all these marginalized, angry young men running about in gangs, there are the little ones who are going into business for themselves, because there is an atmosphere of total lawlessness in communities. My daughter brought this story to me about a young friend of mine who lives in Maturita. She has a young man who comes to look for her at her home. For over the three years he has been coming to look for his girlfriend; he lives right in Arima also. All those guys in Maturita know him, but 10 of them just decided on Sunday night to rob this young man, beat him to a pulp and take all his valuables; this is what is happening right in the communities.

When the Minister of National Security talked about the decreasing rate of the increase in crime, I want to tell him that we have a 90 per cent increase in the propensity to crime in this country. When these young men suffer that level of humiliation, their mentality changes. He was an ordinary, quiet, easy-going young man and now he is talking violence. He is talking about going to so and so to get guns to do so and so, because he feels humiliated and hurt and he feels that he must lash back. When these random acts of violence take place and persons become victims, they cannot go to the police, because they know the police are not going to hold anybody and there is no culpability. Good, young, law-abiding citizens feel they have to go to the other extreme, because that is the only way they can get some satisfaction. [*Crosstalk*]

[MADAM PRESIDENT *in the Chair*]

I am replying to the Minister of National Security; he quoted all those statistics about the decrease in the increase. [*Crosstalk*] Right in our little country village, two bandits apparently were passing through and they saw this police car coming. Apparently they thought that the police car was coming for them. Do you know what they did? They opened fire on the police; right there on the Cumuto Main Road; there was a big gun battle right there, with all the children and villagers around. They then ditched the car and ran into the forest.

Do you know what happened? The police did not try to track them down; they did not bring any helicopters; the Blimp was absent; nothing. They just stayed in the forest until nighttime and walked out right in front my house and went out the next morning, apparently.

Sen. Yuille-Williams: You did not call the police?

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: That was the information we got afterwards; that the bandits stayed in the forest during the night and somebody saw these two strange men walking through the village the next morning. But there was no follow up. You had a shoot-out; you had two men who opened fire on the police and the police did nothing. They went home and slept and left us to the mercies of the bandits right behind our house in Cumuto. So the criminals are acting with impunity; they know they can get away with things and that is why they are doing it.

I am pretty tired and I am sure you are, Madam President, of hearing all these speeches of “This is the last straw”; “We are going to do something very serious now.” We had this cross the line speech when the President’s driver was killed. The Minister stood and said, “They crossed the line; we are going to get them now; we are going to do serious things; we are going to bring them in; we are going to mash them up.” [Laughter] [Desk thumping] How long ago “dem fellas cross de line” and they are still running up and down over the line and nobody can do them anything. They are a bunch of jokers! [Laughter] [Crosstalk]

Crime has reached the stage that rape is institutionalized now in our society as a past time right in the schools. [Desk thumping] It is an institution right under the nose of the Minister of Education; right under the nose of the Minister of National Security. When Power 102 and Gladiator broke this story and called the Commissioner of Police, do you know what he said? He said that he did not have any reports of what was happening and when they called the Minister, the Ministry of Education did not know what was happening. They did not have any information and they were just about to investigate.

The mother of that child who was raped and whose image was all over people’s cellphone, she called in on the programme the morning and said that she reported that incident to the San Juan police six months ago in June last year and nothing was done. The police did not follow up that case; it was only because the case broke on the radio and talk shows then somebody went fast, fast and try to cover it up and bring the perpetrators to justice. You are talking about a 12-year-old child, and nothing was done in six months; nobody could care less. And the Minister of National Security talked about decrease in the increase? What is he

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talking about? This country is in total social chaos. The police seem to be none the wiser; the Minister of National Security is none the wiser; the Minister of Education—well, totally out of it.

In this environment, the gang leaders and community leaders grow, flourish and become stronger and that is why we have the situation where all this slaughter could take place in our communities; and people talking about not to panic? When I leave my daughters home, I am in a state of panic. We are in a state of panic. We are also in a state of resistance and we know that we are going to get them out as soon as the next election is called. [*Desk thumping*] [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. Mark: Out with the PNM! [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: The Minister of Finance spoke about the very good job this Government was doing in managing the economy. I would just like to quote from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Trinidad and Tobago Staff Report for the 2006 Article IV Consultation, prepared by the staff representatives for the 2006 Consultation on Trinidad and Tobago, approved by Caroline Atkinson and Russell Kincaid, September 21, 2006. They made some remarks about the way in which the Government is managing this economy. Some of it was not all that complimentary; so I do not know if this Government has all that much to boast about in terms of managing this economy.

This is what everybody is saying year after year: This Government is not managing any economy. They are swimming in money and they are doing what they do best: spend a lot of money; plaster all the sores with money, while the people are suffering and starving; the income distribution is wide. Our GINI coefficient is 40; that is a very high ratio. The top 20 per cent of the people in this country get over 49 per cent of the income, while the bottom 20 per cent gets only 5.5 per cent. Those are the statistics. So what are they talking about managing the economy? They are not managing anything. They are along for the ride; they are having a good time while people are suffering. [*Crosstalk*]

Those are FAO statistics 2006. [*Crosstalk*] No, I do not have it here; I quoted it last night on the Monday Night Forum. [*Crosstalk*] But I have the papers; those are FAO statistics 2000. You can go and look it up. [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. Dr. Saith: [*Inaudible*]

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Minister, you know better than that, because you know economics, statistics and so on. You cannot correct 40 years of mismanagement in five years. [*Desk thumping*] It would take some time for

statistics to show the good you have done, so do not try that; your time and my time. You had 40 years of mismanagement of this economy.

This is what the IMF has said:

“With the current strong economic growth, fiscal policy must avoid adding to demand pressures. There are now signs that the economy is overheating and rapid increases in public spending combined with tax cuts to the non-energy sector are imparting a sizable fiscal impulse. Capacity constraints are becoming evident, the labour market is tight; real estate prices are rising rapidly, and inflation has accelerated. A rising non-energy deficit puts pressure on the real exchange rate, with potential risks for the development of the non-energy sector.”

Everybody says that *ad nauseam* every year, but this Government is managing this economy so good. [Crosstalk] I would like to quote another section of this report:

“Structural reforms are needed to raise productivity in the non-energy sector. These reforms should aim at removing impediments to growth and diversification in the non-energy sector, including deficiencies in economic infrastructure and a weak business environment...industrial development plans should concentrate on industries that are viable over the long-term without the benefit of Government subsidies.”

In light of this, we are seeing all these special projects, Rural Development Company, this company, that company, because they are monetizing our oil and gas resources and spending it as fast as they could. This is what the IMF is saying here; that they are creating all these companies, which are not sustainable and not over the long-term without government subsidies.

They boast about 5 per cent and full employment; they are fooling people. The people out there with their hungry bellies, who have no jobs, who are angry and marginalized, who are hurt and turning to gangs and drugs, they know the truth, because they feel it in their own flesh every morning when they wake up and look around and there is no sustenance or anything coming to them.

I want to look at the section of this Bill which deals with the transfer for agriculture, under the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Marine Resources. [Crosstalk] I am looking at the reasons for savings here. [Laughter] [Crosstalk] I agree with Sen. Seetahal, S.C. when she rejected this term of savings, because if you do not do something, how does it become a savings? It is something not done;

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it is a service not performed; it is an activity that had been needed, obviously and was not done, so how does it become a savings? It is nonperformance, but you have this euphemism for it: savings. [*Laughter*] [*Desk thumping*]

It says here that funds were available under the Agricultural Incentive Programme to accommodate the transfer of \$7,984 million and that this vote facilitated the payment to farmers under various agricultural programmes; however, during 2006 the Ministry received fewer application for beneficiaries than anticipated and after all the outstanding commitments were considered, it was estimated that there would have been sufficient funds available to accommodate this transfer. [*Crosstalk*]

Part II of this explanation said that the funds for the supply of pesticides and chemicals for the control of froghopper infestation in the former Caroni (1975) Limited lands were not fully utilized as the acreage under sugarcane cultivation has been reduced. Madam President, this resulted in a savings of \$21,020,000. And thereby hangs the tale, because we are seeing here that these funds were transferred from the Agricultural Incentive Programme, because the Minister had fewer beneficiaries than anticipated. We have to look at why the Ministry has fewer beneficiaries or applicants and why all these lands in Caroni (1975) Limited are no longer being treated for froghopper.

With respect to that froghopper problem, while this Government is saving money by not treating Caroni lands for froghopper, farmers' lands adjacent to these lands are being overrun with the froghopper and this is wickedness. You have all these lands under sugarcane, you are not treating it, you are not doing anything; you just abandoned all these lands, but the private farmers have their lands. If their lands remain untreated, then they suffer, because they have to deal with the total infestation that overruns their private lands.

I want to deal with this question of the beneficiaries that decreased with respect to accessing the agricultural incentives. This year is a landmark in the history of this country, because after 150 years, there will be no sugarcane being reaped from the lands of Caroni (1975) Limited. This is the first time in over 150 years and we have witnessed a demolition of the sugarcane industry; totally unnecessary; totally vindictive; totally not vision 2020, because we have seen all over the world that people have turned to alternative uses for the sugarcane plant, for clean energy, ethanol and so on. This Government is totally backward and retrograde to totally decimate sugarcane production, because you are not selling sugar at a price that is tenable. [*Desk thumping*] [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. Mark: We will revive the sugar industry and Caroni. [*Laughter*]

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Last year cane farmers supplied 435,000 tonnes of cane and last year 88,000 tonnes of cane were supplied from Caroni.

Sen. Mark: Call elections!

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: This year we are seeing a total demolition of Caroni; no cane will be supplied. [*Crosstalk*] What is happening in the cane farming industry? We know just on Tuesday 23, the cane farmers went to meet with the Prime Minister. They met with a ministerial committee that talked about an exit strategy for sugarcane under the energy Minister, Sen. Dr. Saith. [*Crosstalk*] He is the head of the demolition crew. [*Laughter*] [*Crosstalk*] They are just like Iwer George, “mashing up thing all over de place”; mashing up sugarcane; “mashing up house”; mashing up anything they could put their hands on; mash up BWIA; mash up the National Broadcasting Network (NBN). [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. Dr. Saith: Mash up UNC!

Hon. Senator: Demolish UNC! [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. Mark: “All yuh try dat; but dat cyar happen; all yuh try to mash up the UNC by jailing our leader and calling him a felon and a convicted criminal.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: The cane farmers who have served this country; who have worked hard over the years; who have expended their sweat, blood and tears—[*Crosstalk*]

Madam President: Sen. Mark, you are disturbing your own colleague.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan:—who have provided canes to the Caroni (1975) Limited for milling and grinding; who have contributed to the economy of this country have just been left hanging, while the demolition crew decides on an exit strategy for them. The farmers had been asking over the last year for an increase in the price per tonne of cane, because they showed that it was not economical at \$180 a tonne to produce cane. They wanted \$225 a tonne and Sen. Sahadeo refused them, but she said that the meeting was cordial and successful. Cordial and successful for whom? The farmers get “mash up and mash down”; they do not know what to do. They are willing to come out of sugarcane, because they see that there is no future in it, but they want some sort of compensation package so they can go into alternative farming. [*Crosstalk*]

This is how we treat our farmers. In 2003, the private farmers produced 750,000 tonnes of cane. In 2006, they produced only 435,000. In 2003, there were 6,000 farmers. In 2006, so many farmers have left; their numbers have reduced to

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3,666. [*Laughter*] [*Crosstalk*] Madam President, 2,334 farmers have abandoned sugarcane since 2003. [*Crosstalk*] The farmers are blaming this Government for the general uncertainty and the trauma they are undergoing, because the Government is not dealing with them in an open transparent manner.

They are talking about bringing Cubans here to set up farms, pretending that they are interested in doing something about food production and agriculture. We have the farmers here who are willing to take a compensation package to invest right here in the land of their birth; they know about agriculture. These farmers, although they farm sugarcane, have always farmed other things, have always planted other crops as subsistence agriculture and so on. They know about farming; that is in their blood; that is what they do; it is their culture. So they are killing the culture of agriculture; they are killing the love of agriculture in our farmers here and, at the same time, they are making this big fanfare about Cubans here to oversee big farms. So what, are you going to bring Cuban workers to work the farms? When you demoralize all our farmers and you get them out of farming and get them so disgusted that they do not want to have anything to do with what the Government is doing?

This administration is forcing the farmers out and demoralizing them. Do you know what the World Trade Organization, the European Union, and the United States are doing? They are subsidizing their farmers to the tune of \$300 billion a year; that is why we have found it very difficult to penetrate their market. They have set up all kinds of tariffs and non-tariff barriers to prevent our agricultural products; that is why the WTO talks broke down recently, because people are saying that they will not go with that regime unless the European Union and the Americans decide to stop subsidizing their farmers. [*Desk thumping*]

We are so backward; this Government, this administration is so backward and so retrograde and they have no vision for this country. Do you know what they are studying to do? Grab all the lands of Caroni (1975) Limited and give them to their friends, family and financial supporters; give it to people who want to jail Basdeo Panday. Some of them have lands in Caroni; a lot of them have a vested interest in that.

Sen. Mark: Junior Sammy seized land up there. [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Look at what the farmers are going through. Tell the farmers something. The 2007 crop was supposed to have started; they have not started; there is no indication that they are going to start. They said that the cranes had to be repaired and the scales had to be set up at the purchasing points; the

access roads needed to be cleared; contracts for the transport of the sugarcane from the scales to the factory must be awarded; so far nothing has been done. They are just sitting in limbo on acres and acres of land, thousands and thousands of dollars invested and this wicked PNM administration has the farmers sitting in limbo. They do not know whether they are coming or going; this is the sort of administration we have. [*Desk thumping*] And then they want to talk about solving crime.

How are you going to solve crime in a climate like that, when you are actually pushing people? [*Interruption*]

Sen. Dumas: I am just wondering if the language is appropriate. I just want to know.

Sen. Mark: What do you mean, wicked? But it is a wicked government.

Sen. Dumas: Could I ask that the language be considered by you as to whether it is parliamentary or otherwise?

Sen. Mark: What is wicked?

Sen. Dumas: I just want to know. [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. Mark: We did not say you wicked.

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: The PNM wicked!

Madam President: You know the two of you are going to get put out. [*Laughter*] Mr. Minister, I would have thought you would be the last one today to suggest that language is unparliamentary. You got away with some today. [*Desk thumping*] I do not consider it unparliamentary.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: I am shocked. This was the Minister who stood up in the Parliament today and talked about dotish, stupid and shameless; totally unparliamentary language.

Sen. Dumas: Once the language is acceptable I am all right. [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: You know what we always say in Trinidad and Tobago, "Do so doh like so." That is what is happening to the Minister. [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. Dumas: I just want to know what the rules are; once I know, I play by the rules. [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: He is on television too; that is why he is getting on so.

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This administration's exit strategy, the demolition team, must tell the farmers something; must give them some word about what is going to happen to the sugar industry. In this Bill before us you are going to move all the money out of the Agriculture Incentive Programme and the payment to farmers under the agricultural programmes; this is the result of it. All that money from the incentive programme and so on, is to clean fields, to give them subsidies to buy chemicals and so on; they moved out all the money. When you move all the money, you refuse to support the farmers and you refuse to tell them what is happening, this is the result.

I have seen this Variation Bill come and I have not seen where the Government is making any effort to deal with the question of pensions to the Caroni workers. [*Crosstalk*] The Caroni workers were promised pension payments. I want to quote an article by Clint Chantak of Wednesday, October 04, 2006:

“All Trinidad Sugar and General Workers Trade Union President, Rudy Indarsingh yesterday said when Caroni was closed in 2003, then agriculture now health Minister John Rahael had assured sugar workers that Government would inject an initial sum of \$350 million into Caroni's daily paid contributory pension fund once they accepted the VSEP packages being offered to them and then there would be additional deposits to the fund over time.”

They are still waiting and we are now in 2007. Mr. Ramesh Lawrence Maharaj said he was concerned that the VSEP money from former Caroni workers have now run out and there still does not appear to be any move to develop the land and give them the moneys they are owed. They are owed over \$700 million to \$1 billion. Mr. Maharaj is saying that if the Government does not inject the pension money for the workers into the budget, he would have no alternative but to resort to the courts.

We have a Variation Bill before us that has nothing in it to give the workers any hope that they are going to get these pension funds any time soon. The Government is totally ignoring their duty to these Caroni workers and what they promised them. That is not the only promise they have broken to the Caroni workers. In an article of Sunday, July 30 we have seen where the Government actually took back certain plots of land that were promised to the workers. Do you know why? Because the National Energy Corporation (NEC) said that it wants to use that land for industrial development. Can you imagine that? They were promised 5,840 acres of agricultural land at Montserrat, Esperanza and Forres Park, with plots at Waterloo, Exchange and Felicity.

Sen. Sahadeo said:

“Montserrat, Esperanza and Forres Park lands were earmarked for industrial purposes by the NEC. The announcement for some 1,000 ex-workers to surrender their plots...”

They are playing a cat and mouse game. When the Prime Minister speaks we have to listen. In relation to the anti-smelter protest that we held at Otaheiti over the weekend, he said, “Let the mice play,” and when they are ready something is going to happen. What they are doing here is a cat and mouse game: promise them land; give them land then take it back; then switch them around to keep them off balanced. These workers do not know what their future is.

Imagine, you promised these workers certain plots of land; so there is no planning? The NEC is now the czar? Who is the head of the NEC? Is it some new czar? Praksh Saith? Is he this new czar who can override even the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources? These lands were promised to these workers as part of their Voluntary Separation of Employment (VSEP) package and the Minister of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources in collaboration with EMBDC should have been preparing to develop these lands and the infrastructure to hand them over. Some czar could just jump up and say, “No, you cannot give the workers these lands; I want them for industrial development.”? What is going on in this country?

9.30 p.m.

The reason all these things can take place is because this Government has consistently refused to bring the National Physical Development Plan to Parliament, so they can move by “vaps” and do what they want. Give lands, and take them back. That is another promise they have broken because in the Caroni Vesting Bill, in the document they had brought when they were looking to invest Caroni (1975) Limited lands, they said that unallocated lands would remain available for agricultural activity or for such purposes as determined by Government according to its National Physical Development Plan which should be completed in 2006.

Madam President, the Government brought the document to Parliament and said that. In fact they said that unallocated lands comprise 69,410 acres, and existing built development would be 4,262 acres, heavy industry, 262 acres; light industry, 560 acres; commercial and residential, 575 acres; the sugar industry team, national housing and the sugar and labour industry would get 1,534 acres and, therefore, unallocated would be 69,410 acres and they promised that those unallocated lands would not be touched until a National Physical Development Plan is brought to Parliament to decide how to deal with those lands.

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Since then, we have been hearing all kinds of other uses to which Caroni (1975) Limited lands would be put. The Prime Minister has made an announcement that people from all over Port of Spain and so forth would be given lands at subsidized prices, and not only sugar workers should get lands. I do not know how it fits into this plan or how he intends to do this. They are totally breaking the promise which was made that the majority of arable, agricultural lands would be left for agriculture. And every Monday morning they come up with a brand new idea how to grab more agricultural lands and put concrete on it and ensure that this country has no food security and in future our children would starve unless we can get a shipload or a plane load of food from America or the European Union. That is what they are trying to ensure. They are trying to ensure that we be recolonized and held hostage for a plate of food.

Madam President, what is this Government thinking? Are we going to tolerate that in this country? How long are we going to tolerate it? A young man in Otaheite over the weekend called on the people of this country to rise up, protest and demand that we must be consulted, we must have a say in the development of our country and this is exactly what is happening in communities in this country from Chatham, to Otaheite, to Fort George, to Port of Spain East, to Malick, people are rising up and demanding to be consulted, and be a part of the developmental process. It is not only a few forming exit strategies in some air-conditioned room somewhere.

Sen. Kangaloo: Madam President, on a point of order. Standing Order No. 35(1), relevance. We are now going from the Variation Appropriation Bill to protest and whatever.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Madam President—

Madam President: All right, just give me a minute. There is a point of order and I have to give a ruling. With money Bills sometimes you can go in quite wide directions, but I think you should come back to agriculture.

Sen. Mark: We are here until 3 o'clock in the morning, what is your problem?

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: Have some stamina.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Madam President, we are saying that the National Physical Development Plan must be brought to this Parliament, that the plans for Caroni (1975) lands must be transparent, that the promise that this Government made that 69,000 acres of unallocated lands would not be touched unless that plan

be brought to Parliament to determine the land use be honoured. If this Government has any honour, it must be honoured because we are concerned about the future of this country.

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

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

Question put and agreed to.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Madam President, it is not as if we are totally bereft of ideas, plans, policies or reports that would give us an indication of the direction in which we ought to go to save our country and ensure that we have some sort of sovereignty and independence in terms of food.

I have this final report, *A Strategic Intervention for the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources* dated September 10, 2004 prepared by the specialist from the University of the West Indies in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture. The ministry has at its disposal all the information, strategic plans and so forth backed by solid research and extension which can guide us along the path we need to go.

Madam President, the Minister of Agriculture seems totally impotent in this grab for good agricultural lands. We have seen where the Chatham agricultural project where people have been there over the last 20—30 years without electricity, water, or any sort of infrastructure which would allow them to develop these lands to produce food and so forth, and yet we come here today to take away the incentive of over \$7 million for people to develop agriculture. What are we doing? And the NEC is grabbing all these lands to give to Alcoa, the foreigners to put down smelter plants. What is the plan?

Madam President, I would urge the Minister of Agriculture to acquire some fortitude to stand up in that Cabinet and say no, I am not going to hand over these good agricultural lands to Alcoa, NEC, or anybody else because my responsibility is to produce food for this country. I wish we had a Minister who would have the backbone to stand up to the exit strategy team and tell them that.

Sen. Mark: Knowlson Gift stood up.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Madam President, some of the issues that were pointed out by the strategic intervention team said one of the things we need to do is to be serious—and I think Sen. Prof. Deosaran mentioned it this afternoon—

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about research and development. We cannot have an agricultural sector where there is no serious research and development being prioritized and they removed \$21 million from the sugar cane extension and support services.

I have always said here that that sugar cane research facility was one of the best kept secrets. They have done so much work in terms of helping them to get the best out of the minimal resources they had. Why are they removing moneys from the areas that can help farmers in their development?

They say the research output and the investment in research is too low in this country and we have to build it up, and invest money in agriculture. The figure shows that only 2 per cent of the GDP is allocated to agriculture and this document says we have to reach as high as 15 per cent. At least 15 per cent of the GDP has to be allocated to agriculture to get the kind of results we want to produce the food we need to have so that inflation will be held down and ensure that our children are eating the right foods.

Right now no ordinary person can go to the market and take up the fruits and vegetables that their children need for the week. A pound of ordinary figs, not even *Gros Michelle*, we are talking about *La Quaterné* is \$6 for a pound of bananas, a pawpaw is about \$20 and \$30. You have to put money into the agricultural sector, give the farmers the incentive. Why are you taking away incentives from farmers?

Sen. Dr. Saith: Madam President, on a point of order please.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: What is the point of order?

Madam President: No, you sit down.

Sen. Dr. Saith: Madam President, I think the Senator is irrelevant and I will tell you why. It states clearly here that the \$8 million that was transferred from the Agricultural Incentive Programme was done because there were fewer applications from farmers for the money. It has nothing to do with taking away money.

Sen. Mark: “Yuh close down Caroni (1975) Limited.”

Madam President: Please, maybe you are misunderstanding what the transfer is, but try to come back to what is in the Bill? You are allowed to speak around a topic, but you are maybe straying a little too much into that one topic without referring to the relevance of this Bill.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: Madam President, the whole point I was making, the first part of my contribution, which the Minister obviously missed, was the fact that you are destroying agriculture, demotivating the farmers; you are throwing them out, so you must have less people applying for incentives. If you are demotivating farmers and not giving them the kind of motivation and caring, you have all of them in limbo all over the place, then you must have less people applying for agricultural incentives. [*Desk thumping*] Then you say they are not applying for agricultural incentives so everything is hunky-dory. That is the point I was making, you missed the whole point.

Madam President, I am saying the fact that farmers are not applying for incentives is a red flag that should go up, given the fact that we have this high inflation rate, the price of vegetables going up by 27 per cent over the last year, people are unable to access food at the market price now. That is not a red flag for you that people are not accessing agricultural incentives? That is what I am saying.

We have the support of the university and they have outlined a number of issues. I would have liked to see in this Bill some additional allocation to the irrigation programme in the Ministry of Agriculture.

Sen. Dr. Saith: Madam President, again, this is not a Bill to allocate money. You are asking to allocate money in an account that is closed, this is dealing with transfers. You are irrelevant to the Bill.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: I would have liked to see that moneys would have been transferred to increase—you transferred \$20 million in this Bill for access roads. That is what you said. So why could you not have transferred money to build up the irrigation systems for water?

Hon. Senator: Your priority is wrong.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: One of the points documented in this, one of the major constraints of agriculture in this country today is that very little of the lands in agriculture are not irrigated and we need more extensive irrigation systems to increase agricultural production. So I am saying the priorities that I see expressed here are wrong; this administration is not paying attention to what is happening in the agricultural sector, and the agricultural sector is directly affecting the quality of life of the people of this country, and all this Government is looking for are exit strategies. I think we have to give them an exit strategy in 2007. [*Desk thumping*]

Madam President, that is why we have headlines like this *Trinidad Guardian* editorial that says: Government's inaction abets food price rise. Everybody knows that. Their inaction is what is abetting the rise in food prices in this country and you stand up here and say you are not talking about this and you are not talking about that. We are talking about hungry people out there. We are talking about children who are going to school every morning without drinking milk because the dairy farmers are no longer able to subsist in this environment and they are looking for exit strategies for agriculture and farmers, and the farmers are no longer able to pursue dairy farming and our children do not have milk to drink.

Madam President: Senator, you are repeating yourself.

Sen. Dr. J. Kernahan: No, I am speaking about dairy farming now and I am saying this administration is guilty of gross neglect of the children of this country by looking for exit strategies for the farmers and I am denouncing that. The next UNC government will embrace and support our farmers and will not take \$7 million out of incentive programmes, in fact, we will put more money into it so more farmers will get into agriculture and produce food and food security for this nation.

I thank you.

Sen. Prof. Kenneth Ramchand: Madam President, my contribution is in two parts; in the first part I want to say something arising from some remarks by the hon. Minister of Local Government, and in the second part I want to look at some of the figures before us and comment on them.

I was very pleased to hear the hon. Minister talk about his commitment to a regional focus to development. I do not think he meant Caribbean region, he meant the different regions of Trinidad and Tobago. I was also pleased to hear him speak about building sustainable communities and in her contribution, Sen. Yuille-Williams supported this notion of community and sustainable community.

The hon. Minister also spoke about the need to put administrative structures in place to facilitate or bring about a realization of his dream of a regional focus to development and the building of sustainable communities. Now I do not think I have misquoted him, or misinterpreted him.

Madam President, there was a phrase that Sen. Prof. Deosaran used that I want to bring back, he spoke the word "resistance" and I find that there is deep resistance in this country and in the Government to radical change. Deep resistance to rethinking our situation, for example Chatham—the Prime Minister had a chance to

score points and say that for the first time in his life he was going to bow to the will of the people and remove Alcoa from Chatham. He did not say that. He would have got a lot of votes if he had.

Madam President, year after year in this Senate I have advocated that all regions of the country should be developed equally and that the development should be appropriate to the natural resources and capabilities of each region. You cannot go into an agricultural region and make safety pins by importing all the raw materials. That is not proper industrialization and development. As far as possible, industrialization policy should be related to the natural products and to the human capacities of the particular region.

Madam President, the southwest peninsula is an agricultural area ideal for coconut, fishing and dairy farming but ideal also for industries based upon coconut, fishing and dairy farming so when we attack the Government's industrialization plan for Chatham, we are not attacking industrialization. We want it, but we want appropriate industrialization.

Take another example. Our import bill for wheat and wheat flour is massive. There are scientists at the University of the West Indies who, a long time ago did research on yam flour and have found, and it has been tasted by people, that a blend of 50 per cent yam flour and 50 per cent wheat flour perform in exactly the same way as wheat flour and only tastes slightly different. So here you have an opportunity if you are interested—[*Interruption*] I know. You know why I am taking the opportunity to say this? I say it every year in the Senate and you all do exactly what you are doing now—you are amused, but I do not think the people of the country who are watching the television and I hope listening are going to be so amused as you are. [*Desk thumping*] So laugh.

Sen. Yuille-Williams: [*Inaudible*]

Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand: That is an example of a kind of industrialization which would encourage the Government to say we have identified the lands where we can grow yams, we are giving you incentives to grow them, we are buying them and we are making the flour and blending it with the wheat flour. That is not a pipe dream. It is not impossible, and it is not absurd.

The kind of industrial development one is speaking about has a number of advantages. First of all it gives people a living and working base in their region; they live there, they work there, they belong there. It makes it unnecessary for them to leave the region in large numbers to go out to look for work in the urban

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centres. Development like that creates communities where the interaction between people who have been living there for a long time and who know one another, that interaction allows us to look out for one another and offers protection to one another against people entering the region for evil purposes, and it helps to reduce crime.

A proper regional development which gives people a stake, a working and a living base in their region is the foundation for developing or redeveloping a sense of community and would have a massive impact on the incidence of crime. Such development puts a check on migration to the anonymous, urban centres where people with no fixed place of abode operate as rogues and vagabonds.

One of our big problems is in the urban areas there is a whole set of people moving around, they do not live there, and nobody knows them. We have to try to give people reasons not to drift in this meaningless way to the urban centres. The kind of development I am talking about creates a community which encourages trust and cooperation, and forces the growth of social capital which is something we have not even begun to tap into in this country. We have money capital, land capital, human capital, but social capital which comes out of the interaction of people in a community based upon trust and working together for common goals, that we do not have and have never encouraged.

So I really commend the hon. Minister. He said such good things. He is probably ashamed, he had to leave, but I really commend him for that commitment to regional development.

There are other benefits which I would not go into here in terms of education where those regions will be the bases for the establishment of the educational districts and districts in terms of health and health care. Within each region, there can be a major hospital so you do not have these ambulances running all over the country allowing people to die before they reach; places to have fire stations within those regions; you could have had control to deal with the roads and utilities; and there is that very interesting point made by the hon. Minister about putting the administrative structures in place.

I know what he is thinking. And what he is saying is: It is true that my Government is not thinking in this way, but we have a very good example of the power of local government. And in the same way that Tobago is a region with a House of Assembly and is given a part of the budget to develop itself, so the other regions of the country can have Houses of Assembly and the Government would be the local government with teeth and money and we would have greater control

of the development of the regions in that way. [*Desk thumping*] You would have a large Parliament where representatives from all those Houses of Assembly would meet and plan for the whole country, establish priorities, make the budgetary allocations and then the Houses of Assembly develop the regions.

So Madam President, as I said—

Madam President: Are you coming to the Bill now?

Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand: This is the Bill. [*Laughter*] The hon. Minister gave me an opening and I am developing his remarks, Madam President. I must say I did not expect such support for the notion of appropriate regional development and the building of sustainable communities from a Member of the Government, and I really am sorry that the \$81 million was not given to him to develop his plans.

Incidentally, I might get him put out of the Cabinet because the hon. Minister is really working against the rapid rail. One of the functions of the rapid rail is to bring more people to Port of Spain and I have to warn the hon. Minister that his plan for regional development goes counter to the rapid rail, so although I would encourage him to develop it, he might get zapped for it, but I would support him. If he gets zapped, he could come by me and live. [*Crosstalk*]

I am glad that the community has got to hear these jokes. If you all think it is jokes, let them hear the jokes.

10.00 p.m.

I come now to some comments on the figures before us. I had already jotted down a comment: Why they are calling this thing “savings”. Sen. Seetahal, S.C. and Sen. Dr. Kernahan have made the point. It is not savings. It was not spent and worse than that you are going to come back and ask for it later. It is just a postponed expenditure.

With regard to the figures, I am quite aware that milk is already spilt; we cannot get it back into the bottle; we are dealing with the closing off of the account relating to 2005/2006. However, we can discuss these figures, not to reverse them, but, in my opinion, to give the Government an opportunity to explain to the people about their fiscal dealings and also you might find room here to offer some kind of guidance for the future. I must say that I need some explanation about some of the figures concerning education, and I want to go to page 3: “Statement of Transfers - 2006” and I look at:

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“Project No. 021 - Expenses of SEMP Coordinating Unit, \$1,000,000.”

Let us go now to page 7 in the Appendix. This has to do with explanations for transfers and (iv) says:

“For Payment of Salaries to the SEMP Co-ordinating Unit to the end of fiscal 2006 - \$1Mn.”

I am not an economist but is expenses the same as salaries? Is it the same \$1 million referred to in one section as expenses and referred to in another section as payment of salaries? I hope the Minister could explain that or clarify that for me.

Still under “Statement of Transfers; Head 26 - Ministry of Education”, I want to look at two more items:

“Sub-Item 24 - Grants to Government Secondary Schools - Education Programme, \$18,000,000.”

There are no details about that here but I would certainly like to know what that \$18 million was about. Then you have:

“Project No. 373 – Teaching and Learning Strategies, \$29,000,000.”

Page 3, “Statement of Transfers, 2006, Appendix I:

“Project No. 373 – Teaching and Learning Strategies, \$29,000,000.

When you go to explanation for the transfers on page 7, what we are told is:

“\$29Mn. was required to procure the necessary instructional materials and supplies to ensure that all Government Secondary Schools would have been well prepared to offer the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) to students in the 2006/2007 academic year.”

I want to know what was procured. I want to know what were the necessary instructional materials and supplies that could cost \$29 million. And it is not true that this is being done for all government secondary schools; it is only being done for the government secondary schools that have A level classes and offering CAPE. So \$29 million—

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: Just for a few schools.

Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand: I do not know how many schools are involved.

Sen. Manning: Madam President, to answer the question, it is mandated that when schools are asked to adopt new programmes that the State has to sponsor those programmes. So therefore there are approximately 63/64 Government and

denominational schools that provide the A level classes and the CAPE programme. For those schools to move into CAPE, we had to support the schools, to upgrade their labs, provide materials so that the students would be able to be supplied with the materials. A lot of them were new materials; they may have even had to research to make sure that the materials were developed, because a lot of the materials were not even developed. So we had to provide the funding to those schools to be able to ensure that the schools were up and running for the students to do CAPE. A large number of students, as in the A levels, do CAPE and therefore we had to make sure that the materials were available for all of them to do the CAPE examination.

Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand: Thank you very much, hon. Minister. I really did not realize that the difference between A levels and CAPE in the science subjects was so great that it would cost so much, but I just have to take—

Sen. Manning: Maybe what I would like to say to you is that the approach is different. When we are doing CAPE the approach is hands-on; it is different; the teacher becomes the facilitator; the teacher no longer has to stand in front of the classroom and “chalk-and-talk”; the students now have to do the work so that the students become very much involved in research, in project management—in actually doing the work. We have to put computers into the system so that there are more students hands-on doing the work.

Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand: I thought this was happening in all the schools with the Secondary Education Modernization Programme and with learning strategies, and so on, but anyway, I just wanted to find out about the details of the expenses which I still find very high. The \$29 million in one place is spoken about as “Teaching and Learning Strategies” and in another place we hear “necessary instructional materials and supplies”. I think a better explanation would have been to say: Cost of training the teachers to teach. Teaching and learning strategies will be one component—

Sen. Manning: All of that happens.

Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand: Yes, but the document we have here says two different things. In one place it says: “Teaching and Learning Strategies”, in another place it says: “instructional materials and supplies”.

Sen. Manning: Both activities take place.

Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand: I now want to look at the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources and go to page 7: “Reasons for Savings”. Sen. Dr. Kernahan has raised the question of the \$7 million and we are told that:

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“This vote facilitates the payment to farmers under various Agricultural Programmes. However, during 2006 the Ministry received fewer applications from beneficiaries than anticipated...”

And the next thing we are told is that:

“Funds for the supply of pesticides and chemicals for the control of the Froghopper Infestation...were not fully utilized as the acreage under sugarcane cultivation had been reduced.”

I have to—I do not have to, but I do support Sen. Dr. Kernahan’s argument and I sympathize with her feelings about the dismantling of the sugar industry, the disorientation and de-motivation of the people who were employed in it and I believe that the human consequences of that action have still not yet been fully felt. The people involved are going to suffer more and more from it. And there is a technical point. You are dealing with people. This is a country where we suffer from what the economists call capacity constraints. We are always outsourcing people: nurses, doctors, now even farmers. What we have done here is destroy a whole set of people who had the capacity for farming and for working on the land; being involved in agriculture. We are not only just disturbing their lives as human beings, technically we are casting aside certain capacities and a country like us cannot afford it. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Sahadeo: Madam President, I know it is a late hour in the night and I do not know if that is what is contributing to that misinformation. I have said in this honourable House so many times the types of programmes we have put in place for the former Caroni workers. I do not want to take too much of the hon. Senator’s time, but certainly at this time we are fully aware that two-acre plots have not just been allocated, we have made it possible that all former Caroni workers be given priority for registering as farmers, which means we have put several measures in place, including training, developing and putting infrastructure and so on. Another time I would certainly elaborate. It saddens me a lot that an Independent Senator will use his time to also misinform the public of Trinidad and Tobago.

Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand: Madam President, I am not misinforming anybody, I am giving an opinion of the human and technical consequences of the dismantling of the sugar industry. Time will tell whether I am wrong and whether the Minister is right.

Sen. Dumas: You know now that you are wrong.

Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand: I do not know.

Sen. Dumas: We do not treat people as waste.

Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand: I just want to repeat for the benefit of *Hansard*, it is not my intention to mislead anybody. I am offering an interpretation of what I think are the consequences of the action. I could be wrong, and that is what we are here for.

Sen. Sahadeo: That is not an intelligent interpretation.

Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand: Well, I find it is quite an intelligent interpretation.

Sen. Dr. Saith: Madam President, I am asking whether the Senator would give way. I think this is a very important point and I think the Senator is selling the people of that area short by assuming that if they are taken from cutting cane, which is basically what a lot of them were doing, and given an opportunity to go into agriculture themselves, and given an opportunity to do something else for their lives, that somehow they would take that opportunity. That is why I think the Senator's analysis is flawed. You are selling these people short.

Sen. Prof. K. Ramchand: I certainly do not intend to sell them short. I am glad that the discussion is taking place. Time will tell. In fact, I am so committed to time-telling and to research-telling, I think I would like to inform the honourable Senate that at the University of Trinidad and Tobago we have just appointed a senior research scholar, a man with a high reputation, to write a book, to do the research on sugar and the culture of sugar in Trinidad and Tobago, in which he would look at the coming of the sugar industry; the effect it had on human settlement; the effect it had on the ways of life; the effect it had on culture and religion. This is going to be a dispassionate and scholarly work and we will see and time will tell. I just want the hon. Minister to know that what I am saying now could be a wrong opinion but I am taking steps to make sure that the facts come out.

Now I want to look at the thing about "fewer applications from beneficiaries than anticipated". Again, I believe that the reason there were fewer applications was that people did not know what was available. Year after year, ever since the introduction of the Tourism Development Bill I have been suggesting that the situation in agriculture is so confused and the various incentives and grants, and so on, are so scattered all over the place, and agriculture is so important—I happen to think it is more important than tourism—that if you could take the trouble to create a Tourism Development Bill in which you list the tourism projects that the Government is willing to support and invite people to apply to do

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those, and in which you can spell out the incentives that you are giving for that, then it is worth the time and trouble to come to this Parliament with an Agriculture Development Bill in which you indicate the kinds of agricultural projects you would like to support and the kinds of incentives you offer. Put it altogether in one place so that the people who wish to go into agriculture will know what they can do and what incentives they would receive.

As I said at the start, we cannot take back the money that was spent in 2005/2006 but I hope with all my heart that the Government will reconsider its industrialization policy with specific reference to agricultural industries and in light of a policy of developing all regions of the country equally and according to their natural resources and existing human capacities.

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

Sen. Dr. Tim Gopeesingh: Madam President and Senators, I know it is 10.15 p.m., but we are here about the people's business and there are a lot of issues that are relevant to this whole budget debate.

Madam President: This is not a budget debate.

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Well, it is a financial discussion on a variation of appropriation for the 2006 budget. What we have here is a transfer of \$81 million from the local government across to three ministries. Basically, it is a transfer from the Regional Corporation Services, in general, to three different ministries: the Ministry of Finance, \$17 million for the Trinidad and Tobago National Petroleum Marketing Company; \$21 million for the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs and \$9 million for the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs, which included the football World Cup expenses and the cultural pageant that went to Europe.

The transfer of funds between subheads and the explanation given by the hon. Minister of Finance states:

“In accordance with the authority delegated by Cabinet, the Minister of Finance approved the transfer of funds in the sum of \$466 million between Sub-Heads under the same Head of Expenditure.”

That is \$466 million that you have on this document.

“These transfers reflect changed circumstances in Ministries and Departments and a consequential re-ordering of priorities during Fiscal Year 2006.”

We will remember that somewhere around July last year, the Senate discussed the re-appropriation of \$3.94 billion in transfers from Heads, et cetera, which is in keeping with what occurs with a government's expenditure programme, that somewhere along the line it needs to rearrange its budgeting. We know that they are coming now to ask for approval to close the financial books for the year 2006 and they are asking for a virement of \$81 million from the local government body to three other ministries. That is something that any government would want to do, but there are certain basic fundamental issues which must arise in such a situation.

We believe that planning, in terms of financial virements to particular Heads, is done in keeping with what is required and what is given before the financial year in terms of budgetary expectations and requirements. Then what happens, the Government or the administration, find that they need to reorder their priorities. When we have to reorder priorities to the tune of \$466 million, it gives the impression that we are not exactly comfortable with the way that we are managing the various ministries and hence the reason for the reordering and rearrangement of the financial expenditure in terms of its priorities.

My colleagues mentioned the fact that, really, when you look at something called savings, it is really not savings, but we would not bedevil that point anymore. But we would really appreciate that a government that is competent would be able to come to Parliament, not to ask for such wide variations, but smaller variations. Nonetheless, in asking for these variations, it brings about a number of important issues which have been debated today and which have been discussed. But we have some fundamental issues still left unanswered and I will want to go through this in a logical manner, very quickly, so that Senators would understand the reason for our asking these questions, particularly in the virement from, what you consider savings to what is needed to be expenditure, and which has already been spent but you are asking us to approve the expenditure which has taken place. Any expenditure that has taken place and we are asked to do this, we must ask certain questions because we have certain concerns about it.

The first part is the Judiciary on page 1: "Vacant Posts - Salaries and COLA (without bodies)". You are getting some money from that, of \$1,745 million. We thought that the Judiciary had been asking for more judges and magistrates—there are 42 magistrates' courts operating—but you have \$1,745 million being vired from vacant posts. You need to give us some explanation as to why this money was not spent when there was the requirement for more judicial officers, particularly judges, and more magistrates, to improve the judicial system.

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The Elections and Boundaries Commission, Head 08: “Vacant Posts – Salaries and COLA”, you got some savings from that, you said. Why have these vacant posts not been filled, particularly when the EBC is being confronted with two elections this year, a local government election and a general election? Materials and supplies of \$4.18 million have been vired across because it has not been spent. I cannot understand why an important body like the Elections and Boundaries Commission would find itself in a situation where it needs more money to do the job of the people and to ensure that we have an effective and efficient elections machinery for 2007 and we find ourselves viring almost \$6 million to somewhere else, within the Elections and Boundaries Commission. It gives the idea that we do not know what we are doing and it is an issue of savings, because you have not been able to do what is supposed to have been done and therefore the money has been left, so “let us transfer it to do something else.”

I will not speak about the Ministries of Finance and National Security because those were dealt with by my colleague, Sen. Dr. Kernahan, to some extent on national security and Minister Martin Joseph raised a number of questions and gave a lot of statistics in terms of the crime situation. He quoted various Caribbean countries’ incidence of murders. But the Caribbean incidence of murders is not a yardstick that we should use to measure our own capabilities and our ability to fight crime. Not because Jamaica has an incidence of about 50 per 100,000 murders and Trinidad and Tobago 28.5—as the Minister said—for 100,000 murders, it is satisfactory for us to have these murders. Therefore I do not think the Minister can feel comfortable by coming and telling the population: “Well, look, population, our murder rate is less than Jamaica; it is 50 per 100,000 in Jamaica; it is 28.5 in Trinidad and Tobago, so therefore let us accept that.” That is totally untenable. [*Interruption*] He did not say, “let us accept that”, but he is giving the suggestion, well, all right, this is what is in Trinidad and Tobago— [*Crosstalk*]

What I am saying is that if the PNM administration is saying it wants 2020 vision and First World type of status by 2020, when we know that the incidence in Trinidad and Tobago of 28.5 per 100,000 is 16 times higher than in Canada and 18 times higher than the United Kingdom, how can we aspire to be a first world country and say that we want 2020 vision? So I do not think that it is comfortable for us and the population to be fooled by statistics when you know that there have been over 1,200 murders in Trinidad and Tobago under your administration and over 172 cases of kidnappings for ransom.

Last night when we were leaving south from a meeting, Sen. Mark, Sen. Dr. Kernahan and I had to travel in a convoy because what is happening outside there is untenable. Our lives and your lives—it could be any one of us tomorrow. I empathize with the Minister of National Security. I know he is a good man, but, obviously he and his administration have been failing as far as security is concerned.

There are one or two issues that I want to raise with respect to the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources. Do not be impatient. Madam President, you are seeing some impatience on the other side, but it is important for us to make our contribution. The PNM will have its way but we must have our say.

Sen. Mark: Yes. And who want to go, go home.

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Madam President, you are not tired.

Madam President: I am. [*Laughter*]

Sen. Mark: You “coulda” fool me, boy.

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: I find it strange; your face is as bright as ever.

Sen. Mark: It looks like she “going for five hours again, man.” Madam President, you “coulda” fool me.

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: That is your natural beauty.

Sen. Mark: Madam President looks fresh like a rose, man.

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Madam President, under the question of agriculture and “Sugarcane Research, Extension and Support Services”, \$21 million has been vired and went across to “Other Contracted Services” of \$20 million. That is at the bottom of page 2.

Where are these contracted services in the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources and what is it being paid for? Is it being paid for the Sugar Manufacturing Company that we know was established in 2002?

10.30 p.m.

Madam President, we understand that the Sugar Manufacturing Company was set up to take care of the private cane farmers, and to ensure that something was going to be positive from 2003. But, it seems as though the Sugar Manufacturing Company has gone down in production. They were supposed to produce 75 tonnes in 2003. I think they produced 40,000 plus tonnes and in 2006, I remember they produced about 31,000 tonnes.

Madam President, I do not know whether these contracted services have gone to the Sugar Manufacturing Company, and it is important for us to understand and to clarify this evening—I want to say to Minister Christine Sahadeo in June of 2006, Bob Lindquist was called in to do a forensic audit into the Sugar Manufacturing Company. And that followed a file which was sent to the Minister on several questionable deals done by the then chairman, Prem Nanlal. He was accused of, amongst other things: Conducting several financial transactions with no board approvals; overspending on the approved quota for several projects; paying money to contractors with no pay slips as evidence. We want the Minister to answer these questions this evening.

We understand that his financial wheeling and dealing totalled millions of dollars. Lindquist, we understand, is still doing the audit. Would the Minister tell us whether Lindquist is still doing the audit? I understand that there is talk of a secret move to cover up the findings and even keep them from the Minister. So you will have to answer—and to protect the PNM in this election year. We want to know whether that is a move to prevent the Minister from knowing about it so as to protect the PNM. And the big question is: What are the results of this Lindquist probe into the Sugar Manufacturing Company? Tell us the results. What are the findings of the Sugar Manufacturing Company? What has happened to the chairman whose name I mentioned? Has that board been fired, or is that board continuing to allow Trinidad and Tobago to lose millions of dollars on that Sugar Manufacturing Company which they said was going to be the salvation for the sugarcane private farmers? It is just another CEPEP, yet another example of a runaway state company and a state enterprise, with corruption at state level in the PNM?

Sen. Sahadeo: Madam President, with the privilege of the Parliament it is always disconcerting when statements are made about a previous chairman. The Senator asked his questions and he answered himself in that yes, a forensic audit was commissioned on SMCL and there is a new board at SMCL. Madam President, I do not have the forensic audit report but I just wanted to caution the hon. Senator that at this time we have not gotten the findings from the forensic auditor.

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: We will await the report wherever it is being hidden and whether it is being hidden from the Minister. Madam Minister, be very careful among your colleagues. They may be hiding it from you. I am glad you know there is a report available and Lindquist has done his investigations so wherever the chips fall in the PNM administration, let them fall. This is another CEPEP, Madam President, a slush fund for the PNM guys.

Madam President, when we asked about the advertisement for the CEPEP contractors Minister Rennie Dumas said yes it was advertised. Madam President, this is what the report says. So, is the Auditor General lying? Is she telling an untruth? This is what the Auditor General said:

“Selection of contractors. Evidence was not seen that the Board of Directors of SWMCOL had established, prior to commencement of the Programme, a tender policy for the CEPEP in respect of the selection of contractors and other service providers.”

So the Minister is saying that there was a tendering—[*Interruption*] Do not erode into my time now. Let me have my say. You had your say. This is why I am speaking last. Everybody had their say and I am not giving way yet.

Madam President: Hon. Senator, would you let the Minister reply?

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Madam President, let me have my time. [*Crosstalk*]

Madam President: Is it a point of order, Minister? Gentlemen, how many times do I have to say that you cannot both be standing at the same time? Are you on a point of order, Mr. Minister?

Sen. Dumas: Madam President, the Senator suggested that I said something. I never said what he is reading there. What he is reading pertains—he reads something that says no evidence was produced about a tendering procedure. My specific statement was that the proposals for the contractors were advertised in the daily papers. That was my specific statement.

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Madam President, if they were advertised in the daily newspapers, obviously the Auditor General missed that, because she did not take that into consideration.

“At the time of the audit field work, the following records, information relating to the award of contracts to the CEPEP contractors at the commencement of field operations were not produced:”

She said at the time of the audit field work application forms were not produced. The names of the members of the selection committee chaired by a consultancy firm were not produced. The minutes of the meetings of the selection committee were not produced. The evaluation forms and grading of each prospective contractor interviewed by the selection panel were not produced.

Paragraph 16 of page 10 of the Auditor General’s report says:

“Documentary evidence relating to the award of contracts for the equipment,

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uniform and ...were not produced...

- the procedures applied in selecting the service providers;
- the authority for the selection procedures adopted;
- a listing of all applicants;”

None of these things were provided. We would not go into the recommendations and so forth. We will spare the debate on that at this time. It has been written in the newspapers and everybody knows the massive corruption in CEPEP because of the non-performance, non-tendering, lack of transparency and lack of probity.

I believe the hon. Minister of National Security—it seems as though the Minister was in charge of CEPEP for the first year or two and that is why he gave a Minister’s father contracts. Madam President, is that not misconduct in public office? And your colleague sitting next to you will know that is misconduct in public office, because, that is nepotism.

The Minister indicated to the Parliament a short while ago there are six teams of 10 and four teams working on the CEPEP programme. He said that the six teams were of 10 people. On a monthly basis they are paid \$183,680. And the wages for the six teams of 10 people was \$125,878—68.7 per cent.

Madam President, we have been informed and we have done our calculations ourselves, each daily-paid CEPEP worker works for \$64 per day. That is \$512. One foreman will receive \$100 and the supervisor \$120 which is \$732 for the day. For 20 days of the month that works out to \$14,640. Let us round it off to \$15,000. For six teams that is \$90,000 in wages so I do not know where the Minister got his figure \$125,000 for wages. It is \$35,000 less. In other words, he is saying that the wages that are being paid is \$35,000 more but we have calculated that the contractor is getting \$35,000 in his pocket. In addition, the contractors are getting money from equipment repairs, rent, external business expenses, and that is coming up to approximately \$10,000 per month. The contractors administration salary is \$15,000 per month. So that \$15,000 plus \$10,000 plus \$25,000 plus \$90,000 is \$140,000. Madam President, the contractor is making at least \$60,000 per month. For 12 months of the year it is \$720,000. For three years it is \$2.16 million. So a contractor who got a contract for three years is making \$.2 million profit and the names that Sen. Mark quoted a while ago who received contracts are making that type of profit and the poor workers are made to suffer. I am saying, why is it that Minister Martin Joseph tried to mislead the Senate by giving us wrong information?

Whoever gave the Minister that information, he should go back and calculate them and he would realize that the contractors are making more than \$60,000 per month.

The hon. Minister of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs said we have not been giving suggestions. Madam President, CEPEP workers are working under terrible labour conditions. Imagine a worker is taking home for a five-day week, 300 plus dollars. How could somebody survive on that? These people do not have toilet facilities; they do not have maternity benefits; they do not have anything.

We are going to ensure that the CEPEP workers work under admirable conditions, we are going to provide the essential things for them, we are going to re-organize CEPEP; we are going to ensure they go through a massive training programme; they will work half day in training, half day otherwise and we will put them into meaningful jobs throughout Trinidad and Tobago where people will feel a sense of self-esteem.

This is just one area which we will do. This is what we will do. We had six years and we performed and our performance has been unparalleled. In our six short years we performed.

Madam President, as on the question of the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs, I am happy Madam Senator. You have been very nice this evening. I am not going to spoil your evening. The Minister has been very gracious in her approach towards the debate and I will not be ungracious. [*Crosstalk*] She is not well, so I will not take advantage of this.

Madam President, she must answer some of these questions at some time: the refurbishment of community centres, \$3.2 million was moved out of that. We know that there are a number of dilapidated community centres throughout Trinidad and Tobago, why was money not spent to ensure that these were taken care of so that there would have been no savings there or no expenses and, therefore, a number of community centres would have been improved? There were vacant posts in the Ministry of Community Development, and the Minister will probably tell us why there are vacant positions to the tune of \$2.1 million. Then there is a virement to official overseas travel of \$3.9 million. We have stated on numerous occasions that this Government has a propensity for excessive spending in terms of public relations, publicity and advertising. We calculated the figures and came up to over \$320 million that this Government has spent over the last three years in these three areas.

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We want them to be extremely cautious and say why it is necessary. This is just a virement of \$4 million. We do not know what the total amount is for overseas travel. This is just \$3.9 million but the Minister will be able to tell us the real figures at some subsequent time, or probably give us the information when she gets it. [*Interruption*]

This is what the purpose of this is so that these figures will be audited by the Auditor General and the Parliament will get to know exactly what is happening.

Madam President, the other area under that is the non-profit institutions and it has there, culture—\$500,000, non-profit institutions—\$7.635 million.

I think there is a perception in Trinidad and Tobago that the Ministry of Community Development—this is not casting any aspersion on the hon. Minister herself. But the Ministry has one of the largest budgets in Trinidad and Tobago. It is about \$3.6 billion or somewhere around there. [*Crosstalk*] Out of the \$34 billion in the budget are you saying that you received—

Sen. Yuille-Williams: Billion?

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: No, the budget for Trinidad and Tobago expenditure is \$34 billion.

Sen. Mark: How much your Ministry gets?

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: We will find out and I will tell you subsequently. There is a perception that there is a handing out of money from that Ministry on a daily basis and we see photographs in the newspaper that people are receiving moneys from the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs and so forth. We have asked for their criteria. I can set up an NGO, a non-profit organization or get a number of persons to set it up and say, “Madam Minister, we need some funding”. You must establish some criteria for us, the nation needs to understand on what basis you give money to non-profit organizations.

Sen. Yuille-Williams: Madam President, the Senator was going good but he is misleading the Senate. The Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs have associated with us a number of NGOs and other groups. I think we has a small budget. We have Self Help, we have CDF and what the money is there for, helping the persons out there. If the Senator wants to write something here to me—first of all, you will hear Community Development Officers will go out to check whether or not such an organization exists. There are Community Development Officers all over Trinidad and Tobago. All the people know what happens. We take good care of the limited funds. Do not say

things that you are not sure about because it really hurts to hear that. We try with what we have. I am very honest about it. My friend said I had \$2 million plus. I do not have it but I am honest with the \$37 million we have to spend. Please, at this hour of the night, let us be honest with each other.

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Madam President, we would like if the hon. Minister could provide the Parliament with a list of all the NGOs that are receiving funding from the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs. Dr. Saith has indicated when we are dealing with the Auditor General's report we will know exactly how many non-governmental organizations and institutions are receiving funding from the Ministry.

Another area is the issue of scholarships and it was briefly raised. Madam Minister, what are you doing giving scholarships for people in sports? Such programmes of training included sport management. Why is the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs giving scholarships? I thought we had one body dealing with Government scholarships.

Sen. Yuille-Williams: Could you give way? Let us not go over the same thing. Your colleague asked that question and we explained it. You were not asleep when he asked. We talked about the word scholarship, we talked about assistance and we went on to say how this arose. Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh, I expect much more from you. I respect you but I do not expect you to fall to this. There is a certain Senator who will go with that and I will take it, but not from you.

Madam President: Senator, you are repeating issues that were brought up by other Senators on your side, the CEPEP issue, and the scholarship issue were brought up by more than one person. Please go on to something new and different.

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Madam President, it has just been brought to my attention that development fund for the Ministry is \$47 million and the Minister is saying it is \$37 million.

We have to make our statements and our statements indicate \$47 million for the Ministry of Community Development alone. I am not repeating the same thing about CEPEP. I am responding to what Minister Joseph indicated a while ago. The recurrent budget is \$254 million for the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs. So, it is not \$37 million.

This here, has in it the explanation and the explanation under the Ministry of Education is that—it is written on page 20, September 2006—approved the

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provision of financial assistance for 82 persons, which you mentioned, programme of training and/or study in traditional and non-traditional areas of the Community Development Scholarship Programme. Such programmes of training included sport management. I think we need to tell the Minister of Finance if it is not scholarship, write what is really the truth. If you say it is not scholarship get the hon. Minister of Finance when he is bringing this to the Parliament to write the correct thing rather than say it is a scholarship.

Madam President, on the question of education, Sen Prof. Ramchand raised three important issues. I want to raise three more on the issue of education. Reasons for Savings, page 8:

The sum of \$14 million was available for transfers from the salaries and COLA and vacant posts provision in the Ministry as letters of appointment for the filling of a number of vacant posts were not received from the Service Commission Department. The pace of recruitment and selection of suitable persons for the filling of vacancies was very slow.

Madam President, you would realize that the Joint Select Committee met and the Ministry of Education had been looked into. One of the findings from the Ministry of Education is that there were a number of teaching positions which were vacant. As a result, the Minister in her response from the Ministry of Education indicated that these positions would have been filled, but today, we are seeing the transfer of \$14 million because these positions were not filled.

Therefore, we understand the reason why the education system is still having tremendous difficulty. It seems as though nobody wants to teach and they are not filling the positions but the pace of recruitment and selection of suitable personnel is very slow. This needs to be addressed. This is a critical area within the Ministry of Education, and to come and ask because \$14 million has not been spent when there were positions to be filled, teachers to be put into positions, where there are classes without teachers and absent teachers—let us fill the classrooms with the teachers and make sure that the teaching fraternity is at top capacity.

Then there was the question of the listing of arrears owed to teachers not being utilized. As a result \$8 million was available for transfer. Madam President, how could you really hold back arrears for teachers? Why do you want to hold back the arrears of \$8 million when they are supposed to be paid?

Then there is the other position, savings from computer:

A contract was awarded for the delivery, installation, networking and commissioning of computer equipment and accessories in 340 primary

schools. However, because of infrastructural works needed in some schools to accommodate the computers only about 134 schools were expected to be equipped in fiscal 2006. As a result, \$25 million was available for transfer.

Madam President, what is the Ministry of Education doing when there are almost 500 primary schools needing computers and computer labs? [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. Manning: On a point of order, Madam President, I would like to answer what the Ministry of Education is doing. [*Crosstalk*] The question was asked.

Madam President: He said he is not giving way. Both speakers cannot be standing.

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Madam President, I am making the point that 340 primary schools were supposed to have received computer equipment and only 134 schools received them. It is in this report, \$25 million, therefore has been left. Why is it that the Ministry of Education does not think it is a priority to ensure that computerization of primary schools must take place?

Sen. Manning: Madam President, on a point of order, please? I would like to answer

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: All right.

Sen. Manning: Thank you very much. The computerization programme of the primary schools in Trinidad and Tobago is ongoing. As a matter of fact, the computers have started to roll out into the schools. What you are seeing is a delay in the rolling out of the programme, that the schools are being repaired. We have started putting the computers in the school system. It was delayed by just a few months.

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Madam President, in case the Minister of Education does not know, I was chairman of the National Advisory Committee on Education from 1996 and I have been following education for the last—and obviously, I think this is one of—no aspersion on you personally—the worst performing Ministries of Education ever for a long time.

Madam President, we come now to an area, which is, the health sector. One sees Statement of Transfers, Ministry of Health, Head 28, North West Regional Health Authority. Salaries and COLA—\$11.3 million being moved and being available, and North Central Regional Health Authority, \$11 million being made available.

Madam President, in the health sector under page 9, Head 28, the reasons for transfers:

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Ministry of Health at regional and international meetings and conferences. That is a reason for transfer. They want to get money for attending meetings and conferences at the Ministry of Health.

Madam President, do you know that the Ministry of Health has more public relations officers and press advisors than most other ministries in Trinidad and Tobago, and as a result, one sees the most number of advertisements coming out of the Ministry of Health?

11.00 p.m.

We are going to ask shortly for a complete breakdown of the total expenditure on advertisement and travel. We are just seeing the tip of the iceberg in terms of money being spent for international meetings and conferences. That is the first point. The second point is that the sum of \$3 million was required to defray expenses for the increase in demand for assistance from nationals suffering from renal failure and other serious ailments who were unable to meet fully the monthly cost of dialysis and other treatment.

If the Minister of Finance were in the room, I would tell him to have a personal chat with the Minister of Health because he promised, from as early as 2004, that there would be two dialysis centres in Trinidad; one in the north and one in the south, to dialyze 200 patients in the north and 200 in the south. We are being asked to accept a virement of whatever cost for patients suffering from chronic renal failure, when that system should have been in place from the end of the 2004 budgetary year. We are now in 2007 and the Minister talks on a daily basis like a movie star and an actor, trying to fool the population, telling them that the money is going towards paying for chronic renal failure patients. It is important that we pay for the patients, but the system should have been there to ensure that these 400 persons are being dialyzed. The Minister should have put that in place.

Madam President: Hon. Members, 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.

Madam President: Senator, just do not refer to the Minister—something you said about the Minister fooling—

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Madam President, the other point is that the amount of \$19 million was required to facilitate the procurement of additional pharmaceuticals and non-pharmaceutical supplies as a result of the introduction of new services, for example, MRI and CT scans. I have questions on this Order Paper that are due since November 16, asking the hon. Minister of Health to inform the Senate of the name of the company which was awarded a contract for the purchase and supply of CT and MRI machines for use in the nation's hospitals.

Would the hon. Minister further inform the Senate of the names of the directors of the company; the number and names of the companies which submitted all bids, the value of each bid, the value of successive—

Madam President, that is just one of the questions. Do you know why? Because there has been massive corruption with the purchase of this CT Scan and MRI machine. The Minister is afraid to come to the Senate to answer who were the members of the specification committee and the evaluation committee because they were the same people. When that is discovered, somebody will make a jail—\$52 million in corruption.

Madam President, the other question related to the coronary and angiography unit. The same company got the \$22 million for the coronary and angiography unit; that is why he is afraid to answer the question almost two months now. We are being asked to vire \$90 million to facilitate the procurement of additional pharmaceuticals for the MRI and CT machines. No, Madam President, we cannot support something like this when we know that the whole thing has been very corrupt.

Madam President, do you know that the National Oncology Centre has been promised by this administration since 2002. Five years later they have not even dug one hole to start the centre and thousands of patients are suffering as a result of cancer. People who can afford it go abroad to seek treatment, but what are the poor people getting? The crumbs of a radiation machine that gives them burns to the bowel and bladder and they are dying as a result of that. The Minister is fiddling and he can only talk nonsense in the other place.

Madam President, do you know that one doctor in Trinidad and Tobago has been brought back from abroad? I taught her from 1989 to 1993. Nothing is wrong with that. She was one of the most brilliant doctors who graduated from the medical school, but she is receiving \$150,000 a month; \$1.8 million a year; more than five times the salaries of three of you Ministers put together. Two other senior people in the national oncology system, which has not even started, have salaries of \$55,000 and \$50,000.

There are a lot of good doctors and a lot of bad ones. How could they give a doctor \$150,000 a month? No matter what you are. Madam President, you are an extremely competent doctor and Parliament, in a way, prevents you from earning a better livelihood. Madam President had a very successful practice on the East-West Corridor and her patients still call for her.

When you pay a doctor \$150,000 and the other doctors see that, what are you doing to the country? Where is the parity? Take note of that, Minister of Finance. Something is wrong. Will the \$90 million we are being asked to vire across to the Ministry be paying that doctor? She is my colleague, but I cannot stand here and accept that type of thing. It is wrong.

Another reason for saving is that the posts are to be abolished and transferred to the regional authorities. This policy has generated savings of \$22 million. Five years now the Minister has had the opportunity to transfer the health sector workers to the Regional Health Authorities. [*Interruption*] Forgot what we did not do. Just think about what we did. You will not even stay in Parliament to hear the end of that. We did approximately 480 infrastructural projects. The question is the abolition of posts and \$22 million being available for the Minister of Health to effect the transfer of public sector workers to the Regional Health Authorities.

I want to go to one other area before I close on the health sector. The Minister has been saying all along that the medical board is responsible for looking at the question of the death of Faith Williams. The reports have come out that the enquiry blames the hospital department for the child's death. The enquiry showed that the theatre was operating on outdated policies and procedures. The report claimed that no efficient or updated management systems had been put into place.

Hon. Member: What is the relevance?

Sen. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: He is asking for money to be removed from the North Central Regional Health Authority. They have a responsibility to utilize the \$11 million to be vired for something else. Why was the money not spent to have the system in the operating theatre working properly; to have a good anaesthetic machine be there? They knew it was not commissioned. It was put there even when it was not commissioned and was a potential for causing deaths. Three people suffered as a result. Why did the North Central Regional Health Authority not take the \$11 million that they are seeking to vire and spend the money for a proper anesthetic machine, making sure that the machine is well commissioned and safe for the use of people?

The Minister of Health is asking to vire \$11 million from one of the Regional Health Authorities. What is happening to the same-day surgery programme? We have \$11 million to be spent within the Regional Health Authority and the same-day waiting programme is fraught with difficulties. There are so many reports and letters sent to the Minister of Health. Permit me to make these statements. One letter was written to the Medical Chief of Staff at the Port of Spain General Hospital which is under the North West Regional Health Authority by an administrator in the Anaesthetic and Intensive Care Unit.

He said that the waiting list has been going on in the main operating theatre since November 2005 and that he had certain reservation with respect to the implementation and conduct of the project to date. He also said that he was not aware of any organizational structure of the project. In other words, to whom the officers report.

I am unaware of any contingency plan in case of mishap. It was brought to my attention on Sunday 22nd January, a list was done at the expense of booked emergency cases. These emergency cases were done after the waiting list initiative project.

For those who do not know, emergency cases are those that come in with gunshot and knife wounds. These patients are made to sit or lie on the trollies while the elective surgeries are being done. The head of this department had serious concerns. The pathology department was not informed of this project and the Minister speaks glowingly about the same-day surgery programme. He said that it is doing well. [*Interruption*] He spoke about it in the other place, so I have to respond.

There was another letter written to the Minister on March 24, 2006, on the same-day surgery programme, talking about the questionable practice of screening patients; unacceptable demands of the anaesthetists, simultaneous administration of anesthesia—two patients being put to sleep by the same anaesthetist. There are very glaring problems on the same-day waiting list programme. All of these could be dealt with if they are managed properly in the North West Regional Health Authority. There was going to be no need for any same day surgery waiting list programme and the Minister is trying to go on a trip to say that we have done 10,000 cases. Last year, we did 5,000, so we are doing better on them. In all that is happening, three persons have died as a result of the same-day waiting surgery programme.

There is so much corruption in this. Imagine Elaine's Cuisine got almost \$.5 million, and a travel tour and service got \$.5 million under the \$18 million

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programme. What is going on? And the Minister says that the same day waiting surgery programme is working well.

This situation is untenable. There are a number of areas in this Bill that we are being asked to approve. We have indicated serious dissatisfaction in a number of areas, particularly the education and health sectors. There are a number of other areas that my other colleagues have touched on. We need a lot of answers to these things. We find it very difficult to support the transfer of money from one department to another when we have no explanations to this.

I am just being reminded that there is also the question of public utilities and the road surfacing programme. The sum of \$68 million is being vired for that. That is only because of works done in the last part of 2006. What is that money being paid for? Is it for the resurfacing of the Churchill-Roosevelt Highway, which was good surface that was redone? Is it being paid to contractors who are giving money back to the PNM to support them and will be for election? We want to know where the money is being spent. Will it be for preferred contractors who are in good keeping and in good books with the PNM? So much corruption is going on. We have exposed the CEPEP. We have exposed the Sugar Manufacturing Company Limited. We have exposed the UTT and we will expose everything the PNM does in massive corruption. We cannot support any finance bill just like that. Answers need to come to us. We just cannot support anything *carte blanche*.

I thank you.

Sen. Brother Noble A. Khan: Madam President, thank you for allowing me these few minutes to share some thoughts on what is before us. Indeed, I know that this is one of the major exercises on the financial calendar. Taking into consideration that we are in the last year of the period in which this Parliament sits, the normal period, one would expect that it may be the last one with which many of us will be dealing, seeing that there is an impending election and there will be changes.

I have always said that the financial system is one upon which the Parliament is based. If you were to look at how it evolved, you will find some credence in what I have said. Our own evolved out of Act 20:59 and it formed the basis upon which our whole financial structure rests. There has been very little change since the initiation of this Act and after 50 years or so—

Madam President: I am not hearing you.

Sen. Bro. N. Khan: Sorry. I was saying that the document we have originated from a law that started a whole financial structure upon which our country is based and continues from that colonial time to now. There has been

very little change in that law. I also initially made the statement that this might be one of the last of this Parliament that many of us will be undergoing, seeing that it is almost five years since we have been here. It is then, to my mind, an important exercise for some of us. I think it is for me.

The Act establishes the appropriation law and the variation seeks to make changes in what is before us—the Finance (Variation of Appropriation) (2006) Bill. Firstly, I would like to give some recognition to those who have prepared it, our Minister of Finance and particularly to his arm within the Ministry, the Budget Division. As you know, I once worked there and I can see, over a period of time, evidence that there is substantially very little change.

The variation deals particularly with about \$81.5 million and as has been said in the notes that accompanied it, the variation of the 2006 appropriation in the sum is required. That was made to retire warrants issued for advances from Treasury Deposits. This advance from Treasury Deposits possibly bears out what I would like to say, that the law is pretty behind time and also seems to be a sort of paradox with respect to the law of appropriation.

There is, on the one hand under this law, an appropriation Act when the budget starts at the end of the year, setting up the financial year and also to supplement the legal framework, a Consolidated Fund. The Appropriation Act allows expenditure from the Consolidated Fund. The Contingency Fund one could look at as a subset of the Consolidated Fund. At a later date, there was a change in the law that allowed for expenditure under Treasury Deposits.

Now the evolution of the law and the Parliament rests much on the basis of expenditure. That was the English pattern and it was the same with us. As we know, the English pattern claims to be one of high democracy in which the people are represented in the Parliament and expenditure is granted by the Parliament, the House of Commons in those days and up to now. So, you have, insofar as expenditure is concerned, the participation of the representatives of the people. With the passing of the first law, the Appropriation Act and subsequently any, the law itself provides following that pattern that you should come to the Parliament if you wish to spend again.

You would observe, if there is an unforeseen expenditure, the Contingencies Fund would take up that slack up to the extent of what has been allocated to the Contingencies Fund. Initially, \$1.5 million was a lot of money. Subsequently, it went up to \$25 million and within recent times to \$100 million, if I am to give credibility to a resolution. I had asked for a document from the Parliament

Library and they passed this to me. Some time ago, September 12, it went to \$100 million.

Now the figure before us is \$81.4 million and, obviously, the Contingencies Fund could not have accommodated that sum. An advance from Treasury Deposits was made. That is what I meant when I said that there appears to be a paradox or a mix up in my mind and that it goes to the law with respect to that very important aspect of expenditure of funds and how we go about it. This \$81.4 million was unforeseen expenditure and we did take it from Treasury Deposits. I am not saying that there was not real reason for it. I am dealing with the system that exists which, obviously, is the one with which we work.

It is against this background that I adduced that the system for the preparation and expenditure of the biggest “company” in Trinidad and Tobago seems to be archaic or no longer relevant to what is required in modern times. I have made mention of this before and also to the mechanism for meeting this expenditure, which is the public service machinery which the people have with them within the framework of government to carry through to what we hope to achieve and to do that in a most honourable, dignified way and with a transparent system of accountability that will be the best that could be afforded.

To my mind, the system has not kept pace with time or with what “modern technology” and advancement has placed on the board. I am sure that we have heard here before that in the private sector—giving you the feeling that the private sector is by far the best way to go. They might be motivated by very different needs, profit motives, et cetera and the flexibility which it affords and the requirement of law and the very dictates of profitability as a requirement or need—you cannot exist without it—will motivate the private sector to try the best methods available and be more flexible.

On the other hand, we have had to say that we have over 50 years of it or more and we remain static in that way. Regretfully, very often we find our thinking capacity, our change for transformation which takes place firstly within our minds, seems to be stuck in that mode too. Obviously, what we have before us here, while it might be because of the system of legislation, the need for having it in this form seems to be the primary need for what we see before us.

On the other hand, if we were—and it became very evident here—to follow the debate that took place on the question of money spent towards a goal or an objective, it was not clear. The achievement of those goals and objectives could not have a benchmark, method or mechanism built into the system to ascertain the extent to what we had hoped to achieve could have been measured.

I am advancing that the management techniques available at the moment seem not to be built into the system that exists now. I suggest, as I did some time ago, that we should have taken action long ago where this could have been done. In changing the paperwork, we are getting the best methods available and it might be a good way to go. It may come to naught if we do not carry with it proper change and restructuring of the public service machinery to carry it out.

There seems to be a big void, to my mind, that has bound us and has not brought us, I suspect, the benefits, no matter how much money we spend, that could be derived. This, I think, might be challenging. It might not be correct, but I feel that way about it. As I mentioned before, it has been quite some time since I have worked in the area of the budget. I have seen various techniques outside in my own professional capacity. I have discussed it with my senior officers in the framework of it, but there seems to be no high motivation or will to bring about or if we were to take the evidence that we have that it does not exist to see that it does take place, this change I am speaking about to bring it on a footing.

This has left us in a way that I suspect that the best decisions are not made. Also, one would say even within the framework of what has been normally referred to as the feedback mechanism, our audit structure because audit is incorporated into our Constitution, into the second Audit Act, which itself has not evolved much.

I worked in audit for some time, too, and there were requests for change in the techniques which were available to implement them but there seems to have been no support of that because staff and funding did not really come. This is all I can think because within the audit department there was high motivation and skills available, but not in the quantity and obviously there would have had to be change in the law to bring in some of these techniques. There again we remained bound.

11.30 p.m.

The audit that is before us today to which so much reference has been made with respect to the CEPEP exercise, which was presented in the Senate here before and which reference has been made, came as a special exercise. One would think in terms of if the regular type audit that you find that appears when the appropriation account comes out, if those techniques and requirements with a more online audit system faced within the background of a more managerial emphasis, that in itself would have been a great motivator or a great tool in putting us in a way where we could have a better command of what comes before us.

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These are some of the thoughts that come to my mind with respect to the structure. When we leave today it will be the last we will be looking at for quite some time, at least insofar as this Parliament is concerned. We would not have a next budget, with what we can see within the framework until it takes place after into the new accounting year.

I would like to make some references to some of the matters raised inside of here. Obviously, the night has been long; we have heard much and many comments have been made so there is not much I will be touching on, but I will like to share some with you.

With respect to the area of what has been—I think we have debated it plenty—the question of crime but I will come back to that. My little note here deals with health. Now we are not unaware that there have been great strides that have been made within the Ministry of Health and the service that is being now given, the expansion of it, almost because I think the desire to serve the nation in a better way and also too, because of the funds that we have to bring about some of the things we would like to do. One of the things that struck me and which we hear on the ground, is that much of the drugs that we get under CDAP are derived out of the generics. I may be using lay terms here and forgive me if I do not fit in with what it is; the generic drug so to speak.

The feeling you get too, is that very often both from doctors—at least this I am getting second hand—and patients, I get first hand; people who are treated, that it is not working properly and things like that. My own feeling is—I will refer to again as what we refer to as the patent drugs which might be more expensive and not the generic drugs—that it might be, to my humble mind, to pay a little more so that you will save quite a lot by not spending on the generic drugs. In other words, replace the generic drugs; you can explore that.

I do not know what the cost might be—because if what you are using now is not working; it may work differently with different people—to bring this within the matrix of considering that. Because at the moment you get quite a number of people who are concerned that the generic drugs are not working with them, and there should be a need for some change. My suggestion as a layman is if you could consider that the use of the patent drugs, which might be a little more expensive, you will get a better effect on that little increase in expenditure as against what you are spending now and you are not getting anything out of it, not even health wise and it will definitely have a push back on the person's approach to the service they are getting.

I have a little note here on the Ministry of Legal Affairs. I have taken out some of these ministries that are linked back to the document. I know much work has been done by the Ministry of Legal Affairs; I thank you, Madam Minister; you know we always like to support you with the nice way you put it over at least. I know quite a bit of crowding is taking place in your Ministry at the moment and we look forward to some clearing up of that. You know sometimes you get a big bump; a big up and it would smooth out. We had much of that statistical terms coming about; I am hoping for that but if you could definitely do a little more into that area, I think it would be most welcome. Many of the people here are women with children; think in terms of that, you yourself as, I think a mother too.

Sen. Kangaloo: Not yet.

Sen. Bro. N. Khan: Not yet. As a woman that we give some consideration for that.

Crime and street children, two things Minister of National Security. I know you are under heavy stress with what is taking place and I too would like to join with others who have expressed sympathy to all those who have faced the horrors of crime and dastardly acts and may God have mercy on them and on their family in their moments of grief and want. Let us stand by them in our spirit and let us hope by the grace of God that soon, things will be overcome. But as we say, sometimes it is always good to pray to God, to have confidence in him, and I support that, but it is also wise to tie your camel; this is an old proverb.

This is self-evident and as you know too, I have always had the stand from very early to cooperate, to participate, to partnership and I still stand in all things with this, because if we could reach in consensus and agreement, I think it will be a better way to go despite the systems that we have, that help us with what we are using at the moment. In this area of crime, I too join in that appeal with participation, particularly cooperation with the police and the other state agencies. We know their job is tough, it is hard and we should give them that moral support, that spiritual support and importantly the physical support too, by participating and helping them as far as we can.

To this end, I could share possibly that there is concern within the faith-based systems. We too, will be getting deeper into it and I look forward to having interactions with other state agencies, particularly the Ministry of National Security at a later date, but soon time.

The street children is one that has been with us for quite some time. Work has been done at UWI, Dr. Marshall and others and I think that the state agencies

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should get a little more involved in this, because they are our precious children; there are those at the lower end of the net; those who could least afford it and those who are in need. To put it at a stronger level, if we do not deal with it, it is at our own peril, as we see with succeeding generations.

With respect to social services, I know there are quite a bit of programmes that are on but there is need—especially if we are to, as the society becomes more sophisticated in this movement towards Vision 2020—to have the type of skills particularly in our NGOs, other faith-based organizations and what have you, in training and bringing them equipped in how to move within organizations and relating to the other State agencies and even within themselves.

Agriculture, as we know is one that much has been said about and with agriculture and too the environment we are dealing here with ensuring our very existence, our very being. It is so important that I can put it this way, that possibly we were men and women long before states made us citizens and keep us within a cramped style that we find ourselves in. And so many negatives that derive, because nearly everything that we do in relating towards the environment, the land, the air, the sea, the trees, the rivers, we are interacting with nature itself. They have a definite effect on what we do because there are consequences of what we do, there is no right or wrong, but there are consequences that go deep within our very make up of our very soul.

I know with respect to the housing much has been said about it and sometimes you feel you are dealing with a bunch of boasters and like if you are doing something for somebody and they owe you that. I think if we could look at ourselves as being servants, in the sense that we are here to give service and service to each other in our own right, and the responsibility becomes more when we offer ourselves for public service. In my own tradition it is a responsibility that is looked upon as very, very grave and it is not that you seek office, people ask you to serve; this is the way we look at it. This is an aspect in our tradition that we could find and you will find it in all the great traditions. If we could pay a little more respect to that element within the areas of service that we give.

I mention housing because just recently—I think it was on the TV just yesterday or the day before—where you saw a parent with some little children around him, the background of it was a house in the East Port of Spain area; they

put him out because he did not have six months rent or so. I make mention to this because the thing seems so bitter and senseless. I am not a lawyer but the impression I get is that if you are renting a place and a person does not pay the rent for the month, you are supposed to take your action then; something along those lines.

You wait for six months! But if you really check it out in the same area and many other areas you may find it is years and why did you select this person. It might be by how you spin it, like the lottery or what have you. When you think about it, as I said, it makes no sense. I would say not because you are traditional supporters I do not think so, but the area is, it never changed so to speak. It seems to be unbecoming of human consideration. It is terrible you know. I remember I was very, very young, my children were small, I had my first car; we went to drop them off to school and coming through Beetham. When you coming down Beetham in the "mang" they broke down a house and I saw this poor little woman picking up her daughter—it brings back memories of that.

You have plenty money. Money for whom? So when the little boys and they get on so, what are you going to do? You talk to them and we are doing it. This is here on public, I do not know how the message will go out, but let us hope we learn inside of here; change some of our ways; say what we are thinking, the transformation has to come from inside. On that aspect, just think in terms of that, because I will like to think I am wrong or is it a betrayal? I am not talking about party or government here, you know, betrayal of one's own self. Even when we start to forget ourself, it is pathology we are talking about. Pathology of a society; of instituting a culture of death and even if we are betrayed, we could still forgive.

These are some important aspects that I share on this as we come to the end of this Bill before us. Say what it is—"say wha" as we say—the question of change will come, some will fall, but as the calypsonian say "more will come;" it is a wave. These are some of the thoughts I share.

Again, let me end by giving congratulations to our Minister who has done quite a bit of work over the period of time; both our Minister of Finance and the Minister in the Ministry of Finance and all of our people who have worked over the years in bringing this document here before us, because as I have said before, this would be the last one, I cannot see any more coming within the frame of things. Also, let us hope that in time to come we will have change. Unless the change comes in our mind and sufficient motivation to work because even the Ministry of Public Administration, it is a powerful ministry; we know they do plenty work and what have you.

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We have good public officers; we have always had good public officers and some of those who have had contact with others even within our Caribbean areas will feel a satisfaction of our own public officers, that we will see some element of change that will put it on the footing that it is capable of, to bringing us to using the mechanisms. If I were to go back a bit, unless we use what we have or what we are capable of, we will continue to be in the muck that we are in. We have it; we are capable inside of here; the staff that we have; our Ministers; the machinery that we have and maybe at a next stage something else is coming. We will deal with conceptualization, the question of development, et cetera which of course, we will leave for that.

Thank you and may God bless us all. [*Desk thumping*]

The Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Sen. The Hon. Conrad Enill):
Thank you, Madam President. Let me at this hour thank all those who have contributed to an exercise that is required in order for us to report to the Parliament on changes made to the approvals that were in fact given by the Parliament some time ago. There has been a lot of discussion about a number of things and a number of opinions expressed about Government policy and the implementation of particular actions.

One issue though that I think we need to make absolutely clear is that in managing any organization; in managing any business and in managing Government funds, what the Parliament basically approves is something called a Head and a Head as approved by the Finance Committee basically is the sum total of the expenditure that the Ministries provide. One of the difficulties that I had in understanding some of the comments made by various participants in the debate was the whole question of planning and the mistaken conclusion that there is absolutely no planning in this process and for some strange reason it happens by guess and it happens by individuals who do not know what they are doing. The one thing I want to make abundantly clear is, that is very far from the truth.

In order to arrive at this stage, a significant amount of work is done and there is a particular process by which the work is done. Because I believe it is important for Members of the Senate to understand the process and to disabuse themselves of what they consider to be some kind of adhococracy in the way we do our business, I want to place on the record the manner in which we get to this stage.

Each year the Government in preparing for its estimates gives instructions to Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Departments and the Chief Administrator in the Tobago House of Assembly. We essentially tell these leaders

what it is they are required to do in order for us to carry out the business of the people of Trinidad and Tobago. I just want to read for you a small part—because I will do the longer version on another occasion—of what we are attempting to do.

We say to these leaders that the preparation of estimates should take cognizance of Government's vision of transforming Trinidad and Tobago into a developed country by 2020; we say that. We also say, importantly, that the key to sustained development is the creation of enabling conditions for the optimum realization of the country's human capital potential.

That therefore says, Madam President, that we are doing two things. The first thing we are doing is we are aligning the Government's vision and the development of human capital with the decisions that we take and the way in which we attempt to take them.

One other point. We have said to our leadership team that during the 2006 fiscal year, the Government continued the preparatory process for changing the budgetary system from line item to output management. It is something that has been said for a very long time in this place and in the other place. We have decided that the time has come consistent with moving this country forward and consistent with our Vision 2020 objective, that we would take the step and that we would start to move to the stage where we will start to measure output management.

What this process involves is the exposure of line ministries to the concepts, the rationale and the practical application of output management. During the course of this year we have spent a significant amount of time creating and conditioning the environment for this to operate. Ministries were asked, in doing what we do, to prepare corporate and business plans and institute the administrative mechanisms to systemize the process and preparation of these documents.

Madam President, it is important that we understand that, because these are the tools that are required to run a large economy. Suffice it to say, that we have said to our Ministries that when they come to discuss budget estimates with us, they must come with the policy framework; the strategic plan of the ministry, in fact the strategic plan of the department and the agency and where it is required, a customer service delivery plan.

The reason for that is because as Sen. Bro. Khan has indicated, we have found in a lot of instances that many individuals who deliver goods and services on our behalf do not do so in a customer service or a customer-friendly environment. It

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is because of that and because of the institutionalization of the system that we operate by, we can continue to say and will say, that we are in fact managing the resources of this country in a manner that is appropriate and in a manner that is consistent.

The one thing that we have no control over are the human beings that operate within the system; the actions that they take from time to time and the ability to change what they do consistent with the instructions that they have given us; that we have not done as yet. That is the challenge that we face and it does not matter which government comes into power. The fact of the matter is there has to be an alignment between Government and those who have the responsibility for the delivery of service and there has to be a situation in which when they do good we praise them and when they do bad we deal with them.

Madam President, let me deal with some very specific issues. Sen. Dr. Jennifer Kernahan sought to give the impression that we are managing the economy badly. I am extremely disappointed in the fact that in circumstances where all of us are struggling with the issue of growth and we are struggling with the issue of how we are managing growth and we are struggling with how to make more service available to citizens of this country and we have reached the situation now, where today, we are finding ourselves in a situation where having created 40,000 jobs over the last four years, the discussion is no longer about putting food on people's table; the discussion now is about it is not sustainable.

The only reason it will not be sustainable is if some other group that does not understand the "long termness" of what we are doing, by some strange perk, gets into office. As far as we are concerned, we are setting the stage now for the sustainable development of what we are doing over the next 10 to 20 years. You see, that is what Vision 2020 is about.

Vision 2020 is about making sure that the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago have the best choices available to them and their children over the next period of time. The Minister of National Security demonstrated to all of us that there is a plan and the plan works and you will see in the future more demonstration of our ability to demonstrate outcomes and deliverables on the basis of plans, because that is what Vision 2020 is all about.

Those who cannot understand the use of statistics to ensure that we are on target will always have issues to talk about that have absolutely no basis in fact. The way you determine the improvement on something is by measuring it. If you cannot measure it you cannot improve it and therefore when you use statistics, you are trying to move from point A to point B, and you measure it in a number of different ways.

While you are doing that, you also have to deal with the human resource and the individuals. One of the things that the Government is focused on doing right now and many commentators are saying we should not do that, is creating an environment. An environment that allows our people to understand that we care about them sufficiently; that we will put them in an environment that allows them to deliver good service. As our leader always says, the only reason that the population will elect a government is to ensure that the citizens are better off as a result of you being there.

Madam President, it is very easy to sit and to talk corruption, corruption, corruption. I want to advise those who speak like that, that at this point in time in our history—and I want to support Minister Dumas—we need to be careful that in our utterances we do not create for ourselves a problem that does not exist.

12.00 midnight

Madam President, if we continue at this level with some of the discussions that we have, in the way in which we have, a population that is looking to us for leadership will find it extremely difficult to make any kind of sense with the work that we do. I believe that if people believe that there are those in the society who have done wrong then there is absolutely no reason why you cannot deal with it in a manner that has been established. But to come in this place and to use the privileges to create confusion and to create a kind of disunity and disharmony, to me, is really not what we are about.

Hon. Senator: We explained that.

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: We have our responsibility and you have yours.

Sen. Mark: So what you want us to do, support corruption? We cannot support corruption, we will expose it and you better do not get involved in that otherwise—[*Crosstalk*]

Sen. The Hon. C. Enill: Madam President, I could handle my issues. [*Interruption*] The thing about it is in the business of governance we cannot look at short-term, we have to look at long-term. [*Interruption*] And insofar as that is concerned how we behave—[*Interruption*]

Madam President, could you ask the hon. Senator to stop disturbing me and to stop rabblousing, I am trying to make a contribution [*Interruption*] on the basis of my observations.

Madam President: Senator!

Sen. Mark: We will remove him from the Government.

Sen. The Hon. C. Enill: Madam President,—

Madam President: Senator, please! Please go ahead, Minister.

Sen. The Hon. C. Enill: Thank you, Madam President—

Sen. Mark: Who do you think you are talking to, your children?

Sen. The Hon. C. Enill: Madam President, you see, Sen. Mark gets up on a number of occasions and rants and raves and misbehaves.

Sen. Mark: No, no, no. When I make my contribution I do not rant and rave.

Sen. The Hon. C. Enill: Yes you do, and we allow him to so do. What I find difficult—

Sen. Dr. Gopeesingh: That is unparliamentary language. [*Laughter*]

Sen. Mark: Who are you? Who are you?

Sen. The Hon. C. Enill:—is that when someone else has a view that is different to his, it is this, it is that. But, Madam President, that too shall pass.

Sen. Mark: Yes we know that, we know it will pass.

Sen. The Hon. C. Enill: Madam President, our objective in doing the things that we do is to provide for the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago a very clear vision and a very clear plan for moving this country forward in spite of the challenges that we face. And that is something that we are committed to do and we will do so with every breath that we have—

Sen. Mark: Stay out of politics, do not get in politics.

Sen. The Hon. C. Enill:—and with every skill that we have. Madam President, out of an abundance [*Interruption*] of caution and based on all the comments that I have heard and recognizing and understanding that notwithstanding what was said we all support the exercise that we have been engaged in, I this morning, beg to move. [*Desk thumping*]

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a second time.

Sen. The Hon. C. Enill: Madam President, in accordance with Standing Order 63, I beg to move that the Bill not be committed to a committee of the whole Senate.

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Question put and agreed to.

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

Bill accordingly read the third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Public Administration and Information and Minister of Energy and Energy Industries (Sen. The Hon. Lenny Saith): Madam President, I beg to move that the Senate be now adjourned to Tuesday, January 30, 2007, at which time, as the Minister of Community Development and Gender Affairs indicated last week, we will take Private Members' Day—and night.

Question put and agreed to.

Senate adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 12.05 a.m.