

*Prayers**Tuesday, February 28, 2012***SENATE***Tuesday, February 28, 2012*

The Senate met at 1.30 p.m.

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

**Mr. President:** Hon. Senators, I have granted leave of absence to Sen. The Hon. Kevin Ramnarine who is out of the country.

**SENATOR'S APPOINTMENT**

**Mr. President:** Hon. Senators, I have received the following correspondence from His Excellency the President, Prof. George Maxwell Richards T.C., C.M.T., Ph.D.:

“THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

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

/s/ G. Richards  
President.

TO: MR. ARNOLD RAM

WHEREAS Senator the Honourable Kevin Christian Ramnarine is incapable of performing his duties as a Senator by reason of his absence from Trinidad and Tobago:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS, President as aforesaid, in exercise of the power vested in me by section 44(1)(a) and 44(4)(a) of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, do hereby appoint you, ARNOLD RAM, to be temporarily a member of the Senate, with effect from 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2012 and continuing during the absence from Trinidad and Tobago of the said Senator the Honourable Kevin Christian Ramnarine.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of the  
President of the Republic of Trinidad

*Senator's Appointment*

*Tuesday, February 28, 2012*

and Tobago at the Office of the President, St. Ann's, this 27<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2012.”

**OATH OF ALLEGIANCE**

*Senator Arnold Ram took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance as required by law.*

**ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

**The Police Service and Defence Force  
(Action taken since the State of Emergency)**

**33. Sen. Fitzgerald Hinds** asked the hon. Minister of National Security:

Could the Minister indicate what specific action has been taken to deal with any additional stress brought upon the officers of the police service and defence force, by virtue of the increased work arising out of demand for more work and effort, since the declaration of the state of emergency on August 21, 2011?

**The Minister of National Security (Sen. The Hon. Brig. John Sandy):** Mr. President, during the imposition of the 105-day state of emergency, all serving personnel of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force were mandated to engage in increased patrols and other law enforcement activities geared towards crime suppression and reduction.

While this period witnessed intensification in the operational activities, it should be noted that the requisite mental and physical preparations for these types of scenarios are a necessary part of the training to which such uniformed officers would be exposed on a normal basis. Notwithstanding this consideration, members are advised that given the sometimes volatile nature of work in both organizations, there are mechanisms in place to ensure that the needs of officers who require attention due to the impact of work demands are adequately addressed.

During the period of the state of emergency, the Defence Force Welfare Department embarked on an intensive marketing campaign aimed at increasing awareness among staff of the range of services available to service personnel, including the teaching of work-life balance skills. This campaign also included the design and distribution of welfare service cards to defence force service personnel and their families.

The department also conducted basic counselling workshop for all commissioned officers of the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard. This initiative was in anticipation of the increased number of individual and familial matters that could have arisen over the high-demand period. Additionally and significantly, great effort was placed on maintaining spirituality and religious values to boost morale during the state of emergency.

Celebration of the religious festivals of Eid-ul-Fitr and Divali, which occurred during the state of emergency, was maintained. There was also an increase in the development of chaplains to conduct religious services throughout camps and bases. Special services were provided for the senior command group, as well as troops on operations, also with a view to improving morale.

An allocation of the \$1,000 special tax-free duty allowance for personnel of uniformed services of the Ministry of National Security was also quite timely and served as a morale booster. In the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, the Social Work Unit provides personal and professional support to officers and their families. In recognition of the increasing demands placed on police officers during the state of emergency, increased services were made available at the four units, strategically located, throughout Trinidad and Tobago. These are located in the Northern Division, Central Division, Southern Division and in Tobago. In an effort to boost morale some of the services made available to police officers were: chaplaincy support, crisis intervention, debriefing and trauma counselling, psychotherapy, familial support services, life skills training and internal alcoholics anonymous programme.

Mr. President, the most valuable resource in the Ministry of National Security is our human resource, and while the demands on them may escalate at times, we are committed to ensuring their safety and well-being. We are therefore working hand in hand with them before, during and after the state of emergency to ensure that their needs are being adequately met.

**Sen. Hinds:** One supplemental, my friends. Hon. Minister, you spoke at length about the question of boosting morale and the \$1000 payment to members of the uniformed sections of your services. Is the Minister or his Government considering extending that to the SRPs and making public sector housing more accessible to members of your services, as well as taking them to the 9 per cent that seems to be the benchmark across the nation in terms of the settlements and wages today?

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** I will answer the first part of your question. Yes, consideration is being given to the other arms of the services. [*Interruption*]

**Sen. Hinds:** The SRPs you mean?

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** Yes. The other part of the question, I would leave that for the Minister of Finance to answer. Thank you.

**Sen. Hinds:** One further supplemental, now that he has said that, do the members of the protective services, the police, defence force and fire officers not fall squarely within your purview, hon. Minister?

**Sen. Brig. J. Sandy:** Yes, they do.

**Sen. Hinds:** And therefore, a further supplemental; is it not incumbent upon you to tell this Senate and this country what arrangements are being made to boost their morale as you have described today, rather than pass the buck so easily to the Minister of Finance?

**Sen. Brig. J. Sandy:** I have done that in your initial answer. [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. Hinds:** One further supplemental. Is the Minister losing his calm?

**Sen. Brig. J. Sandy:** Never! Not for you! [*Desk thumping*]

#### **New Prison at Santa Rosa Heights, Arima (Details of)**

**34. Sen. Fitzgerald Hinds** asked the hon. Minister of National Security:

With respect to the construction of the new prison at Santa Rosa Heights, Arima, could the Minister indicate to the Senate:

- (i) when was the decision made or taken for the construction of the new prison;
- (ii) the name of the individual(s) or entity who/which owns the property lands upon which this Pprison is located;
- (iii) the component and total cost of construction of this facility;
- (iv) the cost of the lease/rental for the period of the lease and the period of such lease;
- (v) whether all of the inmates held at this facility were persons arrested since the imposition of the State of Emergency on August 21, 2011; and
- (vi) what is the population of that Prison as at November 7, 2011?

**The Minister of National Security (Sen The Hon. Brig. John Sandy):** Hon. Senators are advised that no decision was taken to construct a new prison at Santa Rosa. As a result of the urgent need to make a facility available to

accommodate persons detained during the state of emergency and bring relief on the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service, the Commissioner of Prisons was mandated to convene and chair a working group to urgently find a suitable alternative to house persons detained or arrested during the state of emergency.

The working group considered and visited several possible sites and decided that the old Neal and Massy plant, which consists of two buildings situated at the 26 kilometre mark, Churchill Roosevelt Highway, Arima, was the most suitable and viable option for quick modification to meet the international requirements of such a facility. The decision was taken in principle and later by contract on August 29, 2011, for rental of the property by the Ministry of National Security. Subsequently, on Friday September 02, 2011, the hon. Minister of National Security, acting in accordance with section 5 of the Prisons Act, Chap. 13:01, appointed the said facility as a district prison.

The property upon which the district prison is located is owned by the company, Wala Wala Limited. The modification and other related costs to ensure the facility's compliance with international standards were as follows:

- Modification and installation—\$50 million
- Office accommodations—\$3,329,250

Wala Wala Limited agreed to rent the property to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago for a period of six months commencing September 01, 2011, at a monthly cost of \$850,000 plus VAT.

**1.45 p.m.**

The majority, though not all, of the persons detained at the facility were arrested following the imposition of the state of emergency.

On October 17, 2011 the facility had to be vacated to facilitate urgent repairs to the roof to ensure the well-being of the persons that were being detained therein. These repairs were completed on November 15, 2011, following which it was again deemed suitable for occupation and was re-occupied with a total of 105 inmates. Hence on November 07, 2011 the facility was under repair and therefore, unoccupied.

**Sen. Hinds:** Thank you very much, Minister. Is the Minister able to tell us what was the cost of that repair to the roof, when it was vacated for that purpose?

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** The roof was repaired by the owners of the facility, and I have no idea what the cost was.

**Sen. Hinds:** That repair, was it at the expense of the Government or was it at the expense of the owner?

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** It was at the expense of the owner. Do you not understand what I just said?

**Sen. Hinds:** One further supplemental, before I get my head bitten completely off, does the Minister consider that the \$50 million spent in modification—*[Interruption]*

**Sen. Cudjoe:** Fifty-seven million, no \$54, sorry.

**Sen. Hinds:**—that the \$50 plus million spent in modification of that premises for rental for six months, does the Minister consider that that is an absolute misuse of public funds that brings no further benefit to the people of Trinidad and Tobago?

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** You would have to bring that question on another instance and I will answer you.

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** Supplemental question, Mr. President. Hon. Minister, for the sake of completion for part II of the question, are you able to name the individuals, major shareholders or members of the board of Wala Wala Limited?

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** No, I cannot.

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** Thank you.

**Sen. Hinds:** Is the Minister aware that contrary to figures given by him to this Parliament about the cost of maintenance of a prisoner in the system, that based on the figures that you revealed to maintain the prisoners—105 of them—it costs this country \$7,619 per month?

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** Is that a new question?

**Sen. Hinds:** Yes, supplemental.

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** It is a supplemental? Mr. President, the inmates at the time were temporary. The plan is to increase the population in that prison, to ensure that the location is properly utilized in the future.

**Sen. Hinds:** In the circumstances, is the Minister willing to indicate whether the Government is minded to own the building rather than continue to pay rent at such an exorbitant rate? It reminds me of the plane.

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** No, it does not remind me of the plane, it reminds me of the vessel—what is the name of the vessel?

**Hon. Senator:** MV *Su*.

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** The *Su*. Mr. President, to answer the hon. Senator, consideration is being given to the purchase of the location.

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** Supplemental, Mr. President. Hon. Minister, you indicated that you will be increasing the prison population to occupy the prison. Is it not the objective of crime suppression to decrease prison numbers? It seems to me that in an attempt to justify the cost, you are going to look for people to put in there, whereas the focus should be on decreasing the prison population.

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** And the only reason for this is because the former administration overcrowded our prisons.

**Sen. Hinds:** So, finally, just for clarification, for the benefit of the members of the public who pay close attention to the conduct of your Government, are we to understand that you are still paying Wala Wala \$850,000 a month for rental as we speak?

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** Yes.

**Sen. Hinds:** You are not even embarrassed, hon. Minister?

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** I am embarrassed with the things that you all did; there is no comparison.

**Sen. Hinds:** I thank you very warmly for your intervention. Mr. President, might I move on.

**Mr. President:** Next question, Senator.

**Sen. Hinds:** As I direct question No. 36 again to my friend, the hon. Minister of National Security, and of course indicate that when this question was filed it was in terms of the existence of the state of emergency, it has only now come up for answer, and therefore it may be a little dated, but the information that we seek is still very relevant and helpful, I thank you.

**Number of Persons Arrested since the State of Public Emergency  
(Details of)**

**36. Sen. Fitzgerald Hinds** asked the hon. Minister of National Security:

- A. Could the Minister inform the Senate of the number of persons arrested as at October 31, 2011 since the imposition of the State of Public Emergency?

- B. Could the Minister also indicate the number of persons who were arrested under the Preventative Detention process vested in the Minister as a consequence of the declaration of the state of public emergency?

**The Minister of National Security (Sen. The Hon. Brig. John Sandy):** The response to part A: from the date of the imposition of the state of emergency—August 21, 2011 to October 31, 2011, 5,723 persons were arrested.

The number of persons arrested under the preventative detention process, vested in the Minister, as a consequence of the declaration of the State of Public Emergency, is 16.

**Sen. Hinds:** Did you say 60 or did you say 16?

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** Sixteen!

**Sen. Cudjoe:** Wow!

**Sen. Hinds:** Is the Minister in a position to say what has become of those persons who were arrested? Were any prosecuted for any matters for which they were arrested?

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** It is public knowledge that these people were not prosecuted, they were released.

**Sen. Hinds:** And therefore, is the Minister prepared to say that it might very well have been an abuse or misuse of the Minister's preventative detention powers of arrests in the context of the state of emergency?

**Sen. The Hon. Brig. J. Sandy:** No, it was not.

**Sen. Hinds:** I thank you very warmly, Mr. President, and I shall allow my friend to rehabilitate until he returns.

#### **Education Facilities Company Ltd (Details of)**

47. **Sen. Dr. James Armstrong** asked the hon. Minister of Education:

With respect to money owed to contractors who have completed works under agreements with the Education Facilities Company Ltd (EFCL) and who have submitted claims for payment, could the hon. Minister indicate:



- a) the procedure as agreed between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance with the EFCL in respect of the settlement of certified payments to contractors;
- b) the degree of compliance of the EFCL with such an agreement or other directives of the Ministry of Education/Ministry of Finance;
- c) what are the established criteria for the priority order of payments to contractors;
- d) what are the outstanding amounts owed to contractors, who completed work for the EFCL, as at December 2011; and
- e) whether funds have been allocated to meet these payments on a timely basis?

**The Minister of Public Utilities (Sen. The Hon. Emmanuel George):** Mr. President, I request, on behalf of the Minister of Education, a deferment of this question—[*Interruption*]

**Sen. Hinds:** Deferment? You answer all.

**Sen. George:**—he is at the present time at the residence of the Prime Minister, because we have a royal visitor in our presence today, and we have to accommodate him.

**Sen. Hinds:** The Parliament is supreme.

**Sen. George:** Thank you very much.

**Sen. Hinds:** And we were told that you would answer all questions.

*Question, by leave, deferred.*

#### **Invaders Bay Request for Proposals (Details of)**

**48. Sen. Dr. James Armstrong** asked the hon. Minister of Planning and the Economy:

With respect to the Invaders Bay Request for Proposals (RFP), could the Minister advise:

- (a) has an Evaluation Committee been established by his Ministry for evaluation of proposals in response to the RFP;

- (b) if the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, when was the Evaluation Committee appointed and who are the members;
- (c) did the publication of the Request for Proposals (RFP) conform to the Tenders Board Act; and
- (d) what is the document referred to at paragraph 3.5 in the Request for Proposals (RFP) as an “Invaders Bay Development Matrix and Criteria Description” and has this actually been used in the evaluation of proposals in response to the (RFP)?

**The Minister of Planning and the Economy (Sen. The Hon. Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie):** Thank you very much, Mr. President. To the first part of the question, yes, an evaluation committee was established in the Ministry of Planning and the Economy to review and evaluate proposals in response to the RFP.

The response to part (b); the evaluation committee was appointed in November 2011 and comprised the Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Planning and the Economy; the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Planning and the Economy; Senior Planning Officer, Ministry of Planning and the Economy.

This committee reported to a Cabinet-appointed ministerial committee which, following discussion, took the committee’s recommendation to Cabinet. Cabinet then named a technical team to negotiate with the recommended parties.

The answer to (c); the publication of the request for proposals was not the subject of nor required to be in conformity with the Central Tenders Board Act. Advice to this effect was received from the Legal Unit of the Ministry of Planning and the Economy, and subsequently from the Ministry of the Attorney General.

The answer to (d); the Invaders Bay Development Matrix and Criteria Description consists of 31 specific questions asked of each respondent to the RFP for the purposes of comparative evaluation. This matrix was utilized by the evaluation committee for the evaluation of the proposals received, and it is on this basis that recommendations were made to Cabinet.

These criteria were publicly articulated at an awards dinner of the Contractors’ Association by the Minister of Planning and the Economy. Some of these criteria were also included by reporters in the public media.

**Sen. Dr. Armstrong:** Are we to understand that there is a recommended party that is being negotiated with? Could you advise us on the parties? Could you give us any information on that, hon. Minister?

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** I do not feel that it is appropriate to name the parties until the negotiations with the technical committee are either completed or dissolved.

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** Supplemental question, Mr. President. The Minister said that the criteria were announced at an awards dinner. Did I hear that correctly?

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** It was announced publicly because I went to the Contractors' Association, and issues had been raised about the criteria, and people were talking about the criteria as if they were secret and I simply made them public.

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** You said in answer to section (b), that the evaluation committee consists of the Acting Permanent Secretary, Deputy PS and senior planning official, my supplemental is; are these three people happy with the time frame given, via advertisement, to all interested parties, that enough time was given for all interested parties to develop proposals?

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** How could I possibly know their state of happiness or unhappiness? All I can say is that this was led by the acting Permanent Secretary, and the process was seen through to the end.

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** Further supplemental. Could the hon. Minister please indicate whether the advice received from the Ministry of the Attorney General and also that of the Legal Unit of the Ministry of Planning and the Economy could be circulated by way of a written response to this Senate?

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** I do not know why I should circulate the entire opinion.

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** Further supplemental. Could the hon. Minister indicate please, whether any request for the review of this process has been made, and if so, what steps are being taken in relation to it, that is objections to the RFP process?

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** I do not fully understand the question. There have been requests for reviews, some of them in the public domain. There was one request by the JCC. We had a consultative meeting with a whole range of stakeholders, we explained our position and we are proceeding with the process.

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** Supplemental, Mr. President. Can the hon. Minister state whether an audience was granted to any of the people who submitted proposals, an audience with yourself or any other Ministers, prior to the advertisement?

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** It is difficult from me to speak for other Ministers. I do not feel compelled to answer that question, but I would say, that none of the proposals—and there were 10 originally, and subsequently eight, prior

to the proposals being presented, that is to say, through the process, none of those investors with proposals had met with me. There was, in fact, a request for an audience with me, but I was not involved with the process at the time. Cabinet subsequently established a committee of which I was a member.

**2.00 p.m.**

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** Further supplemental, Mr. President, maybe, I can ask the question more directly. Did you, hon. Minister, at any time, before the advertisement, meet with Mr. Derrick Chin?

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** I met with Mr. Derrick Chin at a formal conference at which I was invited as a speaker, he was also a speaker and we sat at the same table and we had talks, as people would, at a table. If the insinuation is that there were any special favours granted to anyone I want to put that to rest immediately. [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** Further supplemental, Mr. President. Could the hon. Minister indicate who the members of the Cabinet-appointed committee are? The second question is a bifurcation. Insofar as during the course of several debates he indicated that he would provide the reasons that the Central Tenders Board had not applied, could the hon. Minister indicate what those reasons are—Central Tenders Board Act inapplicability?

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** Mr. President, in my view and I think in the view of any objective person, those would be really new questions.

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** Who the members of the committee are?

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** I would be prepared to answer the positions of the members of the evaluation committee, the negotiating committee. These are: the Chairman of the Economic Development Board, who is the Chairman of the committee; the Chairman of the Tourism Development Company; the Chairman of the Trinidad and Tobago International Financial Centre Management Company; the President of Evolving Technologies and Enterprise Development Company Limited; the Chief Executive Officer of the Environmental Management Authority; the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Planning and the Economy; the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Food Production, Land and Marine Affairs; the Senior Planning Officer, Ministry of Planning and the Economy and the Senior Legal Consultant, Office of the Attorney General.

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** Thank you, hon. Minister. Further supplemental, Mr. President, and perhaps it is more in the rhetoric. Just to remind the hon. Minister

and the Senators opposite by way of an interrogation, that they had promised to offer the reasons in relation to—the legal reasons as to why the Central Tenders Board did not act and, they in fact, made great protest that they would be given in the course of this answer, so, to state today that that is a further question—

**Mr. President:** Sen. Al-Rawi, it is not a debate on the question, it is not—  
[*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** Further supplemental, Mr. President. You stated, hon. Minister, that the CEO of the EMA is one of the members of the committee, has that CEO of the EMA expressed any misgivings about the Invaders Bay project, given the very novel phenomenon of flooding in the Diego Martin-Maraval area last year, which, I think, happened for the first time and talking about the concretization of the environment? Has the CEO of the EMA expressed to you any misgivings?

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** About what?

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** About the Invaders Bay project, in light of the novel recent floodings.

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** Mr. President, I do not understand how I can be asked questions of those kinds. This is a committee—

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** You promised to answer—

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** “Who did I promised what to?”

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** You shut down the debate every time we asked you questions—four times today.

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** The members of the committee are engaged in a process. I feel it is unreasonable for Senators to even ask what their views are until they produce a report.

**Mr. President:** I mean I left it open for the Senator to decide whether he would reply to that question, but I do not think it arises properly as a matter of supplementary question on the question before this Senate.

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** I thank you, Mr. President.

**Sen. Hinds:** You boasted to open this transparency now you are hiding, do not hide.

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** I do not hide from anybody. You would see how quickly you would have to hide just now. [*Desk thumping*] Everything I do is

*Oral Answers to Questions*  
[SEN. THE. HON. DR. B. TEWARIE]

*Tuesday, February 28, 2012*

in the open. [*Interruption*] I face the music and there was nothing to be found about anything.

#### ARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS

**The Minister of Public Utilities (Sen. The Hon. Emmanuel George):** Mr. President, in accordance with Standing Order 20, I seek leave of the Senate to deal with Government Business at a later stage of this sitting.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO POLICE SERVICE (FIGHT AGAINST CRIME) [Fourth Day]

*Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question [October 25, 2011]:*

*Be it resolved* that this honourable Senate take note of the strengths and deficiencies of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and its impact and potential in the fight against crime.

*Question again proposed.*

**Mr. President:** Those who spoke on Tuesday, October 25, 2011: the mover of the Motion, Sen. Fitzgerald Hinds, Sen. The Hon. Brig. John Sandy, Sen. Dr. Rolph Balgobin, Sen. Penelope Beckles; and on Tuesday, November 22, 2011, continuing: Sen. Penelope Beckles, Sen. Dr. Lennox Bernard, Sen. Rabindra Moonan, Sen. Terrence Deyalsingh and Sen. Dr. James Armstrong; and on Tuesday, January 31, 2012, continuing: Sen. Dr. James Armstrong, Sen. The Hon. Anand Ramlogan SC, Sen. Faris Al-Rawi, Sen. Subhas Ramkhelawan, Sen. Lyndira Oudit, Sen. Basharat Ali, Sen. Corinne Baptiste-Mc Knight, Sen. The Hon. Kevin Ramnarine, Sen. Helen Drayton and Sen. Shamfa Cudjoe. Those wishing to enter the debate at this stage may do so now.

**Sen. Nicole Dyer-Griffith:** Thank you very much, Mr. President, for affording me the opportunity to contribute to this Private Motion on the strengths and deficiencies of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and its impact in the fight against crime.

Before I delve into the subject matter, I would just like to infuse a bit of sensitivity into this debate by recognizing Opposition Sen. Deyalsingh for the provision of roses to some of the Senators at the last sitting when it was Valentine's Day and he saw it fit to present us. [*Desk thumping*] So, I would like to thank the Senator for that very kind gesture.

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** You are most welcomed.

**Sen. N. Dyer-Griffith:** I would also like to take the opportunity to recognize—well, Sen. Moheni has not arrived as yet, but also a team of us represented Trinidad and Tobago at a Public Accounts Committee hearing—was it in Antigua—

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** Antigua.

**Sen. N. Dyer-Griffith:**—in Antigua recently, and again, Sen. Deyalsingh demonstrated a tremendous sense of nationalism. We spoke as one body; we removed the political robe, so to speak, and we spoke as participants from Trinidad and Tobago, and I would like to recognize Sen. Deyalsingh for doing so and to encourage him to do so and to encourage the other Senators of his Opposition team that, perhaps, they should also shed those robes of political partisanship and come back to the table, put the people of Trinidad and Tobago first and come back to the table for the joint select committee.

Mr. President, you have heard the barrage of questions that they have put forward. [*Interruption*] Surely, those things could be placed on the table in that setting, so, Mr. President, with that, I encourage the Senator, through you, to speak some words of wisdom to his colleagues, certainly not those who might be here with us today, but to the other Senators of the Opposition.

**Sen. Hinds:** I have no rose to give you. [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. N. Dyer-Griffith:** I am sure! I am sure! In today's debate we are hearing a lot of conversations around many buzzwords, and one of those buzzwords happens to be that of confidence or the lack of confidence thereto.

We are hearing it spoken with reference to the Commissioner of Police and the Deputy Commissioner of Police. We are hearing it spoken against elements of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and other members of the protective services, and even, we are hearing conversation around confidence with the hon. Prime Minister. I would like to lay on the Table and take this opportunity to categorically state my full confidence in those persons who do not follow where the path may lead, but go instead where there is no path and choose to leave a trail. Some of those persons include the good men and women of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, the members of all of our protective services, and indeed, the Chair of the National Security Council of Trinidad and Tobago in the person of the hon. Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar. [*Desk thumping*]

*Trinidad and Tobago Police Service*  
[SEN. N. DYER-GRIFFITH]

*Tuesday, February 28, 2012*

Mr. President, there is a saying and I want to share this saying particularly for the goodly Senator on the other side whose brow is furrowed:

“What chance gathers she easily scatters. A great person attracts great people and knows how to hold them together.”

There is none other who has managed to hold a coalition of interests together than the hon. Prime Minister, and I state that claim in the Senate here today for it to be recognized and underscored: the hon. Prime Minister has the full confidence of those on this side. [*Desk thumping*] But, of course, in due course we shall hear a lot more of those conversations.

I would like to get into the substantive part of my contribution. We have recently come out of a very successful Carnival, and I would like to take the opportunity to recognize the hon. Minister of Arts and Multiculturalism, though he is not in this Senate, but to recognize the good work that he has done over the period and to host another successful Carnival, in that, we owe a lot of this success to the work that has been undertaken by the men and women of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. [*Desk thumping*]

If we were to just refer to a few pull-outs, with your acquiescence, where we see here: “Ewatski praises cops for Carnival success”, and mention was made of the significant use of the light aircraft in the propelling of this significant factor. If we were to look as well, “Police: No major reports of crime”.

As a matter of fact, Mr. President, I recall in the early parts of Carnival where a number of operations were set up where each person entering the city was scanned and a full body rub down to ensure that they were not entering the city with any illegal weapons or so. So I think that these reports bore out the fact of the good work that had been undertaken. I have another report here, it does not have anything to do with Carnival per se, but something that was identified as a cold case and it states: “Daughter relieved, thanks police for never giving up”. This was the *Daily Express* of Thursday, February 23, 2012.

So, Mr. President, in everything you would have the flip side; you would have the good, the bad and the indifferent, and then, of course—[*Interruption*]. I shall not be disturbed. [*Interruption*]—you have the flip side, where “Violence rises as police stays away”. This, I understand, was identified, and a number of other observations were made, but the point I would like to make, “Violence rises as police stays away”, is that, even though the men and women of the police service did yeoman service over this Carnival period it must be noted that they could not have done it on their own. They cannot by any means be expected to do everything on their own.



**2.15 p.m.**

To speak to that fact, I did some research on something called “Crime Prevention”. I went online to [www.criminaljusticereform.gov.bc](http://www.criminaljusticereform.gov.bc). It identified a number of different mechanisms, and it looked at different levels of crimes and criminality, and so. The definition of crime prevention according to this document is that:

“In its purest form crime prevention looks at people...who are not involved in criminal activity and asks, ‘What can we do to make sure they never come into conflict with the law?’”

It goes on to state, Mr. President:

“...How can we make sure crime never becomes a significant problem here?”

The reason I am going into great lengths to identify the different levels of crime prevention is that I have a very important point I would like to make, not a political point, but a national point. The crime prevention through social development speaks to different levels of crime prevention, which I am sure all of the hon. Senators here are very much aware of, the primary level, the secondary and tertiary levels of crime prevention.

The primary level of crime prevention speaks to the universal population-based programme such as public education and health care. Over the Carnival period the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service went to great lengths to educate the population on the dos and don'ts, pre-post-and peri-Carnival season. If we were to take some time and go on to the website of the TTPS, there are a number of Carnival safety tips, ad nauseam—a number of different Carnival safety tips that were posted on the website that spoke to: when attending parties what to do and what not to do; parents and guardians are reminded what their children should do; when leaving households what to do and, Mr. President, it went on and on.

Every day, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service Public Affairs Department would host different media briefings to identify some of those preventative tips that could be utilized during the Carnival period. They went to great lengths for public education—and that looked at the primary level. So they covered their bases from that perspective.

The secondary level crime prevention refers to programmes that target those at higher risk for criminal activity. This would include programmes for youth at risk, of leaving school and so on. I would like to take the opportunity to recognize

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the work that has been undertaken under the leadership of the Minister of National Security, because the Minister of National Security led his team into the launch of programmes such as: Making Life Important Programme—that was recently launched in Beetham some time ago; the Pan Yard Initiative; the Mentorship Programme; the CSP, and a number of other programmes that speak directly to the secondary level crime prevention.

So, Minister of National Security, thank you very much for recognizing the marriage that needs to take place in the different levels of crime prevention.  
[*Interruption*]

**Sen. Hinds:** Which Minister, this one or Mr. Griffith?

**Sen. N. Dyer-Griffith:** That Minister right over there, Minister Brig. John Sandy who is the Minister of National Security, that one. [*Desk thumping*]

At the tertiary level, crime prevention refers to rehabilitative and supervisory programmes—that is for the criminal justice system. But I would just like to underscore the primary level again, Mr. President, that looked at ways in which—how can we prevent crime from taking place? What are the things that we are going to put in place so that young people might not have the opportunity to commit a crime?

This brings me to one of the issues that really concerned me over the Carnival period. The TTPS as I mentioned before went to great lengths to introduce a number of primary and secondary level type preventions, but they could not do everything on their own.

Mr. President, I had the opportunity to participate in the Carnival festivities with a particular band. I played J'ouvert and I played mas on Monday and Tuesday. I spent a significant chunk of my Tuesday morning into afternoon looking at young men and young women; groups of little boys and little girls in the entire Port of Spain, in little groups of five or six or seven, unattended, unsupervised, no parent, no aunt, no uncle, no cousin, nobody. Many of these children could be no more than 13 years old, 14 years old or 15 years old. I am not speaking about two or three groups; I saw throughout the entire day many groups of these unsupervised young boys and girls. And when you throw in the mix of other things that might give them the opportunity to commit a crime, it is something that we have to have some serious concerns about. Because as I mentioned, Mr. President, the TTPS can only do so much, we as responsible citizens have to do our part as well.

Mr. President, what concerned me even further, is the fact that many of these young ladies, these little girls were in—I do not even know how to phrase the type of wear that they were in. Many of them were in pants that were this short and their tops were tight as that [*making motion*]. Many of the young men were in something called “sagging”, which is where you wear your trousers way below the level that is decent. This really disturbed me, because with groups of these young men and young women pandering all over Port of Spain, no attention, no adult supervision, no responsible supervision, it really puts the opportunity for something dire to happen. I would like to take the opportunity to recognize— [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. President, this is serious business, and if it is some persons on the other side might not see this as serious business, that is their business. [*Interruption*]

**Sen. Hinds:** Could you give way?

**Sen. N. Dyer-Griffith:** We are speaking about serious issues and persons are utilizing the opportunity to speak and spout jokes and so. Unfortunately, I shall not give them the time of day and I shall continue my contribution because what I am saying needs to be heard.

So the issue I spoke to is that of “sagging”, with young men wearing clothing that borders on the line of indecent exposure and the potential opportunity that could have been caused by many of these young children in the Port of Spain area during the Carnival period at times that they should not be there unsupervised.

Mind you, Mr. President, there was an equal number of those that were supervised. And I would like to take the opportunity to recognize and congratulate those adults who saw the need to ensure that they went there with their children. I would also like to take the opportunity to recognize the hon. Minister of Gender, Youth and Child Development, who took great lengths and who went to great measures to ensure that she mounted a public awareness campaign to support those initiatives. So very good work to the hon. Minister. [*Desk thumping*]

Just as a matter of interest. The issue I spoke to about “sagging”, and that is the wearing of trousers under an indecent line, in some States in the US, in Albany, Georgia it was banned. There is a Florida State law that looked at banning “sagging” in the schools. In a town in Louisiana, it was also prohibited under the indecent exposure. Mr. President, mind you, I am not stating that we should consider “sagging” to be banned or anything, but I am just recognizing that in some States in the US it is recognized as indecent exposure, and I would like to encourage young men who might be looking on, it does not look good. Do not do

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it. If you want to become part of a culture or cult or movement or whatever, that is not a problem, but do not cross the line of indecent exposure. It does not look right. [*Interruption*]

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** Bill Cosby spoke about that.

**Sen. N. Dyer-Griffith:** Bill Crosby spoke about that. And there you go, being magnanimous and supportive and that is what I am speaking about. [*Desk thumping*] We welcome you. We welcome you to this side whenever the need. [*Laughter and crosstalk*] Yes, because he is being respectful.

So, Mr. President, the negative conversations—I mentioned some troubling conversations some time ago with confidence and so on. But before those conversations became topical there was another type of conversation that was also a little negative pertaining to the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, and this troubling sense gripped the nation with respect to a number of incidents. You mentioned, Mr. President, we have had contributions over the period, and many of these contributions cited some of these incidents where—I believe it was Sen. Beckles who spoke about the victim of sexual assault who was not taken in by a police officer. Then you have issues around the alleged use and misuse of force. You have issues of poor judgment, lack of trust in some communities and among some constituencies. And then you have issues of poor understanding of the science of the law.

Mr. President, a litany of woes. I mean, we can stand here and speak from now until “thy kingdom come” on the deficiencies within the protective services or within the police, but we always have to look at the balance side. We also have to look at the flip side and we must recognize that these negative trajectories of conversation must be balanced, and must be balanced with looking at the various ways in which we can create a suitable framework within which the members of the service can continue to operate because they have been operating so over the period.

Now, it is important for us to understand that within the scenario as I mentioned before, you do have the good, the bad and the indifferent. Of course, you would have those alleged rogue officers; you would have some persons who may be on the take as it is identified; you would have officers and other ranks in the TTPS and defence force whose training perhaps might need to be upgraded; you would have those who might perhaps need to have strengthened emotional and psychological support, and of course you would have those who might as well be inspired by a number of other issues. It is our responsibility to continue to

provide those support services that would be able to underscore the relationship between the members of the protective services, the TTPS in particular, and the citizenry within Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. President, there is something that underscores that relationship that is called the social contract or the social treaty. I took the opportunity—it is not a written contract, but it is a contract that binds the interaction between the members of the TTPS and the citizens, and if it were written it would sound something like this. I took the opportunity to draft something so that both sides would understand the type of social relationship that strengthens the bond and ensures that we have a fully functional TTPS. If it were written it would be an unwritten contract—well the fundamental foundation for this relationship. It would sound like, “I, the citizen, would provide you the police officer with the information you require to protect me...” That is the basic fundamental, for the citizen to provide the security officer with the information required to protect me, “on the condition that you do not abuse the trust that I have placed in you and that you use your position and authority to truly protect and serve with pride.”

Then on the flip side, Mr. President, the police officer could very well state that, “I, the police officer, would ensure that you are protected and served and provide you with your right to safety and security, but all I ask is for you to trust me and to provide me with the information and support that I better need to protect and serve you.”

So, Mr. President, as I mentioned before, it is not a written contract, but it is an understanding of the relationship between the members of the police service or the protective services and the citizen. Once that social relationship or social contract is met with a level of respect, it can work. However, many times that level of respect is a bit lacking and I will give you an example.

At the recently concluded Kiddies Carnival in St. James, there were thousands of spectators who were lining the streets and looking at the children as they paraded, and there was one senior police officer who were trying his best to keep the spectators out of the road so that the children would have the opportunity to parade in peace. Every time this one police officer—[*Demonstrates*] so these were the masses—every time this one police officer would try to part the masses away from the children, they would comply, but as soon as he passed they would go right back into the streets. So that you would find the officer having to do the same thing for the entire period. And that is a simple demonstration of the issue of the social contract and the respect that needs to be there in order for this unwritten

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social code to work. The members of the public demonstrated the respect, when they were in the line of eyesight of the police, but as soon as the police passed everybody just went back into the roadway.

So that is what I am talking about, Mr. President, a social contract should exist in a society such as ours and that social contract must be underscored by mutual respect.

Mr. President, the crux of this contribution pertains to some of the positive contributions of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. Many times you would find that the gains that have been undertaken by the TTPS are undermined by some of the negative types of controversies or the negative types of connotations that might come their way.

**2.30 p.m.**

One such issue was that of the recent raid of a media office. You would recall that happened recently. And, as a result of that, there was a negative force that went against many of the members of TTPS and many negative types of contributions and conversations were had. I recall that even on one Facebook thread, people were asking if we were fast becoming a police state, because of the negative conversations that were coming out of that.

Now, Mr. President, as I mentioned before, it is very important for us to maintain a balance. In no society would you have a perfect operation—you would never get a perfect operation—but what we must ensure is that we always maintain the balance in the public persona of the operation which we are trying to undertake.

In looking at the TTPS one of the things that I sought to do was some research on the website—the TTPS’s website—and, I came across this document called the *Service Newsletter*. Now, quite honestly, I had no idea that the TTPS produced this type of document on their website on a monthly basis—this “twenty something” page newsletter. I would encourage Senators of this honourable Senate and other members of the national community, to take some time and go to the website of the police service and you would see what the members of the TTPS have been undertaking, that might not be produced on a daily basis in their daily newscast.

It speaks to police officers trained as 21<sup>st</sup> Century leaders. It spoke to community officers making vital links with the people. It spoke about the Central Division Police Youth Club and the work that they have undertaken in Cunupia. It spoke about a number of different issues. It spoke about the recently launched

sensitive handling for crime victims and the Witness Protection Programme, how they were going about managing this programme and this support unit—very, very important support unit. It spoke about Sangre Grande, and ways in which they were supporting initiatives in Sangre Grande to coach parents.

Mr. President, how many of us really understand the work that has been undertaken by the members of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service? Sometimes you only see the negatives, or the negatives that might be sensational, would be on the front page. Would you see the work undertaken by the Victim Support Unit on the front page? I am not stating that that is what is required, because we have to be realistic. But, at the same time, it is imperative that we understand both sides of the story, and, we understand the level, and the amount of work that has been undertaken and continues to be undertaken by the good men and women of the police service.

Now, in some of the questions that were being asked earlier on in this Sitting, the state of emergency (SoE) came up as one of the questions—and, I suspect it will continue coming up. In the SoE being shared again, of course, you would only see one side. I question, and I wonder how many of us realize and understand—because it has been said, it has been published, it has been spoken about. Sgt. Myster has said it in his daily news briefings of the different results that came about as a result of the SoE.

How many of us really sat and understood what it meant when they said that over \$1 billion of narcotics were seized and destroyed? Mr. President, I did not say \$100, \$1,000 but \$1 billion worth of illegal narcotics were seized and destroyed. That is by no means a small task—[*Desk thumping*] no means. And, the reason why, I repeated that, is because it was \$1 billion. And, I saw—was it yesterday or today?—that there was another huge raid and destruction of illegal narcotics? Almost on a weekly basis you are seeing those types of results. That is by no means a small result. Mr. President, \$1 billion worth of illegal narcotics removed from the hands of those same little boys and girls of whom I spoke earlier in my contribution. That is by no means a joking matter, that is a significant matter, and something that we need to recognize. When we speak about the SoE we need to speak about those issues as well.

I would also like to identify, that last year we recorded the lowest homicide rate in six years. How many of us are aware of that? [*Interruption*]

**Sen. Hinds:** What do you know about that?

**Sen. N. Dyer-Griffith:** How many of us are aware of that? And, I want to repeat it for the benefit of the hon, Senator opposite who just asked. Last year we

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recorded the lowest homicide rate in six years. [*Desk thumping*] Now, do not get me wrong, one homicide is one homicide too many. It is unacceptable. However, there are those who would like us to put that light under a bushel. And Matthew 5:15 states:

“Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under a bushel, but on a lamp stand; and it gives light unto all that are in the house.”

So, we shall not put such lighted fixtures under a bushel. We shall not, because all you get is the other side. When we speak about those things we need to speak on both sides, not just about what we did or we assumed. We need to speak about those success factors. Because, it was not those of us sitting here on this side, whowent out and did that, and proposed and had those gains. It is the good men and women of all the protective services who left their families on a daily basis to produce these results, and we need to recognize that and recognize them. [*Desk thumping*] I would continue along those lines.

I recall one person, when the daily media briefings were going on and we spoke about the SoE—one person, I cannot recall who made the statement. But, a little over three hundred and something illegal weapons that were removed from the streets. I remember it being said, I cannot recall, but persons were saying, “Ooh, but those are old guns, those are old weapons or what is one weapon; what are 375 weapons?” Some of these high powered weapons—it just takes one weapon, one bullet, to do absolute damage and destruction.

So, if it is that the members of the protective services were able to remove over 300 of these illegal weapons from the streets that is something that we need to talk about and we need to recognize. The list goes on and on. We can go on and on about the different things that were achieved over the SoE, but this is not the time for that. I just felt that we needed to underscore it, because, again this morning you heard the conversation and you heard it from the other side. I want us to remember, whenever we speak of the SoE, whenever we speak about effectiveness of the police service, whenever we speak about strengths and weaknesses, to remember it from both sides and both perspectives and, to understand and underscore those strengths.

As I speak about strengths, I would just like to, with your acquiesce with your approval—because, I want to give it the due respect—speak a little more about some initiatives that were undertaken by the TTPS. Some of the initiatives undertaken over the past year, year-and-a-half or two were the development of an agenda for change, which is the strategic plan for the TTPS over the next three years. And, this agenda for change would serve as a blue print for achieving a number of goals.



Some of these goals include, reduce crime and victimization. And, of course, we have seen the results, as I mentioned, the results last year. To provide a citizen centred police service; to become a model of efficiency and effectiveness, and to improve roadway safety. Each one of these goals had been broken down into a number of detailed work plans, which are being actively worked upon by the various divisions of the TTPS.

Another one that is always a buzzword is the 21st Century Policing Initiative. This transformation process is the provision of the core frontline services to citizens. The new deployment model called the 21st Century Policing Initiative was piloted in the Western Division. As a result of this initiative, the police were able to see results in a reduction of crime in that specific division by approximately 35 per cent compared to a similar period. That deployment model put more police within the community by actively patrolling and responding to calls for service. This resulted in incidents where police arrested suspects at the scenes of crimes and suspects leaving the scene of crimes.

The 21st Century initiative increased the public's confidence levels as a result of greater visibility and better customer service. I understand, from the information I have, that the deployment model would have been expanded into the Central Division and in the Tobago Division by the end of February and the Northern Division in mid-March. [*Inaudible*] Yes, similar results, I understand would be expected.

Some of the other areas: an Air Support Unit was formed in 2011 utilizing some of the ground support operations and units with a robust patrol and response regime. The Air Support Unit was able to see an arrest of 178 persons, including a person fleeing the scene of a crime—a homicide— seizure of over 26 firearms and over 2,000 rounds of ammunition, the seizure of over 38 kilogrammes of narcotics and the recovery of 20 stolen vehicles. This happened in the period of April 4 to December 31, 2011.

Thus far, they have also seen the creation of a Professional Standards Bureau, which has been tasked with investigating criminal and serious allegations against police officers.

We have seen the formation of a Gang Suppression Unit, which, I understand will become operational very soon and would provide a more focused approach on the goal of disrupting and dismantling criminal gangs through a greater use of intelligence, enforcement and other disruption techniques. I understand the unit will be collecting the necessary evidence to support convictions under various legislation.

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We have seen the expansion of the training and development programme at the TTPS Training Academy, with advance training being conducted in numerous police skills—both hard and soft skills—and leadership, which is increasing the competencies of police officers and creating a workforce that would be able to provide effective supervision and leadership within the organization. They have undertaken an aggressive recruiting and induction training programme to meet the goal of turning out 800 new TTPS members per year. And, the list goes on. A number of different initiatives that have been undertaken by the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service.

I would just like to point out this one because it is important. The enhancement of the TTPS Victim Support Unit through the hiring of additional social workers and a programme coordinator to ensure victims and witnesses of crime are supported through counselling and facilitating resources where needed. And, the creation of a tourist-oriented policing unit in the Tobago Division as recognition of the unique public safety challenges, where the tourist or visitor sector plays a major role in the economy of the nation.

There are a number of other initiatives that have been outlined that have been undertaken quite successfully. I would like to encourage members of this Senate and members of the general community to visit the TTPS website, where you will be obliged to get information that would be relevant to you. You will receive police tips. Again, the issue of the service; I notice that every month they would upload a new edition of the service, and they would provide you with information that would be relevant and very useful.

So, with those few words, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to have contributed to this Motion and wish you and the other Senators of this honourable Senate a good day. Thank you.

#### PROCEDURAL MOTION

**The Minister of Public Utilities (Sen. The Hon. Emmanuel. George):** Mr. President, as agreed earlier by this Senate, I proposed that the debate on the private Motion be suspended to allow us to deal with Government business and we will resume the debate on the Motion thereafter.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**2.45 p.m.**

#### FINANCE BILL, 2012 (CLAUSE 19)

**The Minister of Finance (Hon. Winston Dookeran):** Mr. President, may I thank the hon. Members of the Senate for their indulgence. I wish to move the following Motion that is standing in my name:

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*Whereas* on Friday February 17, 2012, the House of Representatives considered the Senate amendments to the Finance Bill, 2012;

*And whereas* the House of Representatives concurred with the Senate, except in the amendment to clause 19;

*And whereas* the Senate amendment to clause 19 has fundamentally changed the intent of the provision;

*Be it resolved* that the Senate note the reason for the disagreement of the House of Representatives with the amendment to clause 19 and take no further action.

Mr. President, you would recollect that clause 19 of the Finance Bill, 2012, dealt with the issue of the stay of proceedings which we have incorporated in the Finance Bill, 2012 on the issue pertaining to institutions which fall under the jurisdiction of the Central Bank whenever they find it necessary to apply section 44 of that Act.

Mr. President, the particular reference has to do with the stay of proceedings and the categories on which such stay of proceedings can take place. The stay of proceedings would apply, according to the original Bill, with respect to limitations of actions, proceedings, or the enforcement of any judgment or order. The purpose of this is to ensure that those who may have incurred any form of litigation, with respect to the institution, would not be denied the right of continuing that even though the period for which the proceedings had taken place has now elapsed. This was an important point raised earlier on. The Senate, in its deliberations, on this aspect of the Finance Bill, interpreted the use of the word “or” in clause 19 to suggest that it may have been a typographical error, and suggested that the word should have been “for”.

Mr. President, on reflection, it was pointed out that the word “or” was a deliberate word, and the word “for” would have restricted the categories of persons who could then benefit from this stay of proceedings, and that the word “or” was, in fact, correct. Why is that so, Mr. President? It is because the limitations of actions and proceedings must not only apply for the enforcement of any judgment or order, but must include, in addition to limitations, actions and proceedings, such action with respect to enforcement of any judgment or clarity. It was, therefore, brought to our attention that the change to the word “for” was inappropriate, and therefore, it was necessary to cover all bases for such litigation, and that the original stipulation of “or” was, indeed, correct. This position was indeed confirmed to us by the Central Bank after the amendment was approved in the Senate.

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I am therefore proposing, Mr. President, that in order to remove any doubt with respect to the basis for such litigation to be exempted from the stay of proceedings, in accordance to the Act and the Central Bank, that we revert to the position of “or” instead of “for”. And that essentially is the minor error that was, in fact, identified and we wish to correct. Mr. President, I beg to move.

*Question proposed.*

**Sen. Hinds:** Thank you. We, on this side, find ourselves somewhat disadvantaged to treat with an obviously important matter of state. We are not the beneficiaries of the relevant documents and I gather that this is not just for the Front Bench but for the Back Bench as well. [*Interruption*]

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** The Independents.

**Sen. Hinds:** The Independents, I mean. I am terribly sorry. Without wanting to cause any further embarrassment, I say we are a bit embarrassed, if they would be kind enough and the Leader of Government Business, to suspend the sitting just for a brief moment so that we can acquire the documents, and then we might be able to respond to the Minister’s proposal for the amendment. Just for a short moment, so that at least the documents could be circulated, Mr. President, and we can treat with it accordingly.

**Sen. George:** Mr. President, on this matter, I did speak about it both with the Leader of the Opposition in the House and also with Sen. Subhas Ramkhelawan, alerting that this would be a subject of discussion in the Senate today. I assumed that all other bases would have been covered by the relevant parties. I am to be guided by you, Mr. President. Should I agree with what Sen. Hinds is recommending?

**Mr. President:** What I propose to do, Senators—I understand that you would like to have the documents. I, certainly, have had the opportunity to look at them. Perhaps you would recall that on the last occasion when this Bill was considered, it was suggested in this Senate that the word “or” was a typographical error and it should read “for”. I think, therefore, one, we must recognize, of course, the Finance Bill is a money Bill, and this Senate, of course, has limited jurisdiction in terms of vetoing any provision coming back from the House. I understand that you are without papers, and I think you should have that opportunity to look at them.

I am proposing to suspend the Senate for 10 minutes, and we will return at the end of those 10 minutes, and the Opposition and Independent Benches may then decide whether they wish to enter into the debate at all on the issue, having had that moment for reflection on the issue.

So this Senate now stands suspended until 3.05 p.m., when I will return and the Senate will resume.

**2.53 p.m.:** *Sitting suspended.*

**3.05 p.m.:** *Sitting resumed.*

**Mr. President:** Hon. Senators, before we suspended this Senate, consideration was being given to whether Senators wanted to enter into a debate. I did point out to you that it was the Finance Bill, 2012 being considered, one, over which this Senate has limited jurisdiction. I am certainly hoping that we do not have to enter into an exercise of futility this afternoon, and we would get some confirmation that we may proceed. Sen. Hinds, would you care to let me know your position? Sen. Al-Rawi?

**Sen. Faris Al-Rawi:** Much obliged, Mr. President. I rise to contribute, in very succinct fashion, to the proposed amendment of that which went to the Lower House and which has returned to us. Upon review, it is in order, in our view, for the substitution of the word “for” to “or” insofar as it fits within the intent that any judgment or order may be the subject of the limitation which we seek to introduce.

Mr. President, I would like to say that—and I have been warned not to say this by certain colleagues of mine—the next time, I would make sure to contribute on these amendments as I had given the “bligh” on the last occasion, and said that I would say nothing. So, I am happy to support it, Mr. President, on behalf of our Bench and I thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

**The Minister of Finance (Hon. Winston Dookeran):** Thank you, Mr. President. I always knew that Sen. Al-Rawi always rises to the occasion. [*Laughter*] I thank the support of the Senator and I now beg to move.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved:*

That the Senate note the reason for the disagreement for the House of Representatives with the amendment to clause 19 and take no further action.

**TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO POLICE SERVICE  
(FIGHT AGAINST CRIME)**

**Sen. Dr. Lester Henry:** Thank you, Mr. President. I join in this debate to make a brief contribution on what is a very, very critical topic given the state of affairs that we find ourselves in, at this time, in our country. Now, I have always had the issue of policing and the role of the police, in our type of societies, as one

of my pet peeves because they could play such a potentially important development role, and in also promoting the peace and harmony in our society as many speakers and commentators have stated before, and for a long time, it has peeved me.

When we think about the role of policing in the former colonial society, and we find that in historical perspectives—before I get to the current state of affairs—when we became independent and we had to put in place our own military and police service and so on, we inherited a police service from the colonial power. To a large extent, the attitude and the approach of policing reflects our colonial past. If we look at the role of the police in many of these colonial societies or former colonies, they were essentially set up in their first incarnation as basically a law enforcement group to keep the natives in check, because they were there to do the bidding, initially, of the colonial power since we did not have control over our own destiny.

**3.10 p.m.**

I have always attributed this fact of history to reflect and to have influenced how our police officers operated and how the population responded in return, in the sense that we have inherited a natural distrust between the citizens and the police that has lingered from colonial times into our 50-odd years of independence. I think it is a serious point because, not that I am the first one or the only one to understand this—and I am sure many others may have commented in the years before, perhaps in this same honourable Senate. When we look back at the history of the role of the police and we see this persistence of distrust between the people who are there to protect and serve the public and the public themselves, it is somewhat distressing for a nationalist and somebody who wants to see this country move in the right direction, that we are still seeing that today.

I do not say distrust by accident. Of course, we know historically that was the case. Even if we look at the UNDP survey that was published recently, February 12; I am quoting from the *Guardian* but it was also in the *Newsday*, the other newspapers as well:

“A United Nations study, which was launched in Port-of-Spain yesterday, reports that only 25 per cent of the population either feel secure or ‘very secure’ in Trinidad and Tobago, while just under 53 per cent have confidence in the police to control crime.”

This is what I am alluding to, that has remained part of our culture and our national psyche since independence. Unfortunately, 50 years onwards, we are still pretty much along this road.

Further down in the article they said:

“In Trinidad and Tobago, 52.7 per cent expressed ‘some amount of confidence’ in the police and”—this is the key number—“4.6 per cent said they had ‘a great deal of confidence’.”

The figure was quoted in several other places, so I am not pretending that I am revealing anything new here, but I took the time to put this in the *Hansard* in this honourable Senate, so that we could see the level of the gap between the average citizen and the police officers; despite all the good things that hon. Sen. Dyer-Griffith was alluding to, in terms of the work that the police do. This is particularly pathetic, in terms of the way people feel about our police officers.

As I have said, I put it in a historical context and I am also presenting the evidence, in terms of an actual survey that was conducted. We have no reason to doubt the quality of the survey until new information becomes available. We suspect these were professional people who did a serious analysis. Therefore, the point I am making is, historically, we have had that distrust and even though we have had very, very good and committed police officers over the years, we have had people—when we switched from foreign in the early days to local police officers and especially at the level of Commissioner of Police—and we developed a fairly sophisticated and highly trained cadre of police officers on our own; locals, Trinidad and Tobago citizens. I would get back to that a little later.

We developed very skilled and very qualified people, including one of our first local commissioners, Commissioner Eustace Bernard, who set in train a pattern of police officers qualifying themselves, not just in policing but in studying law. [*Desk thumping*] We have had quite a number of officers follow in their footsteps. I know quite a bit of them. [*Crosstalk*] We have had people who excelled in law and in policing, such as the former Aeneas Wills and followed by the hon. Fitzgerald Hinds. [*Desk thumping*] We have had a tradition established back then, with not only good and competent police officers, but also qualifying themselves in matters of the law and trying to build a proper police service. Nevertheless, the gap in confidence remains very, very high. We did not have the statistics or the surveys. I do not have the numbers to tell you what it was back then, but certainly these numbers should be highly embarrassing for us as a country, both Government and Opposition, when we look at the role of the police in our society and the fact that they play such a critical role.

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What we see is that the police often do not act as though they are part of the community. We know we have had community police initiatives and so on. The hon. Minister mentioned a friendlier approach to policing than he is trying to push. I am sure several other initiatives have been tried in the past, but yet we see the persistence, and part of it has to do, again, with the inherent distrust that lingered from colonial times to now. When we look at the police service—for example, the other Senators who spoke gave their personal experience. I could give one of mine.

A few years ago, I was outside my home washing my car. I live at a dead end, so I am not disrupting anybody in the street and a fully-loaded van of heavily armed police officers drove up, which was quite shocking to me because we do not normally see police patrols in that area. As you know, in Trinidad and Tobago, our police tend to be reactive rather than proactive, in terms of crime situations. They tend to wait for something to happen and then show up. I saw them and I was quite happy. In fact, I was delighted that I would see police in my neighbourhood for the first time in, like, 15 years, since I was living there. In fact, I was so happy, I smiled and waved at them and they became agitated. Instead of smiling at me in return, they thought I was trying to make a fool of them “or something”. I was shocked that they would not realize that I was just happy to see them. I was like—[*Sen. Dr. Henry waves*] I was shocked that they could not appreciate. Then I thought maybe they were engaging in ethnic profiling and thought I was the cleaner “or something” and I was not the owner of the house or the car; maybe I was just the wash boy and, therefore I was demeaning them or something. That thought did cross my mind.

Again, it emphasized the point: why was that necessary for them to show me hostility when I was trying and, of course, just simply washing my car for myself? But these are the things that linger on in our society and create the kind of distrust that you see reflected in the survey. In some of the other communities, they tend to act like an occupying force, rather than friends of the community. We have to change that perception if we are to get anywhere after all is said and done.

Like I said, in terms of the proactive nature of policing, one of the things that have baffled me over the years, since returning from the US, is this whole notion that you sit back and wait for something to happen before you actually get engaged; that kind of reactive policing that we see is the norm. I have had this discussion around many tables, with a wide variety of people saying: “Why do we still see that happening, even though our police officers grow up watching the same television that I did with *Kojak*, *Starsky and Hutch* and all the other



American cop shows, which show a very proactive policing of a community and society and yet, today, you will still see where there is no police presence until a crime has been committed. That is the norm in Trinidad and Tobago.

If you look at the recent Carnival, hon. Sen. Dyer-Griffith mentioned the police officers who were missing in action. Police officers were not absent. In response, one of the deputy commissioners said: “Well, they were not really absent, they were just late.” This was Carnival Tuesday when various people complained about the absence of police patrols in fairly crowded areas of Port of Spain. They said: “According to reports, at least 50 per cent of the uniformed officers assigned to Port of Spain did not show up for work.”

Now, that speaks to the low morale or some kind of inefficiency in the service, as we speak. I would prefer, at least the indication seems to be that the police service at present is completely demoralized and the morale is extremely low and it has to do with several factors. One factor is that we have the wage negotiations issues that are still unresolved. We have not heard much about them since then. Then, the police officers were subjected to very, very long hours during the state of emergency that the hon. Senator boasted about and in which the hon. Senator said the homicide rate last year was the lowest in six years. At the time when they declared the state of emergency—when I say “they”, I mean the Government—many of the Opposition speakers said: “Well, you know, this is a ploy to artificially keep down the murder rate and, as I said in a previous contribution, by imprisoning the population so that nobody is out and no crime could be committed. This is a ploy to artificially pad the murder rate numbers to make sure that they remain low, so you can come January and boast about it.” Many on the Government’s side jumped up immediately and said: “Oh, no, no, no. That is not the reason we are doing this. Of course, we would never be so petty.” *[Interruption]*

**Sen. George:** But that is not the reason.

**Sen. Dr. L. Henry:** Well, somebody did not tell Sen. Dyer-Griffith. *[Desk thumping]* So what we have here is a police force right now with a very, very low level of motivation. There is the wage negotiations, which have gone virtually nowhere, the long hours, and then we have the issue of the Commissioner of Police, which we cannot avoid because it is the 800 pound elephant in the room, because every day you hear the Second Division representative, Sgt. Anand Ramesar, calling on the current Commissioner of Police to be dismissed, to go.

**3.25 p.m.**

In relation to the revelations about the plane, Sgt. Ramesar quoted in the *Guardian* of Thursday, February 02, 2012:

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“He described the incident as just another instance of Gibbs acting ‘unilaterally’ and not in the best interest of the police service.” He continued, Mr. President. He reiterated his call for Gibbs to be fired, insisting that his decision-making process needed to be scrutinized.”

This is just one example. I have heard the leader of the Second Division call for the firing of the Commissioner of Police on at least five or six occasions.

Now, how could we have a viable police force when the Second Division seems to be so adamant that the leadership must go? It is not a tenable situation. These are the people who are supposed—well, these are the ground troops, for lack of a better way of saying it, these are the people on the ground. In fact, the fiasco which took place in the Joint Select Committee last week Friday, Sen. Cudjoe was there—the Police Service Commission, where the Chairman of the PSC came publicly and chastised the Commissioner of Police as being rude, not wanting to answer certain questions, and so on, in full public view. *[Interruption]* Well, disclosure, hon. Senator, fiasco, I consider it because it could have easily been avoided. So we have a situation where the Commissioner of Police is under attack.

Before I continue on the issue of the Commissioner of Police, I also want to draw the public’s attention, and the attention of this honourable Senate to something Sgt. Ramesar said in same article which disturbed me quite a bit, I am not sure any other Senators picked up on it. In the article:

“Ramesar also questioned the whereabouts of surveillance equipment once used by the disbanded elite unit, the Special Anti-crime Unit of T & T (SAUTT). He said that type of equipment can conduct sensitive surveillance work, including zeroing in on houses. Where is that equipment today, and who is in charge of it...”

Now, I do not know if the general public understands how serious this matter is and I want to draw this to the attention of the Senate. How could you have someone in such a position as Sgt. Ramesar who should know and is asking such a relevant question, because this is spy equipment. Remember the situation which occurred in the Parliament less than a year or a little more ago, where the Prime Minister came and spoke about people spying and so on, and we rushed to pass the Interception of Communications (Amdt.) Bill, where is this equipment?

If the hon. Minister of National Security knows the answer to this question, I would be happy to hear from him on the matter. But missing spy equipment is not a joke, it is a very, very serious matter and if you have someone at that level in the

police service raising questions of the whereabouts of this equipment, then, I think, I consider that to be some kind of message the sergeant is sending, and it should be taken very seriously. So the Commissioner of Police virtually has no support from the Police Service Commission and has no support from officers under his charge, then it begs the question, who is he being supported by that allows him to still be there?

The next issue—and I am going to wrap up in a few minutes—that I would like to raise, I was watching television this morning and saw an interview with the former Police Service Commission head, Mr. Nizam Mohammed, and Pastor Dottin on the programme, Morning Edition with Fazeer Mohammed. The former chairman of the Police Service Commission made a statement which I found to be quite disturbing, and if he is correct, I find it very, very—it made me very uneasy. The statement said that while Mr. Mohammed was head of the Police Service Commission, he had never seen the contract of the Commissioner of Police, because he asked the question: I wonder whether Prof. Deosaran, the current Chair, actually saw the contract of the Commissioner of Police?

**Hon. Senators:** Hmmm!

**Sen. Dr. L. Henry:** I find that to be quite alarming, because maybe it might have explained what Prof. Deosaran was mumbling when he said: “Well, we were worried about judicial review, and so on” which other commentators have subsequently dismissed as being non-applicable, and he went on to sound somewhat unsure of himself in terms of his ability to accurately evaluate the Commissioner of Police. I wonder upon hearing the question or the issue raised by Mr. Mohammed this morning, if indeed the Police Service Commission does not have a copy of the contract of the Commissioner of Police.

**Sen. Hinds:** Hmmm!

**Sen. Dr. L. Henry:** So then, how could people and the public, assume that they were in possession of such, and would be capable of making a proper evaluation of the commissioner. If you have never seen someone’s contract how could you evaluate what they are supposed to do or not do? Again I call on the powers that be, maybe the Minister of National Security could explain this anomaly to the public and to this honourable Senate, or someone could inform me that Mr. Mohammed’s statement was not true. I find this to be quite shocking that these people are supposed to evaluate someone without actually ever seeing his contract; it makes absolutely no sense, and it will cause continued chaos at the top of our police service.

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Also, before I close, I just want to put on record my strenuous objection to the whole process which led to the Commissioner of Police being hired from outside of Trinidad and Tobago. I am not sure where most of the blame lies and I do not really care who is to be blamed. The final result is something that I have always argued very strenuously in my private conversations, that it is untenable, it cannot work and it should never have been done in the first place.

Whether it was the former administration or the current administration, my position will not change, and it would not have been different back then and it would not be different now, because we have seen that tried all over in many other countries and you will never get that support. So it is not surprising that I quoted Sgt. Ramesar over and over again calling for the current Commissioner of Police to be dismissed. There is no way that these things could ever be tenable and it is an insult to our nationals whom I spoke about. I set it up earlier by talking about our qualified local police officers who trained and equipped themselves with masters degrees, with law degrees, and so on; and we ended up taking this backward step. I just want to put my official position on record.

With these few words, thank you, Mr. President. [*Desk thumping*]

**The Minister of Planning and the Economy (Sen. The Hon. Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie):** Thank you very much, Mr. President. Thank you very much, hon. Senators. This particular Motion is a simple Motion, in that it says:

*“Be it resolved that this Honourable Senate take note of the strengths and deficiencies of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and its impact and potential in the fight against crime.”*

So really what it asks us to do is it to look at the strengths and the deficiencies and, therefore, its implications in dealing with crime as an issue in Trinidad and Tobago.

I would like to say that I was somewhat taken aback by the contribution of Sen. Dr. Henry, when he spoke about the relationship between the police and the people and the breakdown of trust, not because it might not be true, but because of the perspective, when he talked about the indiscipline and sometimes unacceptable behaviour on the part of the police. Again not that it might not true sometimes, but again the perspective. I was absolutely surprised and taken aback when he talked about the process of selection of the Commissioner of Police that has been established in this country. The reason I am surprised is that if you have a country and in real terms it is 50 years old, since gaining independence in 1962—and he went back to the colonial order.

You have a country that has been governed from 1955—2012, 55 years, by a single institution, a political party in office for 43 of those 55 years. It seems to me that the shaping of the institutions, the character of the institutions, the manifest practice of conduct and behaviour in those institutions are going to have some bearing about the fact, that the tenure of governance by one institution in the country has been so long and so prolonged, and so consistent over a period of time. That is why I was a little taken aback by the perspective, Mr. President.

If there is a relationship problem between the police and the people, and there is a breakdown of trust, as there well might be, was that not something which would have evolved over time? Would that not have been something which over time would have escalated and deteriorated and would it then not take a repair intervention to be able to address those issues? I want to ask the hon. Senator through you, Mr. President, in good conscience, is it not evident that this Government and the hon. Minister, the Minister of National Security, that these institutions and this particular leader in the Ministry of National Security have been going out of their way to address the issue of the relationship of police and community in Trinidad and Tobago? Because, in fact, it had broken down prior to his becoming Minister of National Security. [*Desk thumping*] The evidence is very simple today in one of the answers—[*Crosstalk*]

**Sen. Dr. Henry:** The state of emergency destroyed it.

**Sen. Hinds:** “Dat’s right!”

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** Every problem in Trinidad and Tobago did not start with the state of emergency, let me just tell you that. [*Desk thumping*] The state of emergency arrested an escalating crime wave in Trinidad and Tobago that was unleashed over decades ago, and especially in the last eight years, by the administration which preceded the People’s Partnership administration, and the facts speak for themselves. [*Desk thumping*]

**Hon. Senators:** In a state of crisis.

**Sen. Hinds:** Tell us about Clico.

**3.40 p.m.**

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** Do not try to distract me! The relationship between the police and the people is something that is systematically being repaired.

My wife went into the Cunupia Police Station the other day because she needed to do a transaction at this station. When she went there, she said that she was surprised, first of all, at the number of policemen and the extent to which the

policemen were busily engaged in activities that were related to deploying cars in the communities, attending to people who were waiting and generally managing a police station. That is now becoming a practice in Trinidad and Tobago. It was non-existent before.

There were police stations in this country at which there were more beds upstairs than there were policemen in the place. The fellows would be sleeping in the night when they were supposed to be on duty. Everybody in Trinidad and Tobago knows that. If you are going to make a difference in the police service, it takes a certain kind of leadership and it takes a certain amount of change. I am surprised that the hon. Senator, Mr. President, would not appreciate and acknowledge that whatever the challenge we have in crime in Trinidad and Tobago today, the escalation took place over the last decade or more in Trinidad and Tobago, and that the situation had to be dramatically arrested.

The unacceptable behaviour and the indiscipline he talks about in the police service—and there have been instances of that even in this year 2012, and in 2011—I ask you, under which government was action taken to address the issue of indiscipline and abuse of authority by the police in Trinidad and Tobago against its citizens, whether in Moruga or anywhere else in Trinidad and Tobago? Under which government; under which system?

These things were virtually hidden from public view—the transparency. We had instances in this country in which police were involved in something and you would have a situation ending up in someone being shot and there never was any investigation. There never was any information given to the public to satisfy people that it was an accident, except to read in the newspaper that it was an accident. The last administration did not care how it was run as long as it stayed in power. That is the truth that the facts will reveal if you look at them seriously.

This Government, if there is an abuse, the Minister does what is required because the Minister in a fundamental way has limited authority over the police service in this country. There is a Commissioner of Police and the commissioner is in charge. There is a head of the military and he is in charge of that. There is the head of prisons, and he is in charge of that. There is the head of the coast guard and he is in charge of that. That is the way the system operates and the duty of the Minister is to ensure that he creates the climate in which good governance can take place and in which the leaders of these institutions can do their work. Ultimately, the Minister is responsible politically to this Senate and to other

institutions in this country and certainly to the public; but these leaders of institutions must be accountable to the Minister and we are trying to put in place a system in which this accountability is something that is taken for granted by everyone who has the power and the authority.

He did not speak about these things; but the state of intelligence in this country—I do not want to talk about the state of intelligence in this country because I have been personally, as has my son, been the victim of the use of intelligence services in order to categorize people. That happened under the last regime. I do not know anybody in this Government who had anything to do with that.

I want to say to you that the systematic damaging of institutions in this country is part of the challenge we now face in Trinidad and Tobago. Intelligence gathering in this country was a joke for that administration, but serious business for persons on the receiving end of victimization in Trinidad and Tobago. That does not exist in Trinidad and Tobago under the People's Partnership Government. [*Desk thumping*]

The condition of police stations. If you had 43 years of government in 55 years and the police stations are dilapidated, we are now proceeding—how many are they, Minister, that you are proceeding with? Certainly about a dozen now that you are involved in the construction and re-construction of police stations.

Again, you are dealing with something in which the inheritance has been so severe, so decrepit, so much cumulative neglect over the years, that you now have to make an intervention in the country, almost police station by police station. As I understand it, there must be about 88 or 90 of them in the country and you have to make an intervention almost police station by police station, just like you have to make an intervention community by community. The last straw really is for the hon. Senator to come here and talk about the process of selection of the commissioner. I wish to say nothing about the commissioner one way or the other. Let the commissioner do his job. Let the commissioner be accountable.

What I would say is that there was a debate in this Parliament when this administration, the administration on the other side, was in office and the Police Service Commission made a recommendation to the Parliament and, under that law, when that matter came to Parliament for the first vote that was ever taken under that new law, that last Government vetoed the recommendation of the commission and said that the process was flawed. One of the persons who argued most vociferously against that is now arguing outside of Parliament and making a public nuisance of himself, indicating that the process should be reversed and that we should do this and that and that somebody else should have been selected and we should not have done this.

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We did not select anybody. The process was in train. The matter came to Parliament—I was not in Parliament—and the Government of the day sought, in the interest of the legislation, in the interest of good governance, to accept the recommendation of the Police Service Commission and we now live with that as a reality. I really cannot understand the thinking that goes on, on the other side.

**Sen. Dr. Henry:** If you had listened to me, you might have understood. Apparently, you were not listening.

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** Saying what?

**Sen. Dr. Henry:** I never said it was your fault or the Government's.

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** You said you did not know whose fault it was. I am not saying it is anybody's fault. I am talking about the gall that exists on the other side to deny history; to deny reality; to deny its role in the deconstruction and dismantling of institutions in this country and come to this place with the air of Columbus, as if they were discovering something new, and accuse this Government of X, Y and Z, as if there was no legacy left behind; as if they were never in government. I do not understand the thinking. It is a problem. This is not an attempt to blame anybody. I have no interest in blaming anybody. I want to see the country move forward, but I think that this element of backward thinking is part of our problem.

Another thing that goes on in this Senate about which I feel needs to have a clear point of view expressed, is the fact that Senators on the Opposition Bench come here all the time and say: "You have no plan; where is your plan?" As if saying it many times will make it true. I want to say that this is a country in which, for many years, there was no planning and the Vision 2020 that was articulated by the last Government brought together a number of people in order to put the plan together. I was one and I contributed. I contributed because I am a citizen and because the way I view government, government governs for the country and, therefore, if you are a citizen and you have a skill and you have a contribution to make, you make that contribution hoping that the government would govern for all and that whatever you contribute would be for the benefit of citizens.

The last plan was Vision 2020 and everyone on the other side knows that there was a big gap between the notion of the word "2020" and any plan that had anything to do with execution in this country. There was a total and absolute disconnect and because of that they now come and everything we try to do they say, "You are doing this, it has no plan; it has no connection" —everything you try to prevent from happening—so that the wheels of government will grind to a halt. It is really an unreasonable way to proceed if you are interested in having the country develop and progress.



We do have a plan. As we have said—

**Sen. Hinds:** What is it?

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** I cannot stand here and articulate the plan.

**Sen. Hinds:** Sit and do it.

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** We have done it.

**Sen. Hinds:** “Voops, vaps” and *vaille-que-vaille*.

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** First we started with the manifesto and the seven strategic and interconnected pillars of that manifesto. The seven pillars provide a broad strategy toward the achievement of sustainable development and they reinforce the fundamental principle of government in facilitating the process of achievement of prosperity for all for the country.

What that manifesto does is to provide coherence, integration, coordination for the process of government intervention to achieve specific targets and objectives that we want to achieve. That was just a broad policy perspective; a perspective of development within the framework of sustainable development.

Then we did the medium-term framework. Sen. Dr. Armstrong sometimes says that yes, we have the document, but that he does not know what the specific plans are and to some extent he is right. I will explain why he is right. What we do in the *Medium-Term Policy Framework, 2011—2014*, which derives out of the manifesto, that is meant to bring greater focus to the work of the Government. Within that framework, we have identified five priorities for the medium term, up to 2014, for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

**3.55 p.m.**

Primary among these is the issue of national and personal security, human security, to achieve peace and prosperity in this society. Why? Because if you do not do that you cannot have progress, you cannot have economic investment, you cannot achieve the diversification that we want to achieve, so this is very, very important. And we cannot, therefore, have a significant future in the country, we cannot have an effective management system if there is a situation of perpetual disorder.

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And perpetual disorder is what the other side is seeking to create in the country every day. That is their entire objective: create the disorder, prevent governance so that they could then go to the population and say that we have not done this, we have not done that, we cannot do this, we cannot do that. That is part of the problem; to create disorder.

**Sen. Hinds:** Imputing improper motives, “eh”.

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** So what I will say is that in this strategy, in this plan, crime and law and order is a big part of it. Now there are five elements of the plan that are very important in the Medium-Term Policy Framework. Besides, crime and law and order, there is agriculture and food security that is very clear; health care and hospitals services; economic growth and job creation; competitiveness; diversification and innovation and, of course, poverty reduction and human capital development.

Now this business of crime, law and order, there is a very, very strategic approach to it. The hon. Minister knows that. The hon. Minister has presented that, the Medium-Term Policy Framework has it, and I know that these targets, et cetera, have been presented to an assembly of people in the police service, the military, et cetera, under the chairmanship on the Minister of National Security. So it is very well known, people know what they are working towards.

I will share with you some information which is very important. First of all, in most opinion surveys of the population, crime—law and order and vandalism—continues to be consistently ranked as the number one issue facing the country, therefore, it has to be dealt with, so that there is no denial that crime is a serious problem. And the real issue is: how do you address this issue of crime in a comprehensive way, a systematic way, with long-term results rather than simply short-term measures? And that is where the real difficulty is.

And the way that the Ministry of National Security and the Government seek to address these things is, first of all, by more effective law enforcement and policing—so we come here, we pass the laws, many of them have been passed by you, and the policing side is the other side. The second one is the social interventions aimed at discouraging a lifestyle of crime and violence. And the hon. Minister spoke to some of those social measures related to the question that was asked in the Senate earlier today. It also involves reform of the justice system and the legal framework. It involves rehabilitation of offenders as well.

Now all of these are also supported by national strategies for economic growth and expansion, for poverty eradication, for creation of jobs, to ensure economic inclusion in order to achieve our fundamental objective of prosperity of all by all, through the process of inclusion.

Now, are there targets that have been identified by Government? This has not been identified by someone like me, maybe standing up and setting a target, or someone else in another ministry or some part, you just pull it out of a hat. This has been done in consultation with the Ministry of National Security which has, in fact, indicated what that they wish to do, and what they wish to achieve. So for instance, based on that consultation and contained there, in the Medium-Term Policy Framework, one of the objectives is to reduce and prevent crime so that people feel safe in their homes and communities, and the target is for a 25 per cent reduction in crimes annually.

So instead of the “ol’ talk”, and the general talk, at the end of the year you can measure us. You can come and see whether, in fact, crime has been reduced by 25 per cent. And we will come to you and say, “We have done 25 per cent or 30 per cent, or we have done 20 per cent; we did not make the 25, but we are going for the next one.” There are measurements, there are targets.

Then the second one is increase confidence in the justice system through the appropriate punishment, sentencing and rehabilitation of offenders. So it is general thing. You have got to deal with the issue of crime, the issue of detection, the issue of actual conviction, then punishment and sentencing and rehabilitation, because at the end of the day these are citizens; whatever crime they committed.

Another issue is the recidivism rate. The target for this is 10 per cent annually. People talk about prisons as a revolving door. Repeat offenders are the norm. That is part of the process. Okay? And one of the things is to try for this rehabilitation—when the hon. Minister was answering the question, he spoke to that issue; the fact that part of the strategy is, in fact, rehabilitation. I think a question was asked in relation to that. [*Crosstalk*]

**Sen. Hinds:** It is not what you say, it is what you are—[*Interruption*]

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** The other one—[*Crosstalk*—what do you mean? The numbers are coming down in almost every area, in every division of the country, the numbers are coming down: for homicides, for serious crimes and for minor crimes as well. The numbers are coming down in a systematic way. Now that does not mean that crime does not exist, it does not mean that things do not happen, it does not mean that murders do not take place, it does not mean that gangs do not exist. But what this state of emergency was able to do, was to contain the crime, and it was able to identify the gangs, but it did not dismantle the gangs. That is part of the process that has to take place. Therefore, one of the targets is to reduce the number of gangs in operation.

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Another target is to increase the crime solvency rate. The target increase is from 12 per cent, escalating each year, to 25 per cent in the year 2014; the solvency rate. Because if you cannot solve the crime when it is committed—the hon. Attorney General, some time ago in a debate in this honourable Senate, indicated that part of the problem is that when the crime is committed the police do not know who to go after because there is no suspect. Therefore, the detection rate is an important factor in dealing with crime, and therefore, this solvency rate is important.

Increase the homicide detection rate: again, increase from 15 per cent to 25 per cent by 2014, so that by 2014 you have a reduction of 25 per cent. Improve coordination among the various social sector agencies and create stronger partnerships with communities: again, the community policing the partnership.

Now, how do we measure performance and track progress? Good governance demands the establishment of systems and procedures to ensure both the efficiency in the utilization of resources as well as the impact of interventions in people's lives. And I want to say, what the Government has done is not just have a manifesto or have a Medium-Term Policing Framework, but they have also done—and this is your medium-term framework, everybody knows it, everybody in Parliament got one of these—is to develop an integrated public management framework.

Over the last two weeks, the Ministries have been meeting together, they have been identifying what their targets are, what their frameworks are. In one of those meetings, the number of people who attended was so large that they had to acquire another room next door because of the participation. This is not the Ministers of Government, this is the participation of the public servants in the system. Because for the first time they are seeing coherence in what a government is doing, they are seeing purposefulness, they are seeing the measures, they are seeing the targets and, therefore they are enthusiastic about it.

And more than that, the public servants from the Ministries are getting an opportunity to interact and change things so that if a target has been set or an objective has been set, and something else is happening in their Ministries that require a shift, they are now able to do that for every Ministry. For instance, there are about nine Ministries involved in this objective of creating a safe society. The hon. Minister knows that. A number of the social agencies: the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development, the Ministry of People and Social Development; all of these are involved, all of them are involved in crime.  
[*Crosstalk*]

I know you would like me keep quiet because you do not like what I am saying, but what I am saying is the truth. These are the facts [*Crosstalk*]*—*they are relevant because you need to have this coherence in order to deal with crime. You know as a former minister—[*Crosstalk*]

**Hon. Senator:** Junior!

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:***—*in the Ministry of National Security—

**Sen. George:** Which Ministry?

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** You know, Senator, that it takes more than national security, it takes more than police to address the issue of crime. And for precisely the reason that I said, which has to do with the deterioration of homes, the deterioration of families, the deterioration of communities and the tolerant attitude towards criminal behaviour which became the norm, the ethic in Trinidad and Tobago—and that is a fact of life; it is not a joke.

So in all of these things, and for national security, we have the key result areas, the outcomes and the indicators. I mentioned some of the outcomes and the indicators to you before. The object we, of course, is to have more effective law enforcement, reduction in crime through social interventions and improved criminal justice system. That is what we are seeking to do, because what we want to do is to create a safe society. But you cannot create a safe society in a situation in which you have runaway crime; you cannot arrest that situation, and create a safe society by a single intervention nor can you do it in a single year or two years. But the process is obviously making a difference in the society, and that is what we hope for; that if we achieve the targets, over time, by 2014, you have a significant difference, and thereafter you keep reducing it so that you bring the society back to some semblance of order, but also of servility, also of some element of law-abiding ethic. We need to do this, not just at the level of the society itself but in the entire education system so that we would prepare that group for the process of citizenship.

And it is this long-term view that we have, Mr. President, that I want to say that it is necessary, given the 50 years or so, that we have found ourselves in this situation, because of decisions that we have made, and positions that we have taken, and actions that we have taken and not taken. And we must collectively accept the responsibility for that. I am not blaming anybody, but this is where we are. If you cannot take responsibility for that and accept it, I do not think it is fair to come and indicate that okay, this is how it is now, as if it has happened today, and you are doing nothing about it. We are doing something about it, and we are doing something about it every day.

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**4.10 p.m.**

I could not close, Mr. President, without saying a few words that are relevant to today's debate and some of the issues taking place in this society. This Government could not have achieved the things that we have been able to achieve in Trinidad and Tobago in the short space of under two years, and I want to emphasize that. It could not have been done without able leadership and vision.

The leader of the leaders in this Government and the vision for this Government resides with our leader and Prime Minister of this country. [*Desk thumping*] This country is only now beginning to get a taste—

**Sen. Hinds:** Mr. President, I want to bring to the Senator's attention, as a point of order, Standing Order 35(1) which has to do with relevance. You would think that the Minister was debating a no-confidence Motion in the Prime Minister in this place. Let him wait! [*Crosstalk*] I am obliged.

**Mr. Vice-President:** Sen. Dr. Tewarie, continue. [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** Mr. President, thank you very much for protecting me. This particular Motion here is about the strengths and deficiencies of the police service, and the entire colouration of this debate has been really to ascribe to what you might call "fault" to the Government, because we happen to be here at this time, for whatever are the deficiencies. That has been the focus of this debate.

The hon. Prime Minister is the head of the National Security Council and she is the head of this Government. It is because of the people's confidence in her and our confidence in her that we are here today to govern, and we thank the people for that, and we are prepared and will continue to govern. It is important to say that, because the achievements that we have made are under her leadership.

Having said that, the country is only now becoming accustomed to a female—a woman—in charge of the country as a whole. It is a new experience for this country, and the country does not understand it because it does not have the experience, and some of the country misunderstands it. I think it is important to appreciate that the job of leadership requires an understanding of a difference in tone that comes with a change in the sexuality or the sexes of leadership. I think we need to understand that.

You cannot expect the tradition that we have had in this country of extreme authoritarianism which is part of the culture of the country; and you cannot expect the tone of governance which has been one of authoritarianism to characterize the nature of this regime and, therefore, all of that is part of it. It is an important thing to consider.

Notwithstanding the skepticism about this lady before she even became Prime Minister, this lady is the only lady who has been able to assemble a conglomeration of people under institutions like this in Trinidad and Tobago, and to create what you might call “a new era in governance in Trinidad and Tobago.” It is not easy to pull a partnership like this together, and we know that and you will understand that, because tomorrow or maybe after Friday, you may have five contenders in your own party for the post of leader and [*Desk thumping*] if you provoke me I am going to name them.

**Hon. Member:** Name them! Name them! [*Crosstalk*]

**Mr. President:** Sen. The Hon. Dr. Tewarie, I think I have given you some latitude and you are entitled to that latitude, I have no problem with that, but we cannot carry it beyond what might fall within the ambit of this debate.

**Sen. Hinds:** Oh, I thank you, Mr. President. I thank you, Mr. President. [*Desk thumping*] This is not fun.

**Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:** Thank you very much, Mr. President. [*Crosstalk*] Mr. President, I thank you for your intervention and I appreciate your ruling. I want to close by saying that we have been in Government for less than two years under able leadership, and giving this country for the first time two things that are very important: one is a female leadership and a coalition of interest in the country that has come together for the first time to form a coalition of this nature. It is very different, for instance, to anything that has been done before, although there have been similarities in the precedents.

In this circumstance, and in a situation in which there has been continuous governance by a single institution for many, many, years and a legacy, we have had to feel our way, so to speak, in order to bring good governance to the country; change the tone of governance in the country; establish a different kind of relationship with the people; a different kind of responsiveness; and a different kind of emphasis and approach, at the same time, making a major policy shift in the country.

In that circumstance, when you think of the peace and harmony that we have been able to achieve; when you think of the success of the last Carnival; when you think of the optimism of the population in terms of what is possible—you can feel the shift now in terms of the confidence, let us say in the business sector and in terms of investment sector—when you begin to feel this, you begin to see that things are beginning to turn the corner, to use the words of the IMF.

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I feel that we are at a very positive point now. I want to ask my hon. colleagues on the other side, including Sen. Hinds, that it would be a far, far, more valiant thing to contribute positively and constructively to the development of the country than consistently attempt to be a naysayer and an obstructionist in the system when what the country needs is progress. [*Desk thumping*]

**ADJOURNMENT**

**The Minister of Public Utilities (Sen. The Hon. Emmanuel George):** Mr. President, I beg to move that this Senate do now adjourn to Tuesday, March 06, 2012 at 1.30 p.m. when we expect to be debating amendments to the Trinidad and Tobago Postal Corporation Act.

**Mr. Hinds:** Mr. President—

**Mr. President:** Can I ask you what time, Leader of Government Business?

**Sen. The Hon. E. George:** At 1.30 p.m.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Senate adjourned accordingly.*

*Adjourned at 4.18 p.m.*