

Leave of Absence

Tuesday March 27, 2012

SENATE

Tuesday, March 27, 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. Vasant Bharath and Sen. Shamfa Cudjoe who are both out of the country.

SENATORS' 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: ARCHBISHOP BARBARA BURKE

WHEREAS Senator Vasant Vivekanand Bharath 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 section 44(4)(a) of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, do hereby appoint you, ARCHBISHOP BARBARA BURKE, to be temporarily a member of the Senate, with effect from 27th March, 2012 and continuing during the absence from Trinidad and Tobago of the said Senator Vasant Vivekanand Bharath.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago at the Office of the President, St. Ann's, this 26th day of March, 2012.

Senators' Appointment

Tuesday March 27, 2012

“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. DEON KIRTSON ISAAC

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

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS, President as aforesaid, in exercise of the power vested in me by section 44(1)(a) and section 44(4)(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, do hereby appoint you, DEON KIRTSON ISAAC, to be temporarily a member of the Senate, with immediate effect and continuing during the absence from Trinidad and Tobago of the said Senator Shamfa Cudjoe.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago at the Office of the President, St. Ann's, this 26th day of March, 2012.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

Senators Archbishop Barbara Gray-Burke and Deon Kirtson Isaac took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance as required by law.

WELCOME BACK OF PRESIDENT

The Minister of Public Utilities (Sen. The Hon. Emmanuel George): Mr. President, before I get into the text which I am to read here, I would like to take the opportunity, on behalf of all of us here gathered in this esteemed Senate, to welcome you once again to the Chair and to presiding over the sitting of this House. We want to take the opportunity also to thank Sen. Oudit who, as Vice-President of the Senate, did an excellent job in holding on for you. [*Desk thumping*]

PAPERS LAID

1. Annual audited financial statements of Taurus Services Limited for the year ended September 30, 2008. [*The Minister of Public Utilities (Sen. The Hon. Emmanuel George)*]
2. Annual audited financial statements of the National Quarries Company Limited for the year ended September 30, 2009. [*Sen. The Hon. E. George*]
3. Annual report of First Citizens' Bank Limited for the year 2011. [*Sen. The Hon. E. George*]

WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION

The following question was asked by Sen. Penelope Beckles:

- 54.** Could the hon. Minister of Food Production, Land and Marine Affairs provide the names of all persons who received compensation from his Ministry during the period June 2010 to January 2012, the value of compensation received by each applicant and the respective categories of compensation?

Answer lodged in the Parliament Library.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

**Point Lisas Industrial Estate
(Supply of Natural Gas)**

- 55. Sen. Terrence Deyalsingh** asked the hon. Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs:

With respect to the supply of natural gas to the Point Lisas Industrial Estate during the period February 01, 2011 to February 29, 2012, could the Minister indicate to the Senate:

- i. if there was any interruption of the supply;
- ii. if the answer to (i) is in the affirmative, could the Minister state:
 - (a) how many times during the period did this occur;
 - (b) the production losses arising from the interruption;
 - (c) the revenue losses arising from the interruption;
 - (d) whether arising from the interruption there were any risks to power generation and electricity supplies to citizens;
 - (e) how the government proposes to ensure that supplies of natural gas to Point Lisas are reliable; and

- (f) whether the interruption in the supplies negatively impacted the international reputation of Trinidad and Tobago?
- iii. if the answer to (ii)(f) is in the affirmative, what measures the government proposes to take to repair the international reputation of Trinidad and Tobago?

The Minister of Public Utilities (Sen. The Hon. Emmanuel George): Mr. President, before the Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs answers the question, I would like to inform the Senate that this Government is on this occasion, once again, prepared to answer all three questions—55, 56 and 57—and we are also prepared to present to the Senate a written response to question No. 54, which is the question for written answer. In respect of that question, however, because of the volume of paper that had to be churned out, what we propose is to lay the paper in the Senate, but to put it in the Senate library so that Senators can have access to it. It would have meant a lot of paper to give every Senator a copy of that document.

Thank you.

The Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Kevin Ramnarine): Thank you very much, Mr. President, and may I take the opportunity to welcome you back from India and hope that you had a good trip.

The answer to (i) is, yes, there was an interruption of supply during the period February 01, 2011 to February 29, 2012.

The answer to (ii)(a) is that the interruption occurred on approximately 56 occasions over the period February 2011 to February 2012. It should be noted that the occasions varied from sometimes hours to days.

The answer to (b) is that the NGC could not supply a possible 23,158 million standard cubic feet of gas during the referenced period. This represents a 3.34 per cent loss of delivery to its customers. There are, however, individual customers who have been affected as much as 8 per cent to 10 per cent during this period. But the overall loss of supply is 3.34 per cent.

The answer to (c) is that the revenue loss to the Government arising out of these losses in supply is US \$8.05 million.

The answer to (d) is that there was no risk to power generation and electricity supplies to citizens at any time arising out of the interruption. Small domestic customers were also not affected and, might I add that the NGC has a policy that in times of shortfall we always give priority to power generation so that the country is not affected.

The answer to (e) is that the Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs has convened high level coordination meetings comprising of senior Ministry personnel, heads of the major gas producing companies, the Point Lisas Executive Association (PLEA), and the leadership of the NGC to manage this situation. In addition, the Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs has convened a bi-monthly natural gas round table meeting to bring together all producers at the NGC and its major customers on the Point Lisas Estate.

The objective of all this coordination is to ensure that supply and demand of gas production are aligned as much as possible while asset integrity works continue to take place in the upstream sector mainly with regard to BP. This high level coordination will complement the coordination that is a key component of NGC's operations. The NGC will also commence work on the optimization of their pipeline network to allow for more flexibility of supply into the domestic grid.

The answer to part (f) is that there is no indication of any adverse reports that the interruption in supplies negatively impacted on the international reputation of Trinidad and Tobago. As such, I think Part (iii) of the question, therefore, does not require a response.

Thank you very much.

1.45 p.m.

Sen. Deyalsingh: Supplemental, Mr. President. From the answer given it seems to someone listening that there was no plan in place to deal with the interruptions. Is it that the Ministry had no contingency plans for a six-month to one-year period to deal with these interruptions?

Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine: Well, the Ministry has recognized the gravity of the problem. The Ministry, as pointed out in my contribution, has put together a coordinating effort between suppliers and those customers to, as much as possible match demand and supply. That has been going well because what we are trying to do is what they call, "sheltering" in the industry, in that, when there are shutdowns in the upstream, we advise the downstream that they could proceed on their shutdowns. So, as much as possible we mitigate the impact of the shortfall on the Point Lisas Industrial Estate. And, as I said, there is also a plan at the NGC—in fact, I spoke to the vice president, transmission before I came to Parliament, to further optimize the NGC domestic pipeline grid to allow for greater flexibility of supply. Thank you very much.

Sen. Deyalsingh: Supplemental, Mr. President. It is my information that, prior to May 24, 2010, the then Ministry had excellent contingency plans in place to deal with such efforts. Why were those contingency plans not put into action?

Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine: Mr. President, I was not in the Ministry before May 24, 2010, but the Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs, as I pointed out, has recognized the gravity of the problem and we are dealing with it. I would certainly look into the Ministry to see what those contingency plans were. But, by and large the information that I have is that the Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs had largely divested this responsibility to the NGC. As Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs, I think that the Ministry has to now have greater oversight over supply and demand in the country. Thank you very much. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Deyalsingh: Further supplemental. If in fact those responsibilities were divested, why were they not put into action?

Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine: I am trying to understand your supplemental question. Can you repeat it?

Sen. Deyalsingh: I would pass on that one, Mr. President. He obviously does not know. In answer to part (c), Trinidad and Tobago lost approximately TT \$50 million in revenues arising from these interruptions. [*Interruption*]

Hon. Senator: What?

Sen. Deyalsingh: He did say US\$8 million, which is about TT \$50 million.

Sen. Al-Rawi: TT\$50.175 million.

Sen. Deyalsingh: TT 50,175 million. Are there any plans to recoup this \$50 million plus loss?

Sen. Hon. K. Ramnarine: Well, Mr. President, I suppose the answer to that would be no, because the product is—the time has gone. So, one cannot recoup that. That is simply gas which could have been sold that has not been sold. That is how it is, the time has gone.

Sen. Al-Rawi: Further supplemental. Thank you, hon. Minister. Relative to the TT\$50,715,000-odd dollars loss on account of the shutdown, would the hon. Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs be in a position to tell us whether there are any claims as a result of either that loss in the sale of production or contingent claims consequent upon the shutdown?

Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine: Mr. President, I do not have that information right now. If the Senator wants to file another question, I would be willing to answer that.

Mr. President: Sen. Deyalsingh, next question.

**Trinidad and Tobago/Venezuela
(Details of Cross-Border Gas Field)**

56. Senator Terrence Deyalsingh asked the hon. Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs:

- A. Could the Minister state government's policy position on the cross-border gas field between Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela?
- B. Could the Minister indicate what progress, if any, has been made on the negotiations for monetizing the resources of the Loran Manatee gas field since this Government came into office?
- C. Could the Minister provide the names of the persons comprising the technical team and indicate the schedule for negotiations?

The Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Kevin Ramnarine): Thank you again, Mr. President. The answer to part A: Government has adopted an aggressive exploration programme to replace the depleted gas reserves and to achieve and maintain a reserves profile that meets the growing needs of Trinidad and Tobago and to meet the baseload demand. In this context, it is Government's strategy to engage all stakeholders in the pursuit of reaching agreements on the monetization of cross-border fields with Venezuela. And, there are three such fields that we are aware of, one of them being the Loran/Manatee gas field which is the largest of the three.

Part B, the answer is: in August 2010, there was an exchange of instruments of ratification of the Framework Treaty on the Unitization of Hydrocarbon Reservoirs that extend across the delimitation line between Trinidad and Tobago and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, also known as (the Framework Treaty) and the signing of the Agreement Unitization of the Exploitation and Development of Hydrocarbon Reservoirs specifically Loran/Manatee. This is also called the field specific Loran Manatee Treaty.

In January of 2011, the Joint Steering Committee and the Special Multi-Disciplinary Committee comprising representatives of both the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of Venezuela met in Caracas to determine the governance structure for the development of Loran/Manatee.

Consequent upon that meeting a proposed governance structure involving the establishment of a Unit Directing Committee comprising all stakeholders—and the stakeholders there would be the respective governments and the companies

involved—has been developed and is to be reviewed by both parties at the upcoming technical meeting. The stakeholders, of course, as I mentioned are the Government of Trinidad and Tobago; the Government of Venezuela; British Gas; Chevron (Trinidad and Tobago); Chevron (Venezuela) and Pedvesa Petróleos de Venezuela.

On finalization of the Unit Directing Committee Agreement there would be the selection of the Unit Operator who would prepare the development plan for the Loran/Manatee field for consideration of the Unit Directing Committee. Ultimately, both governments, subject to the requisite approvals, it is projected that production from the Loran/Manatee field could commence sometime in the period 2017—2020.

On December 3, 2011, the Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago met with the Minister of Energy and Petroleum of Venezuela, the hon. Rafael Ramirez at a Summit Meeting of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). We discussed, among other matters in the field of energy, the development of cross-border hydrocarbon reservoirs. Among the recommendations arising out of this meeting was the agreement that the two governments should hold more frequent meetings in order to concretize and implement the development of the Loran/Manatee as well as the other cross-border fields. The Venezuelan members of the steering committee have since submitted via email, in response to the Trinidad and Tobago draft of the Unit Directing Committee Agreements, their comments. A meeting of the Joint Steering Committee and Special Multi-Disciplinary Committee is scheduled for April 2012.

Part C: the Joint Ministerial Committee comprises the Minister of Energy Trinidad and Tobago, myself—these are the Trinidadian representatives: The Acting Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs, Mr. Richard Oliver; the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Margaret Parillion; the Joint Steering Committee has as its membership Mr. Selwyn Lashely, Chief Technical Officer now deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Energy; Ambassador Gerard Thompson, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ms. Lisa Ann Fraser, attorney-at-law Ministry of the Attorney General; Mr. Frank Look Kin, Advisor to the Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs and Dr. Jerome Rajnauth, Petroleum Engineer II, Ministry of Energy.

A Special Multi-Disciplinary Committee comprises Mr. Selwyn Lashely, Mr. Frank Look Kin, Ambassador Gerard Thompson, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Jamaludin Khan, Reservoir Engineer at Petrotrin and Mrs. Louise Poy Wing,

Senior State Counsel, Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs. As mentioned, the next meeting of the Multi-Disciplinary Committee and the Joint Steering Committee would be in April 2012.

Sen. Deyalsingh: Supplemental. The hon. Minister in response to part A) mentioned two landmark dates, August 2010 and January 2011. It seems to me that these two dates coincided with the former Minister being in office Carolyn Seepersad-Bachan. What have you done since you have assumed office, to progress these negotiations?

Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine: Thank you very much, Mr. President. I think the hon. Senator missed out a third date. I mentioned a date in December 2011 when I met with the Minister of Energy in Venezuela. In November 2011, I also met with the Deputy Minister of Energy in Venezuela, Mr. Ivan Orellana, and we have been accelerating the discussions between Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela. We are, of course, working between two countries and sometimes we have to work at the pace of the other country. Thank you very much. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Al-Rawi: Thank you, Mr. President. Hon. Minister, I noted in response to part B) of the question, as to the committees established, I did not hear—perhaps, I am mistaken—mention of the National Gas Company (NGC) representatives to the committees established and I was wondering if there was any rationale for the exclusion of the NGC participation.

Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine: These committees were appointed by the Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs. Primarily, the people involved are Ministry people. At a later stage, I think when we get to the point of the development plan and so on and as we get more into the specifics of the marketing plan in particular, the NGC would have to get involved at that stage. But, at this stage I do not think there is a need for the NGC at this point. We do however, at the Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs, rely heavily on the NGC for technical support.

Sen. Al-Rawi: Further supplemental. Perhaps more so by way of clarification, Hon. Minister, forgive me, my own perception is that the NGC is a critical institution involved in this particular area, we are talking about monetization in this question. I am warmed to hear the Minister's statement that monetization may be expected in the period somewhere between 2017—2020. Hon. Minister, is it envisaged by way of your recommendation that we could expect some better inclusion of the NGC in particular, they having the dedicated resources in this

area? I did note the Ministry of the Attorney General is involved and that BG is involved. And, with a company such as BG in association we are talking about the private end. So, I am concerned to have my fears alleviated by you recommending and whether you could recommend that the NGCs involvement happen sooner rather than later. Thank you.

Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine: Thank you very much, Mr. President, through you. Just to clarify the involvement of BG, Chevron and Pedvsa Petroléos de Venezuela is simply because they are the companies that are on both sides of the fence. On the Trinidadian side of the border the field is operated by BG and Chevron in a 50/50 partnership. And, on the Venezuelan side it is Pedvsa Petróleos de Venezuela and Chevron. Chevron, of course, is the common denominator between both countries. But, the point made by Sen. Al-Rawi is taken, that the NGC would at some point in time have to get involved because we are dealing with marketing and monetization. And, of course, the view would be that some of the gas, at least the gas on our side of the fence, which is our gas, which is approximately 1.8 trillion cubic feet of gas, some of that gas should come to Trinidad and Tobago. Thank you very much. [*Desk thumping*]

Olefins Plant

(Details of Relocation)

57. Sen. Terrence Deyalsingh asked the hon. Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs:

Could the Minister state the social, economic and environmental basis upon which the Government decided to relocate the gas to olefins plant from La Brea to Point Lisas?

The Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Kevin Ramnarine): Thank you, Mr. President. This was dealt with in the debate in the No Confidence Motion, but I would speak to it again. The prime reason for the consideration of the site for the proposed methanol to polyolefin and methanol petrochemicals projects was land space requirement. The project requires somewhere in the region of 200 hectares of contiguous land, which would allow for plant and for a suitable buffer zone.

We are advised that the land available in La Brea at the Union Estate is 150 hectares non-contiguous land. It is therefore broken up into three separate parcels. The location suited is an area called Point Lisas north which is located north of what is the existing Point Lisas Nitrogen Limited plant. That area, of course, has 200 hectares of contiguous flat land. So that was the main reason for the selection of that site for that project.

Thank you very much.

2.00 p.m.

Sen. Hinds: Hon. Minister, when the feasibility study would have been conducted in respect of the La Brea location, it would have contemplated the possibility of assisting and developing that community in respect of employment opportunities. You might be aware that the people were looking forward to that in order to give expression to their desires. Is there anything that the Government has done, or is about to do, to compensate for the grave disappointment to the people of the communities so adversely affected?

Sen. The Hon. K. Ranmarine: Thank you very much again, Mr. President. The Senator has raised a very important point. With the decision of the Government not to proceed with the smelter. One, of course, has to look for alternative projects for the Union Industrial Estate and, indeed, the LABIDCO Industrial Estate port area, one of the projects which we signed a memorandum of understanding for is the Severstal Iron and Steel Plant, which is a project conceptualized by Neal and Massy, and they have as their partners Severstal of Russia, Metaldom of the Dominican Republic, the NGC and the NEC. An MOU was signed for that a few months ago. That is one project.

There is another project which I understand may have started, but I need to clarify whether they have actually started. It is a company called Surecorp—I had discussions about this with the Member of Parliament for La Brea—and they are involved in the coating of pipelines for the oil industry with cement. I need to clarify whether that project has started. There is also a tremendous amount of demand for space at the various ports and maritime facilities in that area. I am reminded by the Minister of Transport that they have gone out for an expression of interest for another port in that general area.

What we see, as hon. Karim mentioned, is that with the expansion of the Panama Canal by 2014, the volume of maritime traffic passing through this area would greatly increase. There would be a heightened demand for maritime services in Trinidad and Tobago and La Brea could play a critical role in that regard.

Thank very much. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Al-Rawi: Another supplemental, Mr. President. Thank you, hon. Minister, through you, Mr. President. Hon. Minister, I am wondering whether—this is clarification. The answers come quickly. You say that the La Brea area had 150 hectares of non-contiguous land and that there is, I assume, better feasibility for the north Point Lisas area. Has a feasibility study for the north Point Lisas area been concluded; and if so, has it included also an environmental impact assessment?

Sen. The Hon. K. Ranmarine: The National Energy Corporation, which is the company charged with the responsibility of developing industrial estates, ports and so on, would have to apply for a Certificate of Environmental Clearance, and if need be—of course, I am sure you are aware of how the process works at the EMA—an EIA for the preparation of that particular site for the industrial plants that are proposed. Then, the company itself would have to apply for a CEC and possibly have to submit an EIA for the construction of the plant. So we are still yet to reach that point.

Sen. Al-Rawi: Further supplemental, Mr. President. Thank you, hon. Minister. That is exactly where I was going because the second question was relative to the time frames for the establishment in the north Point Lisas area. It may be reasonable to presume that we may suffer a time lag as a result of the shift from one area to the next. I will be happy to know if I was wrong. Time lag, it may be delayed as a result of the need to meet certain requirements in the north Point Lisas Industrial Estate area. So to ask the question, the question is: whether in fact there has been a feasibility study for the north Point Lisas area for that relocation?

Sen. The Hon. K. Ranmarine: Mr. President, before I commit to an answer, I would have to seek that information from the National Energy Corporation. So, if the Senator wants to file another question I will be willing to answer that.

Sen. Deyalsingh: Further supplemental question. Mr. President, just a point of clarification, hon. Minister. Am I to understand that a decision was made to stop the plant in La Brea or forego its development even though there was no environmental clearance for the Point Lisas site, potentially so?

Sen. Hinds: Just let the Minister speak freely. Do not influence the Minister.

Sen. The Hon. K. Ranmarine: Well, the Minister of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education is familiar with the area. He is from that area and he is making a very good point. Point Lisas north is essentially—first of all putting aside the requirement for CEC and EIA—is a brownfield site. Basically, it is in the Point Lisas Industrial Estate; it is north of the Farmland Miss Chem plant. I do not have the facts as to whether a feasibility study was done and whether the environmental considerations and so on, but we are advised by the NEC that the technical requirements of the plant require 200 hectares of contiguous land which is the main determinant for the site being located there.

Sen. Deyalsingh: Further supplemental, Mr. President. Hon. Minister, just in case the eventuality that the Point Lisas site does not get the necessary clearances, what is the fate of the project?

Sen. The Hon. K. Ranmarine: Sen. Deyalsingh, the EMA is an independent authority and its decisions, as we have found out, are subject to the courts. So all parties involved, the NEC and the principals behind the project, will have to face the EMA as everybody else and seek the EMA's clearance. So we have no control over that. If they succeed, then the project goes forward. If they do not succeed, we move to another project.

Sen. Deyalsingh: Through you, Mr. President. Given your answer, is there any sort of contingency plan just in case the clearances are not received? What is going to happen to the investment that should have gone in; the jobs to be created, and the anticipation of the people for jobs? What are the contingency plans?

Mr. President: If I may Senator? I think that question and the one that preceded it, involves a hypothetical case, so it is not appropriate for questions at this point.

Sen. Deyalsingh: Thank you, Mr. President.

Sen. Hinds: Thank you. This is not hypothetical, I can assure you, Mr. President. Based on the answer to my supplemental earlier, hon. Minister, about the employment prospects in La Brea and given the fiery protest of the people and their obvious impatience and lack of trust in your Government, would you like to say to them, the people of La Brea, how soon can they expect meaningful employment in terms of your plans for the La Brea site and the extent of the jobs? How many jobs do we expect, 2,000 jobs, 3,000 jobs? Could you tell us?

Sen. The Hon. K. Ranmarine: Mr. President, I would be very willing to answer a question; if the Senator would file a new question, I would answer it. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Hinds: Mr. President, I know you would not permit that degree of escapism. A supplemental question, as our Standing Orders would demonstrate, is justified and based on the answer given by the Minister. The Minister told us that they have at least one project earmarked for the La Brea site, and he told us there was already a signed memorandum of agreement. It is quite appropriate for me to then ask the hon. Minister how soon can we expect jobs and approximately how many jobs can the impatient people, who do not trust your Government, expect relief in La Brea, you having taken it away and sent it to central Trinidad?

Mr. President: Sen. Hinds, may I point out to you that the original question relates to the social, economic impact in moving to Point Lisas. It does not refer to the impact on La Brea and, therefore, to introduce this question at this time

would be to take it out of the remit of what is before the Senate at the moment. I think it is appropriate if you want answers to those questions you will have to file it again. Thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

2.10 p.m.

**TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO POLICE SERVICE
(FIGHT AGAINST CRIME)
[Fifth Day]**

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question [February 28, 2012]:

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: The long list of those who spoke consists of Tuesday, October 25, 2011, the mover of the Motion, Sen. Fitzgerald Hinds, Sen. The Hon. Brig. John Sandy, Sen. Dr. Rolph Balgobin and Sen. Penelope Beckles.

On Tuesday, November 22, 2011, continuing Sen. Penelope Beckles, Sen. Dr. Lennox Bernard, Sen. Rabindra Moonan, Sen. Terrence Deyalsingh and Sen. Dr. James Armstrong.

On Tuesday, January 31, 2012, Sen. Dr. James Armstrong continued, Sen. The Hon. Anand Ramlogan SC, Sen. Faris Al-Rawi, Sen. Subhas Ramkhelawan, Sen. Lyndira Oudit, Sen. Basharat Ali, Sen. Corrinne Baptiste-McKnight, Sen. The Hon. Kevin Ramnarine, Sen. Helen Drayton and Sen. Shamfa Cudjoe.

On Tuesday, February 28, 2012, Sen. Nicole Dyer-Griffith, Sen. Dr. Lester Henry and Sen. The Hon. Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie. Members wishing to enter the debate at this time may do so.

Sen. Deon Isaac: Thank you very much, Mr. President, for affording me the opportunity to enter this debate. [*Desk thumping*] Allow me to congratulate the architect and mover of this Motion. [*Desk thumping and crosstalk*] Come on, come on, when something is good you ought to say it is good. But my purpose of this Motion is not to bash the police service.

Sen. Karim: That is so different to the rest of our colleagues, boy.

Sen. D. Isaac: It is not to find a scapegoat for anything that has gone wrong in the police service either; but, on the other hand, by contribution this afternoon is merely to highlight what works and what does not, just as the Motion says.

Mr. President, the challenges to fighting crime in Trinidad and Tobago are multifaceted. No one organization, institution, has the answer. We all have to come together in the spirit of camaraderie, in the spirit of national development, in an effort to ensure that we solve the challenges that we face. Mr. President, I am very much aware that my colleagues would have exhausted this debate, and when I heard you list out the numerous individuals who would have contributed to this debate, I assure you that my contribution will be precise, concise and to the point. [*Desk thumping*] With that said, I will focus my contribution strictly on Tobago.

Now, as a child growing up in Tobago, you could leave your keys in your car, you could leave your house door open, your front door, you could leave your back door open—but that is not the case anymore—and no one would have intruded. But, as I said, that is not the case anymore. Back in those days, a major violence would have been just a little tussle among two chauvinistic young men, you know, one figuring that he is bigger than the other and a little tussle here and there, and eventually one may have come out with a little bruise or a little scratch. But, I must make the point; no weapons were involved back then. But now, times have really, really changed, and weapons have been introduced into criminal activity.

Now, despite the fact that crime in Tobago is significantly less than it is in Trinidad, I dare say that it can be really damning for us in Tobago if that criminal activity was to increase in our island, and there could be far-reaching consequences for us in Tobago. Mr. President, I will tell you why. Because of the fact that we, and many persons in Tobago, depend heavily on tourism for our livelihood, any negative advisories on criminal activity in Tobago can certainly deter visitors from our shores. I must that say that the recent SoE did in no way contribute to the marketing efforts of destination Tobago. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Hinds: How did it affect Tobago?

Sen. George: It saved lives!

Sen. D. Isaac: Mr. President, as we are on the topic of SoE—[*Interruption*]

Sen. Hinds: “I thought was credit card.”

Sen. D. Isaac:—I must make the point and I am quite certain that we are all aware that, from time to time, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service engages in joint patrols with the Defence Force of Trinidad and Tobago. We saw just a few months ago that was happening with the SoE. We saw, prior to that, roadblocks

throughout the country for different reasons, maybe for security reasons I would assume. One would assume, Mr. President, that because of those relationships being built, those relationships of the defence force and the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, individuals coming together and working together, they would have built camaraderie.

In other words, I may end up knowing a particular—I am from the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and I may end up knowing a particular individual working with the defence force and so on, and a relationship would be built. What is shocking, Mr. President, is the allegations of members of the defence force in Tobago who were involved in a robbery on Saturday, February 11, this year. Now, given those close working relationships with the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, one has to wonder if those investigations will be fair, if those investigations will be thorough without fear or favour.

Now, Mr. President, let us take a minute and talk about the construction of the long awaited police stations in Tobago—those two police stations in Tobago—Roxborough Police Station and Old Grange Police Station. You know, the contract was awarded just before this Government came into office, and—I mean it is the Government's prerogative—they chose to review the contract. It took the Government two years to review that contract. And after reviewing it, they decided, "Well okay, we are going to take it back to tender." Now, that process may very well take another two years.

So, we in Tobago waiting for the police stations to be constructed—the one in Roxborough and the other one in Old Grange—may not see it happen until 2014 or maybe 2015, or maybe just before the next general election. But, Mr. President, one has to bear in mind why is it that the Government chose to review that process and it took two years. But, you know what? That reminds me, Mr. President, of a situation that is taking place currently, it is fresh in my mind; and it sounds or looks like a green paper—a delayed process all over, but, that is for another debate, Mr. President. That is for an absolutely different debate at another time and another place.

Mr. President, just as the Motion indicates, we are looking, and we are examining, the strengths and the deficiencies of the TTPS and its impact and potential against the fight in crime. It would be remiss of me if I did not talk about some of the strengths. Fair enough? Because there are indeed some strengths in the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. Let us take for instance, there are many young lawyers in the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service who serve the nation well and serve the nation in the legal department. If no one took the opportunity

before, Mr. President, to applaud the services of those young lawyers, those police officers who work in the legal department, I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate them [*Desk thumping*] because I sincerely believe that they are doing yeoman service to Trinidad and Tobago.

We also have police officers attached to the Court and Process Branch; all these officers who come up against top-notch lawyers. Lawyers who went to law school, spent years in law school, well qualified, and these very police officers who are attached to the Court and Process Branch—[*Interruption*]

Sen. Hinds: Prosecutors.

Sen. D. Isaac:—those prosecutors would give those lawyers a hell of a time in the courts. So, they, too, I would like to congratulate. [*Desk thumping*] They win State cases as well, might I add.

Specialized training, Mr. President: we have officers attached to the Special Branch; Narcotics and Firearms Bureau, Homicide Bureau, Guard and Emergency Branch, Interagency Task Force, just to name a few, and these officers are given preferential treatment for specialized training. Now, I have absolutely no challenge with these police officers getting specialized training, but when it comes to the preferential treatment, my suggestion—because as you know, Mr. President, if I come to this august Senate and I criticize, I like to recommend as well. So, my recommendation is that all police officers across the board, through you, Mr. President, to the hon. Minister with responsibility for national security, all those police officers be given the opportunity to be exposed to specialized training. I will tell you why.

Many of the police officers in Trinidad and Tobago—those you see on streets patrolling—those traffic branch officers for instance—are the first port of call if something was to happen. They are the first response. Now, tell me, how many of them are exposed to training in first aid?

2.25 p.m.

“If somebody was to drop down on the ground”, God forbid, at the side of the road, how many of those traffic police officers are exposed to first aid training? I have heard of police officers who had to assist with delivering babies, but they did not have a clue as to how to assist with delivering the babies. “Ah mean” that might be far-reaching, but things happen for a reason. Giving those police officers exposure to specialized training, it can certainly help.

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Take for instance what happened at Panorama, where those civilians were beaten with batons by police officers. Maybe, perhaps, if those police officers were exposed to crowd control training, maybe that incident may not have occurred. Who knows? These are recommendations that I am bringing to the table, because I strongly believe when you criticize, you must recommend as well. I do not know everything. I am not always right. I make many errors, but I sincerely believe when you criticize, you make a recommendation.

What about police officers who are corrupt? How are these allegations being dealt with? A couple of weeks ago, on the very popular show, Crime Watch, Mr. Ian Alleyne—[*Interruption*]

Sen. Karim: It is alleged.

Sen. D. Isaac:—it is alleged, interviewed a civilian in Tobago who was talking about—I do not know how many people would have seen it—the drug trade in Tobago. That civilian was brave enough to call the names of police officers whom he alleged, because I am not that brave, were involved in the drug trade in Tobago. What is the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service doing about that? What is the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service doing about those allegations; because it is out there? Names were called.

Another major deficiency in the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service is that, let us face it, there is absolutely too much political interference. I make no apologies for saying that and my humble recommendation to that is, stop it this instant.

The most recent occurrence in the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service is the well-known 21st Century Policing. It sounds nice, but I have some challenges with this 21st Century Policing and what I may say this afternoon may sound shocking. I ask the question: did you know since the 21st Century Policing began earlier this month in Tobago, the Charlotteville Police Station closes its doors at 9.00p.m.? Did anyone know that? The Charlotteville Police Station closes its doors at 9.00 p.m. The Moriah Police Station closes its doors at 9.00 p.m. and “opens back” at 7.00a.m. the next morning, as a result of this new 21st Century Policing.

Tell me, in Tobago, where our claim to tourism and our contribution to GDP in tourism is so high, we have so many visitors coming to the island and those areas that I have just mentioned are remote areas. I have another Tobagonian in this Senate, who can certainly attest to that, who sits on the other side. He could certainly tell us that those areas are remote areas.

I am going to share a situation that took place in Tobago with a visitor. How is it that you can close a police station—where the tagline indicates that you are supposed to protect and serve—and tell residents: “You have to now revert all your reports. For the Moriah Police Station, you have to send all your reports to Old Grange Police Station—do you know how far that is—and for all the reports from Charlotteville, which is an enclosed community, which gets locked off if there are any major hurricanes or any major disasters? It took place with Hurricane Ivan. Charlotteville was completely locked off. There was no way in or out, save and except by sea. How is it, for a tourism-based destination, you could say you are shutting down a police station at 9.00 p.m. and then reopening at 7.00a.m.?”

Mr. President, that really disturbs me and I am quite certain many, if not all Senators seated here, feel a bit disturbed as well. If you care anything about policing in Trinidad and Tobago and in particular Tobago, and you care about the safety of the citizenry, there is absolutely no reason to close a police station. My recommendation for that, through you, to the hon. Minister with responsibility for national security, is to resume, reopen the police stations immediately, forthwith.

It gives me the impression that a police station now, closing at 9.00p.m. has been relegated to a “parlour shop” operation. This is the impression I get. A “parlour shop” opens at seven o’clock in the morning or it opens at eight o’clock in the morning most times and closes nine o’clock in the night. That is a “parlour shop” operation. That is not the operation for a police service that is supposed to protect and serve. That is really and truly a pet peeve for me.

That is not all. The CID in Scarborough, the capital of Tobago, they have opening hours too “yuh know”—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Senators: What?

Sen. D. Isaac: “Yeah.” They have opening hours too, since this new 21st Century Policing and “yuh” setting up opening hours for police. Here is the opening hours for the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in Scarborough: 8.00 a.m. to 4.00p.m.; 4.00 p.m. to 12.00 p.m.; and I need to read this piece: off on public holidays and on weekends.

Sen. Hinds: What?

Sen. D. Isaac: The CID in the capital of Tobago, as a result of the 21st Century Policy that has been introduced earlier this month, “dey doh wuk on public holiday no more. Dey doh protect and serve on public holidays. Dey doh protect

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and serve on weekends and dey doh protect and serve from 12.00p.m. to 8.00 a.m. So, if any anything was tuh happen and yuh call dem out, yuh know yuh go hear dem say: “I off”.

Sen. Deyalsingh: Are you serious?

Sen. D. Isaac: Mr. President, that is not acceptable. That is unacceptable, untenable and it cannot remain that way in Tobago. [*Interruption*] I humbly submit, we have other representatives from Tobago seated here and I am quite certain that they will agree, because they are Tobagonians to the bone as well. They will agree with me that it is untenable. My recommendation to that is to stop it immediately and “open back” the police station forthwith, 24 hours, to protect and serve.

Sen. Hinds: And fire, and fire.

Sen. D. Isaac: Mr. President, I made reference a couple of minutes ago with regard to what happens if a visitor—because we are a tourism-based destination, let us face it—calls a police station after 9.00p.m. We all know what will happen, especially those two police stations to which I am making specific reference, Charlotteville and Moriah. They will get absolutely no answer. They will get no response.

I would share a story with this honourable Senate.

Sen. Hinds: Tell us, tell us.

Sen. D. Isaac: It is a very tragic story. It is a very graphic story. I am sorry I have to bring it, but it is imperative that it must be said. [*Interruption*]

Sen. Hinds: The Minister is not listening.

Sen. D. Isaac: A visitor who owns a villa in Tobago came home—“yuh come on holidays regular, yuh own ah villa, yuh stay at yuh villa—and one evening that particular lady realized that intruders were in her house. She locked herself in the room, called the police station—this is a very graphic story, listen carefully—they said they were coming. She said: “Look, there are some individuals in my house. I think they are here to rob me. Come.” Mr. President, those individuals had the time to rape that woman, to rob her, to beat her, to relieve her of her ATM card, and go to the ATM machine, only to realize that she gave them the wrong pin and they had time to go back to beat her again, to ensure that she gave them the right pin and still the police did not arrive. Response time is critical for the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service.

I do not know if this is a response that could assist to alleviate, but the Tobago House of Assembly did initiate a 211 contact number for emergency cases where they have a direct link with the police service. For the information of this Senate, if you call 211 while in Tobago and I believe you can also call from Trinidad as well, and you have an emergency, you can have a direct link to the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service.

Before I take my seat, I wish to reiterate that the Trinidad and Tobago police officers are generally committed and dedicated individuals, but we simply cannot afford to allow politicians to continue to attempt to micromanage the process. All we need to do is equip the members of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service with what they need, the equipment, the technology, facilitate them and provide the police stations in Roxborough and Old Grange and allow them to do their job. That is all we need to do. Mr. President, with those few words, I thank you.

2.40 p.m.

Sen. Prof. Harold Ramkissoon: Thank you, Mr. President. I too would like to welcome you back to the Senate, and hope your trip has been, among other things, very enlightening.

Before I make my contribution, I crave your indulgence and those of the other Senators to make a few comments on Private Members Day. Private Members Day, as we know, is on the last Tuesday of every month. It gives us an opportunity, Senators on the Opposition Bench and the Independent Bench, to debate Motions which they consider to be urgent and of national interest; its duration is normally from 1.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. In the First Session of the Tenth Parliament, that is the last session, we sat here in this Senate for 333 hours, 11 of those were over 10 hours, and of those 333 hours, Private Members Day was allocated or got 30 hours of those 333 hours, which is less than one-tenth of the total number of hours we spent in this Senate. And I ask myself: is this adequate? We were able to get through two Motions, I think both from the Independent Bench.

This session so far, which is coming to an end, we have only been able to debate one Motion, I do not think we are going to get beyond one Motion; there are six Motions scheduled for debate. Mr. President, through you, make an appeal to the Leader of Government Business and the Senators beyond the divide, the Government Senators, to please consider our request for two more hours on Private Members Day, that is from 1.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. I am sure you will try to be a bit more accommodating. [*Desk thumping*] And I say from 1.30 p.m. to 6.30

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p.m. an additional two hours, because I do not think that is really going to make any difference to anyone. When you leave here at 4.30 p.m. the day is basically over. Adding two more hours would hardly make any difference to anybody's day. So I appeal to the Senators beyond the divide to please give that your consideration and hopefully in the Third Session we will have the honour of having four hours for our debate. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

Mr. President, it was not my intention to really take part in the debate of this Motion when there are so many of our fellow Senators who are qualified to do so, in fact, some of them are overqualified to do so. I intended to sit back and listen to the many problems in the police service, but given recent events, I am compelled to make an entry and hopefully this would be a brief entry.

The Motion again:

“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.”

I think it is timely given some of the controversies that we have been witnessing recently, and the fact that although the crime rate had been reduced a bit, it still remains high. And the first question I believe we need to ask is, how did we get here? To answer that question we need to ask ourselves another question. Who is responsible for the management of the police service? With the help of our Constitution, there seem to be three different layers of management. I go to the Constitution, section 75(1) and I quote:

“There shall be a Cabinet for Trinidad and Tobago which shall have the general direction and control of the government of Trinidad and Tobago and shall be collectively responsible therefore to Parliament.”

So that is the first level.

The second level, I go to 85(1) and it says:

“Where any Minister has been assigned responsibility for any department of government, he shall exercise general direction and control over that department; and, subject to such direction and control, the department shall be under the supervision of a Permanent Secretary whose office shall be a public office.”

And there is yet a third layer, Mr. President, which is the Public Service Commission. I believe that these three layers of management is a recipe for confusion which we are now witnessing.

One of the roles of the Police Service Commission is to assist with the selection of the Commissioner of Police and the Deputy Commissioner of Police. What is the process involved here? As I understand it, the Police Service Commission, with the aid of technical advisors, makes recommendations. Those are forwarded to the President who in turn forwards the recommendations to the House of Representatives; it needs the approval of the House of Representatives and then it goes back to the Police Service Commission. Mr. President, in my view that process is cumbersome and circuitous.

Mr. Ken Lalla, learned and highly respected Senior Counsel, one who has served as the Chairman of the Public Service Commission, Chairman of the Police Service Commission and a member of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission, has described the procedure and the process as convoluted. I ask some questions about the process: what happens if the House of Representatives does not approve the recommendation? I ask another question: the members of the Police Service Commission are selected by the President in consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition—whom we assume are honourable persons—and if they make a recommendation, why does it need to come to the House of Representatives? And now I ask myself yet another question: was this cumbersome process to select the Commissioner of Police and Deputy Commissioner of Police always in existence?

Apparently, Mr. President, the Police Service Commission Act was changed in 2006. And you ask yourself the question, why was it changed? Is it a case of wanting more control? I merely ask. In addition, the new Police Service Commission was given a managerial role, and again the question is, why? Should this not be left to the Ministry of National Security and the Commissioner of Police? We note the same was not done for the Teaching Service Commission, the Public Service Commission and the Judicial and Legal Service Commission. They remain quasi judicial bodies.

Why was the Police Service Commission selected for special treatment? The special system in place is certainly not working. The question then is, are we going to move on to yet another Police Service Commission number three? And if that fails, are we then going to move on to a Police Service Commission number four? The point I am trying to make, I do not think so much is wrong with the systems themselves, but I believe it has to do with the individuals who manage these systems. [*Desk thumping*]

Two suggestions, Mr. President, is that we need a simpler approach in selecting the Commissioner of Police and Deputy Commissioner of Police, there

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is no doubt about that. The second suggestion is that we must be more judicious about whom we select to be on Service Commissions.

The Motion seeks to inter alia identify the problems of the Police Service Commission. I now go to a 2001 document. It is called the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. It is headed: Comments of the Police Service Commission on the Constitution (Amdt.) Bill, 2001; the Police Service Bill, 2001; the Police Complaints Authority Bill, 2001. This is talking about the Police Service Commission, and I quote:

“Over the years the service has been plagued with myriad problems ranging from management, discipline and neglect on the part of the administration in providing it with essentials ranging from accommodation to proper tools and equipment.

This is evidenced by the fact that between the attainment of Independence and until 1990, a span of over 28 years, there have been approximately six teams appointed to review the Police Service commencing with the Lee Committee in 1958, the Darby Commission of Inquiry in 1964, the Carr Committee in 1971, the Bruce Committee in 1978, the Police Executive Research Forum in 1990 and the British Review Team in 1990.”

It continues:

“These review teams were appointed not so much as a result of constitutional anxieties but because of the concern for the falling standard of discipline, and efficiency in the management of the Police Service and no doubt with the objective of promoting organizational restructuring, improved discipline and efficiency and enhanced management capability.”

I ask myself these questions, have these recommendations from all these commissions and committees been implemented? Have any of them been implemented? I go even further. Has anyone had the time to read all the recommendations from these committees and commissions? In my view, Mr. President, the crux of the problem is management in the police service. How do we manage such a complex, structured, multilayered system such as the police service and the public service, so that they can provide better service to the public?

While I am not a management expert, it seems to me that there are two basic principles of proper management, namely, succession planning and career development. Where is the succession planning in the police service? Are we

looking at potential leaders of the police service and trying to groom them into those positions? What about career development for all officers? Do we have career development? We seem, Mr. President, to be strangers to both of these.

I now turn my attention to the Commissioner of Police and I make the statement that if someone is hired to do a job and he or she is up for appraisal, you ask yourself this simple question, is he or she fulfilling the terms of the contract? And if the answer is an unequivocal no, you fire that individual. You do so decisively and you stand the consequences. However, having said that, let me state that the Commissioner of Police has been in office for one year. When he came into office crime was still spiraling out of control, it had been in such a state for over one decade, and the question is, can we really expect the Commissioner of Police to make a major dent in the problem of solving crime in one year? The second question, is he, for example getting the support of officers around him? I merely ask.

2.55 p.m.

Mr. President, it is encouraging though to see recently that the Police Service Commission has agreed to work with the Commissioner of Police in a spirit of cooperation and I hope this pervades the entire police service.

Mr. President, I want to quickly talk about the social dimension of crime, and I have spoken about this element sometime in the past. In dealing with crime we need to look at the social dimension not only the punitive measures. We must take, for example, the depressed areas and transform their environment. We need to provide better roads, running water, electricity, schools, classes for adults, low-cost housing and special tutoring for students. And I think some of the Ministers on the opposite side are focusing in this area. We need to create an environment where people can live in dignity. This should be a larger effort to reconstruct our society.

Mr. President, if I may be bold enough, I would like to suggest the following what I call the communalization of the country; take the country and divide it into a number of communities that would facilitate the implementation of our social programmes, crime-fighting programmes and other similar programmes. I think it would make life much easier for us if we go that way.

Now I come to crime; Mr. President. It still remains the number one problem that we face today. Let me emphasize, if we do not make any real progress towards solving the crime problem, it will negate the gains made on other fronts such as the economy. When I talk about crime, I not only refer to blue-collar

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crime, but I am also talking about white-collar crime. Blue-collar crime is an attack on the body of the country. Corruption and white-collar crime are an attack on the soul of the nation. The nation, Mr. President, is under siege.

I also want to talk further about corruption. It is very pervasive, Mr. President. It is widespread in the society. It is a cancer eating away, as I said, at the soul of the nation. And in my view, no Government in the past has had the political will to deal with the problem of corruption. And what we are witnessing today is the result of an accumulative non-involvement in the problem of solving corruption by all Governments.

Mr. President, to understand the magnitude of the problem, I want to go to the *Express* of Sunday, March, 25. What this article does is quote some of the figures from the recent Caribbean Human Development Report 2012, and try to analyze some parts of the report. I want to look at the first table; Caribbean Murder Rate 1990-2010, over two decades. They made a comparison here of, I think, six countries; Trinidad and Tobago in 1990, the homicide rate, seven per 100,000; the homicide rate in 2010, 35 per 100,000. That means that in 20 years' time, the murder rate has increased by 500 per cent.

We look at Jamaica, in 1990, 20 per 100,000; in 2010, 50 per 100,000. The homicide rate in Jamaica over that period has double by 250 per cent. I go to Barbados, in 1990, 10 per 100,000, 20 years later, and this is interesting, seven per 100,000. Barbados is the only country with the homicide rate that has been reduced over the 20-year period.

And you ask yourself, Mr. President, the question, what is Barbados doing to control the crime situation that we are not doing?

Sen. Hinds: They have a better Government.

Sen. Prof. H. Ramkissoon: I suspect that this has to do with poverty. I have not had the time to check the poverty rate in Barbados, but I know it is quite high in Trinidad, 25-30 per cent people living below the poverty line. And I suspect that that is one of the factors. But it would be interesting to know what Barbados is doing that we are not doing so that they could reduce their homicide rate from 10 per 100,000 to seven in the 20-year period.

Then I come, Mr. President, to another table in this *Express* report;

“Confidence in the Judiciary”

It is interesting, Mr. President. I want to make a comparison again between Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados:

- Confidence in the judges: Trinidad and Tobago about 58.7 per cent have confidence—of those surveyed—in the judges, Barbados 24.5.
- The judicial system being corrupt: Trinidad 69.8per cent think that our system is corrupt; Barbados 33.8 per cent.
- Politically connected criminals freed: Trinidad and Tobago 70per cent, Barbados 41.9per cent.

Again I make the point that these figures are as a result of an accumulative inaction by all Governments. Would this Government be able to do any better? I only hope so for the sake of us all, but I would not hold my breath. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. President, what we must do is to adopt a methodical multi-pronged approach towards dealing with the crime problem, and I have no doubt that the hon. Minister of National Security, Minister Sandy, is doing this and we wish him well in his attack on crime. I should point out, Mr. President, that maybe we need to look at things in a more scientific way in terms of method. And there is—hon. Sen. Sandy will be happy to hear this—a group in Boston that is using a scientific approach towards understanding youth violence. Their project is called, “Youth Violence Systems Project Getting to the Roots.”

I want to quote from the website:

“...is about more than just building models to understand how youth violence works in Boston neighbourhoods. It is also about bringing together groups of youth workers, families, community leaders, clergy, academics, funders and concerned individuals to make Boston a safer healthier city for all.”

The website is gettingtotheroots.org for those who are interested.

Mr. President, in closing let me state again, the spiralling crime rate did not occur overnight and will not disappear tomorrow, it spanned a period of about two decades. The uphill battle will take much longer, probably a generation, provided we do the right things, and one of them is creating a more efficient and disciplined police service. It is my sincere hope that the debate on this Motion would set the agenda towards achieving this. I thank you very much. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. David Abdulah: Thank you very much, Mr. President, for allowing me to participate in this Motion on the strengths and the deficiencies of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and its impact and potential in the fight against crime, and join at the same time with other colleagues here in welcoming you back to the Senate and back to Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. President, I think—and other Senators in their contributions have also spoken to the issue of the need for trust, the need for confidence by the citizenry in the police service, that without trust and confidence it is very, very difficult for the police service to function as effectively as it ought to in the fight against crime. Because if a crime is committed and no one is prepared to come forward, because they do not trust the police; they do not feel confident in the fact that that information would be treated with the kind of discreteness that it requires, then the whole mechanism of information and intelligence gathering will begin to break down.

And therefore, when we debate this issue today, and this particular Motion as we have been debating it over several Tuesdays over the last several months, I think that it is important for us to recognize that where we are today, in terms of the effectiveness and the efficiency of the police service, did not happen overnight, it did not happen, you know, like a bolt of lightning coming out of the blue. And we all agree, and I subscribe to that myself, that the vast majority of police officers are indeed very hard-working and diligent and seek to perform their responsibilities and their duties and carry out their functions to protect and serve in a manner that is in accordance with not only the vision and mission of the police service but also with their oath. But of course, like in many situations, a minority of persons can create great difficulties for the whole.

I heard Sen. Deon Isaac say a while ago that one has to cut out political interference in the police service. I think that is what the Hon. Senator said. One cannot help in that regard but remind the honourable Senate that the creation of parallel policing institutions that were outside the Constitution, outside of the laws of Trinidad and Tobago—I speak specifically of course to the Special Anticrime Unit of Trinidad and Tobago—enabled or facilitated or could have enabled, or could have facilitated political interference in, way that the police service itself does not lend itself to because of the protection that the service has and the officers have under the law and under the Constitution.

So we have to recognize when institutions are being created that are outside of the existing institutions what that portends with respect to the possibility of political interference, and therefore the closure of that unit actually and returning all of the functions of policing, and so on, within the police service under the command of the Commissioner of Police—And Sen. Prof. Harold Ramkissoon spoke about the multi-layered management arrangements and so on. But the return of the provision of our policing functions within the police service does ensure a certain independence of the police service from political interference. I just thought I would put that on the record and remind the hon. Senator that we have to look at the matter in a historical perspective.

I am going want to come back later on to the issue of the matter of culture because, Mr. President, I think that it is very important that we constantly address—and I often seek to identify the issue of culture. So we do not only have to look at the culture of the police service, we have to look at the question of the culture, the relationship between the police service and the members of the community, and we also have to look at the issue of the culture of violence in our society, and that is something that I want to come back to as well.

In another debate, Mr. President, I did make the point that the police service, if you look at it over its long historical span, really only emerged in this country—our police force as it was at the time—in the immediate aftermath of slavery. And it was very clear, therefore, that when it was created, it was created to deal with those who came off the plantation as free labourers.

Regrettably, you had that colonial culture where the function of the police force, as it was identified by legislative orders of the Legislative Council, or orders that were made at the time were really to suppress riots and brawls and outrages against the peace which really were seen by the colonial rulers at the time, both the economic powers and the political power of the colonial state—really the persons who would engage in riots and brawls and outrages against the police were the ordinary citizens of the society, they certainly were not those who hob nobbed with the colonial governor and were not of the plantocracy.

3.10 p.m.

So that culture, regrettably, has been there for very many decades and, therefore, there is oftentimes a minority of persons in the police service who still, perhaps, see themselves in that old culture, and in their interactions with citizens behave in a manner that does not engender the kind of trust and confidence that is required and so on.

It would be interesting if there were surveys done on the public in terms of how do citizens see police officers and how do they understand the police officers with respect to them. Of course, you get people writing letters to the editor and you often read them, congratulating police officers for the way in which they handled situations in which individual citizens found themselves—whether it be a car accident or a car breaking down or an attempt at robbery or other criminal acts against them that maybe was about to be committed—and you get the opposite kind of report to that which Sen. Isaac referred—very glowing, positive reports about the way in which police officers responded and they were very helpful and so on. It is to that that we have to seek constantly to strive in terms of best

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practice and to ensure that the culture of the police service is such that there is no room for the lack of response or the attitude of disregard for the well-being and concern of citizens or to treat citizens with a certain level of aggression and so on.

In this regard, we note over the last year or so the way in which the Police Complaints Authority has been functioning under its Director, Miss Gillian Lucky, and to see that the Police Complaints Authority existed in law much longer than the last two years. It existed in law for quite a number of years, but throughout the years that it existed, it has only been since the People's Partnership Government has come into office that you have seen the Police Complaints Authority actually functioning in a way that engenders the confidence of the citizens who would go to the Police Complaints Authority and feel confident, that in making complaints about incidents that those complaints would be dealt with in a very speedy way, in a very fair way, in an objective way and that they could get some measure of justice in that regard.

It comes, therefore, not just to the question of the creation of institutions, but how we manage those institutions that we create by law or by administrative arrangements, how are those institutions managing. In other words, do we see these institutions as being institutions to serve or do we see institutions really as reinforcing relations of power and control in the society? Certainly, I think the Police Complaints Authority has acted over the last period in the former manner, in a way to serve the interest of citizens rather than as a protector of the relations of power in the society.

We also have to identify in terms of the efficiency and the effectiveness of the police service the entire criminal justice system. Mr. President, of course, we have had a number of debates about the criminal justice system in this honourable Senate, most recently, when we were debating the issue of the abolition of preliminary enquiries for a number of indictable offences, and we had an opportunity to examine the criminal justice system. It is very clear that unless the entire criminal justice system is effective, then the police service itself would not be effective. In other words, we have to address the effectiveness and efficiency of the police service in a very holistic manner, and not seek to do it in bits and pieces here and there, because those bits and pieces here and there certainly would not succeed.

We hope that when the totality of the legislation relating to the reform of the criminal justice system is effected, not just on paper by the laws being assented and proclaimed, but in practice in terms of the administration arrangements, that you would see concomitant with that improvements in the effectiveness of the police service.

One of the definite areas where we can see the police service being weak is in the area of white-collar crime in dealing with matters of corruption and of white-collar crime generally. In other words, it is much easier to deal with somebody who steals tomatoes or avocados or steals a motor car than engages in more complex white-collar crime and so on. It is very clear that there is a weakness in that regard because there are cases that ought to have been prosecuted and so on that have not yet been prosecuted or not come before the courts—persons have not been brought before the courts even though there has been a clear perception that they have been involved in wrongdoing, and year after year nothing seems to be happening, whether it is with respect to former UDeCott or whatever it may be—

Sen. Deyalsingh: The airport! The airport!

Sen. D. Abdulah:—whatever it may be. [*Crosstalk*]—everything under the sun. Any and all corruption is wrong. Any and all corruption is wrong, Sen. Deyalsingh. You seem to have a fixation with the airport, regardless of what it is. [*Crosstalk*] You could go far back. You could go back to Tesoro; you could go back to the Caroni Racing Track; Sam P. Wallace and a whole range of things. The point is that all corruption is wrong; all white-collar crime is wrong. [*Desk thumping and crosstalk*] You would not get me to say what you want me to say—at all. I have been around much longer than you have, and you would not get me to say what you want me to say, so do not try that. [*Desk thumping*] Not even Sen. Hinds could achieve that. [*Laughter*]

The point is, Mr. President, when citizens in the society see that persons who engage in certain kinds of crimes pay the penalty for that—they end up in jail and so on—and then they see others who do not get apprehended and where there is no process and so on taking place or no apparent process with respect to investigation and prosecution, then the average citizen out there must say that something is wrong; that justice is, in fact, not blind.

When the average citizen sees that justice or believes that justice is, in fact, not blind, then that citizen loses confidence and trust in the institutions; whether they be the institution of the police service or the criminal justice system and, perhaps, ultimately as well in the institution of Parliament, and I will come back to that in a while.

One of the things that would have to be addressed very clearly is the capacity and the ability of the police service to function efficiently and effectively with respect to dealing with white-collar crime, because there are many laws that have

been put in place and are being put in place to deal with that, but it makes no sense for there to be a strong legislative framework and then nothing appears to be happening with respect to the enforcement of that legislative framework.

Mr. President, coming back to the issue of the culture of that relationship between the police service and the society and the laws that were passed in the immediate post-emancipation period where it was an offence to idle, and the police were empowered to arrest and apprehend persons who were known as habitual idlers. There was the Habitual Idlers Ordinance in those days.

It reminds me that when the rights of citizens are violated albeit a small minority of officers, that we constantly run the problems of building trust and confidence, and that leads to the breakdown of the capacity and the ability of the police service to engage in the fight against crime.

You have seen it fairly recently with respect to the raid at the Transport and Industrial Workers' Union headquarters where a large number—it was on television for all to see—of police officers went to apprehend one individual on a relatively minor offence which is an outstanding warrant for maintenance, which would not or ought not to require a significant number of police going, and then breaking down the door of the union headquarters and damaging the union property and so on. That was certainly not an action that engendered trust and confidence in the police service and does nothing to assist the police service to become effective in its fight against crime.

We also hear statements made by members of the police service with respect to the enforcement of law and order on the picket line at Trinidad Cement Limited, and reminding people about the law dealing with the obstruction of passageway and the highway and so on, but let me remind that there are other laws as well related to workers on a picket line and many persons do not know about it. It is the old Trade Disputes and Protection of Property Act which was enacted on March 11, 1943. That Trade Disputes and Protection of Property Act, Chap. 88:03—I will read the particular clause in a moment—has a history.

You see, in 1932 when the first trade union ordinance was passed legalizing trade unions, it did not provide for peaceful picketing nor did it provide for immunity in tort. In other words, if an action was being taken by a union, an industrial action, and something happened to a plant or equipment or something like that, then without immunity the trade union could be identified as being culpable and held responsible for an act.

And Captain Arthur Andrew Cipriani who sought to have the trade union ordinance passed by the Legislative Council—he was a member of the Legislative Council which was the Parliament at the time—given the absence of those two protections in law, decided that the Trinidad Workingmen’s Association which he led would not be registered as a trade union, and instead changed its name to the Trinidad Labour Party.

It was only after the 1937 general strike that in 1943 the Trade Disputes and Protection of Property Act was passed and clause 3 says:

“It shall be lawful for one or more persons, acting on their own behalf or on behalf of a trade union or of an individual employer or firm in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute, to attend at or near a house or place where a person resides or works or carries on business or happens to be, if they so attend merely for the purpose of peacefully obtaining or communicating information, or of peacefully persuading any person to work or abstain from working; but nothing in this section shall be construed as conferring any legal right to enter or remain upon any land or premises.”

It may be good for people in this country like people in the media, editorial writers and members of the business community, when they make statements and so on to read Chap. 88:03, Trade Disputes and Protection of Property Act, “peaceful picketing”, and that the rights of citizens who are picketing are not infringed by the police, a minority of officers, because subsequent to that action at TCL, the officers had a different approach to the workers and so on. I just wanted to make that point that oftentimes a minority of officers engaged in activities that break down the trust and confidence of the citizens.

Mr. President, we also had in the recent few weeks—and, certainly, this arose subsequent to Sen. Hinds bringing this Motion and leading us off on debate on this Motion—in the public domain, the issue of the Police Service Commission and its performance appraisals of the Commissioner of Police and Deputy Commissioners of Police. I believe that matter may be before the court, so I do not intend to pursue it any further.

Suffice it to say, when important institutions of the State—and the Police Service Commission is an institution of the State; it is a creature of the Constitution of this country, and when there are public conflicts taking place between institutions and important positions such as the Commissioner of Police and his Deputy Commissioners and so on, then that too creates problems both internally in the police service and also in the public at large, and trust and confidence is eroded.

3.25 p.m.

Mr. President, when trust and confidence and morale are eroded within the police service, then things do not work well or as well as they ought to internally. Certainly in terms of the public trust and confidence, either in the police top brass or even with respect to the service commissions and so on, we run into problems; therefore it is very important that we address the issue of governance.

Breakdowns such as we have in terms of the ability of the police to ensure high conviction rates for persons or to solve murders, high conviction rates for serious crimes and the inability to deal with the violence, gangs and guns, are as a result of a general breakdown over a long period of time.

I want to refer us to the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago in the Preamble which says, *inter alia*:

“Whereas the People of Trinidad and Tobago—

(c) have asserted their belief in a democratic society in which all persons may, to the extent of their capacity, play some part in the institutions of the national life and thus develop and maintain due respect for lawfully constituted authority;...”

That is very important. In other words, if the nature of governance in our country over the 50 years of our independence—because governance did not start two years ago; we have had 50 years of independence—and the post-independence arrangements of power between those in office and citizens have not changed fundamentally, therefore ought to make citizens, as our Constitution affirms, play some part of the national life, to the extent of their capacity, if they are unable to play some part in the institutions of the national life, then our Constitution says that they will not have due respect for lawfully constituted authority.

One of the places where we are now is where many of our citizens do not have due respect for lawfully constituted authority, whether it be the police officer, whether it be the court system, whether it be the Parliament, whether it be the Government, whatever the institutions, we are at a moment of crisis. Clearly we have to address that issue. That is not a partisan issue; that is an issue for citizens of this country to say, “We are at a dangerous moment where, unless we fundamentally address the central question of governance in the society and create the mechanisms to enable persons to the extent of their capacity”—and our citizens have a tremendous capacity to contribute. We only have to go to a cricket game and listen to the politics there, or to a football game or in culture and so on—*[Interruption]*

It is not distracting to know what the score is, Senator. [*Laughter*] We are dealing with serious issues here; there is no intermission right now.

Wherever we go throughout the society, we are hearing our citizens talking about their alienation from the processes of governance. If that alienation continues, and they do not have due respect for lawfully constituted authority, then we are going to have crime and violence and the inability of the police service, regardless of how many vehicles they have, regardless of whether it is a 21st or 22nd Century initiative, whether the police stations open or not, regardless of all those things, if there is a breakdown in governance and people feel alienated and they do not feel part of institutions of national life, then they would lose respect for lawfully constituted authority. We are going to be in trouble.

Therefore we need to identify and see the manifestations of the problems that we have—those manifestations being crime and violence, those manifestations being a police service struggling to address those issues—and then say what those symptoms represent in terms of the underlying cause. If we do not address the underlying causes of the problem, then we would continue to be grappling without the kind of success that we require.

That takes me, Mr. President, to the issue of culture. I believe that we have had in the society, over a very long period of time, a culture of violence which is manifested in very many ways. It is not necessarily physical violence. It is not necessarily people being shot and killed or being stabbed and murdered, but we have a culture of violence often in terms of how we treat one with the other and the language we use. Sometimes it is “gran’ charge”. Trinidadians and Tobagonians have a culture of “gran’ charge”, but sometimes underlying that is a seriousness. It is how we treat our children—and I am sure my colleague, the hon. Verna St. Rose Greaves, if she is speaking, would address that far more eloquently and capably than I could—how we treat our elders, how we treat the women in our society, the most vulnerable.

If we treat them in ways that are abusive, then in fact what we are doing is creating a culture of violence. If we engage in environmental practices that degrade, if we damage our environment, if we are involved in actions small and large that result in disaster, then we are engaging in a culture of violence.

So the culture of violence is not one-dimensional in terms of physical violence, it is multi-dimensional. As a society, the manifestation of the physical violence and our inability to deal with it effectively are signs that something is wrong.

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Young people are being socialized differently now, not to be able to learn how to engage in conflict resolution one with the other. When most of us in this Chamber were growing up as young boys, we played games: football, cricket or whatever it was. But in those games we had to deal with conflict resolution. There was not necessarily an external umpire or referee. You had to deal with conflict and manage conflict, and deal with it in a way that your friends remain friends after the game, because there was an interaction and therefore a sense of solidarity that was being engendered.

Today young people play games against each other, via a computer screen or sometimes they even play with themselves on computers or other handheld devices. The kinds of cartoons and images that we have now are those where there is death and destruction. Years ago, Popeye would have hit Brutus a cuff, which was violence yes, but there was never serious injury or death, there was no finality to it. Now in the cartoons that one sees, there is finality or death. So young children can become quite oblivious to what death means and what that kind of violence means in terms of pain and distress.

In so many ways, Mr. President, the whole process of socialization and engagement one with the other has changed and has reinforced—[*Interruption*]

Sen. Hinds: [*Inaudible*]

Sen. D. Abdulah: You want to get into a discussion which we will discuss at the tea break? I will tell you how that could be resolved. It is far easier to deal with that than to deal with your own problems with the Mayor of Port of Spain.

Sen. Hinds: [*Inaudible*]

Sen. D. Abdulah: Sen. Hinds is trying to provoke me, but let me just say that I was up Laventille hill a couple of weeks ago, at upper Pashley Street, and the MSJ was very warmly received. We have some great support in upper Pashley Street. [*Desk thumping*] Certainly people recognize that the MSJ could do a lot more for the people of Laventille than the PNM ever did. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Hinds: Just now Ancil Roget will deal with you.

Sen. D. Abdulah: That was your former constituency. With the neglect of that area which you represented, you should be ashamed of yourself. [*Desk thumping*] Mr. President, there is the issue of the culture of violence. Sen. Hinds provoked me in a particular way, but the violence that unfortunately has come out of constituencies in the urban north of our country, that culture of violence, that development of violence, incidentally, quite coincidentally I suppose Sen. Hinds would say there is no correlation, are the constituencies which the PNM represented since Adam was a boy.

So when we look at that issue, we have to all ask ourselves, and you need to ask yourself the question, “What did I do right or wrong with respect to the development of those communities, which are so alienated, that section of society that has facilitated them getting into the kind of violence that they are in today?” [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Hinds, I think you need to ask yourself that question in a very serious way. I am not saying it in a way to score political points. I think it is a serious introspection which all of us in society must engage in, because if we do not engage in a serious introspection about where we are today, quite frankly we will not solve the problems that we have going forward. [*Interruption*]

Sen. Deyalsingh: Which constituency does the drug lords come from?

Sen. D. Abdulah: The issue is one of the culture of violence that we have to address, and the society needs to look at, examine, from the education system all the way up, “How do we ensure—[*Interruption*—how do we ensure that we—[*Interruption*]

Mr. President: Sen. Hinds, can we listen in peace and quiet?

Sen. D. Abdulah: Thank you, Mr. President. I think the operative word there is “peace”, because we are discussing the issue of trying to deal with crime and violence. [*Laughter*] [*Crosstalk*] The issue of the education system is equally important as we seek to deal with ensuring that the culture in our country is one of peace; one of relations which engender mutual respect one for the other, where we can have differences and disagree, but not get to the point where the resolution of differences and disagreements has to be done by way of violence.

Very importantly, coming back to the issue of the police service, we need to ensure that it internally functions and is managed in a way that engenders confidence and trust in the citizens of this country, and at the same time we are given the resources to enable them to function in an effective and efficient way.

With those words, Mr. President, I thank you.

Sen. Albert Sydney: Mr. President, I thank you for allowing me to contribute to the debate on the Motion:

“Be it resolved that is 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.”

The Trinidad and Tobago Police Service is one of oldest established institutions in Trinidad and Tobago, well moving on to nearly 300 years. It has faced many challenges throughout its existence.

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Several members have served with distinction the people of Trinidad and Tobago in the discharge and responsibilities of their duties. Some of them have also served as Members of this honourable Senate. There have been several negative factors contributing towards the effective management of the service.

3.40 p.m.

Abuse of powers and corruption have always been recurring factors. Several Commissioners over the years have been challenged by this fact.

We see the current challenges being faced by the current Commissioner in office. For the first time in our nation's history we have had a Commissioner who has been appointed by terms of contract after the job was advertised openly. I fear that this Commissioner is now beginning to find out that he was given the entire administration of the service on a silver platter, and now it appears that there are cracks in the platter, and he needs some silver polish to smoothen out the cracks. But will this solve the problem of efficiency within the service? He is finding out that is not so easy a job, but I honestly believe, that he has all good intentions.

Mr. President, I have serious concerns of—one instance I would want to contribute to the house of abuse of authority by members of the police service, which happens on a regular day-to-day basis, which a lot of citizens have experienced, is the fact that while law-abiding citizens are driving on roads, there are instances where motorists are pulled to the side of the road, in a rather abrupt and harsh manner, by occupants of unmarked vehicles with no flashing blue lights, with sirens or horns blaring, with very dark, almost with what appears to be illegal tint. Those officers must not be allowed to operate as though they are above the law.

I would very much like to see that this breach of abuse of authority be corrected by the office of the commissioner, and this point be rectified in their standing orders. Provision should be made for citizens to lodge complaints to the Commissioner's office, not to the Commissioner, but to the office of the Commissioner of Police, about such abuses, and that such officers who abuse this authority should be disciplined.

Mr. President, there is no doubt that there are many members of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service who are extremely committed and dedicated to their jobs. We cannot dispute that; whether they be full members of service or the Municipal Police or members of the Special Reserve Police, who incidentally are detailed for duty at this very honourable Senate.

Over the years there can be no doubt that various Governments have contributed significant amounts of funding from the Treasury to the police service. We have seen the physical improvement of many police stations throughout the country, as well as our sister isle in Tobago. Many of us will remember that some of them, many years ago, were in absolutely terrible and dilapidated conditions, throughout the entire country. So there has been much improvement to these installations. We see that the fleet of vehicles of the service has been very much upgraded, and the members of the service are in more comfort in the execution of their duties.

I note that Sen. Cudjoe, sometime ago, raised the question of the capability of the bomb squad and explosive disposal unit. I know for a fact that this Unit has been well-trained over the years with specialized overseas training, and they have performed many an explosive sweep right here in this Parliament. The Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs recently noted about the storage of explosives for the energy industry in Chaguaramas. I can state that the same bomb unit of the police service that has played a lead role in the modernization of those facilities down in Chaguaramas. I am sure that the hon. Minister of National Security will agree with that statement.

There have been many cases which have severely tested the strength of the police service; coming to mind have been the oil riots in 1937, in which the famous Corporal Charles King was killed. The disturbances of 1970—in fact I am sure that the Minister of National Security would very much remember those times, and that police officers on duty abandoned the police station in Carenage at that time; the attempted insurrection in 1990, where several members of the police service had died in the line of duty. The recent state of emergency also raises questions about the strengths and deficiencies of the police service. With the development of a nation always comes the problem of increased crime possibilities, which has always been a problem for our nation.

Mr. President, it is my hope that the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service will increase its potential to eliminate its deficiencies within the service and effectively deal with the crime problem faced by this country. There can be no doubt that the challenges of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service cannot be solved overnight. It cannot be solved overnight. I think that it is a collective effort, from not only the Government, but from all decent, law-abiding citizens of this beloved country. I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to contribute to this very important debate.

Hon. Senator: “Oh gosh doh read today, eh”.

Sen. Terance Baynes: Thank you, Mr. President, for another opportunity to contribute to another debate in this august House.

Sen. Deyalsingh: Well-drafted.

Sen. T. Baynes: This Motion as brought by Sen. Fitzgerald Hinds, that this honourable Senate take note of the strengths and the weaknesses of the police service, and how it impacts the fight on crime, dependent on where one stands in the woods, this Motion can be seen as either timely or untimely. Timely because crime is a major issue, a concern for us in this country at this point, or untimely because Sen. Hinds is a past junior Minister of National Security, [*Desk thumping*] and why I am saying that is because the same passion that we see displayed in this Senate, and particularly on this Motion, one wonders if that same passion was displayed then, how that may have affected the crime situation in Trinidad and Tobago at that point.

Hon. Senator: Strong point! Strong point!

Sen. T. Baynes: But, Mr. President, I will concede that this is a good Motion; I will concede that. [*Desk thumping*] As my colleague from Tobago, Sen. Isaac said, and I have always said in this Senate that I stand for truth, despite the distractions attempted by Sen. Hinds about who joins the UNC and all that story, I stand for truth, and when something is good, I say it is good, and the contribution of Sen. Isaac was a good contribution. [*Desk thumping*] Now, I do not agree with everything that he said, but the contribution itself was a good one. [*Crosstalk*]

You see, the shouting point of Sen. Isaac's contribution was that matter regarding the police stations and their closure, and he was presumptuous to suggest that, me being a Tobagonian, and I suspect that he is talking about Sen. Moheni, that we will attest to these facts. I do not just attest to things because somebody says it, I make sure and search out the entire issue, because there are always two sides to a story.

Hon. Senator: Yes, man.

Sen. T. Baynes: And when you get the two sides then you have a balanced view, and this is the point that must be made in this Senate [*Desk thumping*] because I made it my business—because you see, the way this was said and received, I wondered how I never heard that in Tobago.

Last week, if I am not mistaken, the Minister of National Security was in Tobago, and he goes there very regularly, one would think that the impact that Sen. Isaac suggested, and it is a fact that crime affects what we do in Tobago, that

the mode of the THA to be shouting about everything that is going wrong, and they can ascribe to the present Government, I am shocked that I did not hear that coming out from the PNM in Tobago. I am shocked, because this is a major issue, as far as the impression that we are given here today. I have never heard that before as a major issue in Tobago.

You know why? Because I enquired of the Minister of National Security, one, whether this matter is true, and it is indeed true [*Desk thumping*] as part of the 20th Century policing initiative, in that there are some stations that are closed in various Divisions, and the purpose for that is that out of these same stations are officers who are on the move constantly to provide better service. [*Desk thumping*] So the issue, Mr. President, is not whether we have nice buildings, it is whether the policing is effective.

Hon. Senator: Yes, man. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. T. Baynes: That is the issue! I know there is this perspective, and the attempt is to make it seem that the People's Partnership has brought gloom and doom to this country; that the crime problem started two years ago.

Mr. President, I just want to read an article I picked up done by Carmen Sanchez, "Cyber Divers News Network"

Sen. Hinds: "You is a cyber diver?"

Sen. T. Baynes: Mr. President, I am being distracted.

And I quote;

"with a steady rise—" This article was done in June 2009. —"in violent crime including an alarming increase in homicides, Trinidad and Tobago has overtaken Jamaica as the 'murder capital of the Caribbean'.

While homicides increase two percent in Jamaica in 2008, murder are up by a staggering 38 percent in Trinidad and Tobago."

Sen. Deyalsingh: Would the hon. Sen. give way, please?

Sen. T. Baynes: No, I am not giving way.

Sen. Hinds: Be courteous.

Hon. Senator: No way, no way, no way.

Sen. T. Baynes: Mr. President, I am being distracted by these honourable gentlemen, and I seek your protection.

Hon. Senator: Yes, from Sen. Hinds.

Sen. T. Baynes: Yes. Because I took your admonition the last time about “making copious notes” and so on, so I would not have to read too much. [Laughter] [Crosstalk] The point must be made that the crime problem did not begin two years ago; that point must be made.

3.55 p.m.

Though it may not be said in so many words, but the impression is given that this present Government is responsible for all the problems in Trinidad and Tobago.

Hon. Senator: Not all, most of it.

Sen. T. Baynes: And that is so wrong. You could “roll” with that? [Desk thumping and crosstalk] All I am simply saying, it would have been more useful, when Sen. Isaac made his contribution, to also say that the reason the stations were closed was because of this process, and I would not have any problem if he would have said, “well, based on the assessment it is not working”. I would have been much more comfortable with that, but just to suggest that there was a closure of the station and there is nothing happening as it relates to policing, to me, that is disingenuous. [Interruption]

Mr. President, I shall spend the rest of my time just treating pretty much with the shortcomings of the service and there are shortcomings as all of us agree. [Interruption] There is the issue of the lack of confidence and most of the speakers have talked about the lack of confidence in the service. This matter of lack of confidence did not really begin recently, that is something that has been with us a long time ago, and there are several reasons for that.

There are endless reasons that we can find for this lack of confidence, whether it is because there are rogue officers in the service and all those things. So, that is one of the problems and that is a problem that is being addressed as we speak. Because the understanding now is that policing is never effective if it is just left up to the police service only. This is the understanding. As Sen. Sydney just shared with us, the issue of crime and security is a responsibility that must be laid on the shoulder of all and sundry; all of us.

In Tobago we had a slogan some years ago, “You are safe when I am safe”. That came out of a programme that was initiated, actually, by the THA as we were looking at community security and so on, and understood that effective policing and effective security started in the communities. You know, strange enough,

after we did such great work, so many different stakeholders were brought on board to put this programme together, it never really got off the ground. The fact of the matter is, there is that understanding. So, we have the issue of the lack of confidence and, also, another problem is the alarming numbers of rogue officers which is a matter that is being addressed also.

There is also need for, perhaps, a greater detailed evaluation of the trainees that come out of the system. We find that the kind of commitment, it seems, that used to be there—and I am sure there are several reasons for that—seems to no longer be there. There are a number of people who go to the service briefly and use it as a transition place to go elsewhere. So, that is another issue.

Another one is the transportation matter. That is another deficiency. So, these are some that I can cite as deficiencies in the service, but we must also, while we look at the shortcomings, look at some of the strengths with the same kind of vigour. One of the strengths that I have written down here as the first one is a Minister of National Security who leads from the front. That is the first strength that I wrote on this paper. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Hinds: Which one?

Sen. T. Baynes: I need to say something, this Minister of National Security is always coming with some plan to improve safety and security in Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*] Always! Despite the criticism—and it is not an easy job. One wonders why our good friend, Sen. Hinds, being a former junior Minister in the Ministry of National Security—how come he was never senior?

Sen. Beckles: You do not always have to be senior.

Sen. T. Baynes: The point is, that is a very difficult job, and the Minister is constantly working and leading from the front and that must be said, and I think that is something that we must take notice of as a major strength in the police service.

The other thing that I deem to be a strength of the service is the willingness on the part of police officers to go beyond the call of duty to provide safety and security. It is unfortunate that—there are some vocations that you do not have the luxury of having just one bad one. For instance, vocations like the police service, like parliamentarians, like Ministers of the gospel or leaders of religion, there is no latitude for one bad one, because the reflection is that everybody is bad. So, one bad or one rogue police officer shines a bad light on the entire service unfortunately. One of the things that I am very encouraged about is the vigilance

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of this present Minister of National Security and his leadership to make sure that we try our best to treat with these rogue officers who are in the system, and we can see that is evident by the number of rogue officers who are brought to justice as long as they are found guilty of wrongdoing. I think that is also a strength.

The other thing that I think is a strength is the reintroduction of community policing, which really has—and I have seen that in the context of Tobago, how that has really helped in terms of safety and security in Tobago and it requires a lot of work. I believe one of my colleagues in a former debate talked about the relationship that existed between people and police then and what has happened since, and there has been a breakdown obviously, but we cannot just throw our hands up and sit idly by and do nothing. We have to do something to try to fix the breach, and there are constant efforts on the part of, under the leadership of this Minister, to make sure that we try to fix this breach so that we can improve the delivery of safety and security to our citizens.

The other thing is the introduction—and I am sure it has been frowned upon by some—of the 21st Century Policing. I do not know, I think the jury is still out as to whether or not or how effective it is or can be. One of the things is that maybe we have gotten so accustomed to the instantaneous syndrome that we want everything fixed now, but there are some of these problems that require a certain amount of time and assessment to see whether or not they are producing the kind of results that we want to see produced. So, I think this also is a strength, something that can benefit the police service.

Mr. President, I think it was Sen. Abdullah who was making the point a while ago, it is a thing that really has occupied my mind about the question of people who are engaged in criminal activity, the propensity of certain groups to engage in that activity, and what is the philosophy? What drives that? Those things have been with us for quite some time. While the Senator was talking I was saying, I still have a problem understanding that a lot of these communities have been predominantly supported by the former regime—predominantly, predominantly—and why there is this proliferation, when we look at the numbers, why is this?

I thought about this and it is a question that is in my mind and maybe we could ventilate that. I realize that when you are engaged in leadership, you can do one of two things. You can have the type of leadership that is autocratic or you can be liberal and decide to empower the people that you lead. If you empower the people that you lead, you run the risk of working yourself out of a job, because these people will develop, they will begin to think for themselves, they will not agree with you on some issues, they would have their own mind and all of that so, it is risky at times, that type of leadership.

One wonders, if in communities where it can be proven that giving information to make people be independent and independent thinking—because they may not agree with your political philosophy because they are now able to think for themselves is it in the best interest for a political organization or for a particular political leadership to empower people or to allow them to remain dependent? That is a question that is in my mind.

I would use a simple illustration. There was a senior gentleman who met a young boy with a cage of birds and he asked him, “Son, what are you going to do with these birds?” He said, “Sir, I am going to play with them and eventually I will kill them.” The gentleman said, “I want to buy these birds from you.” He said, “They are not worth anything much”, but he eventually bought the birds. He went up on a hill, opened the door of the cage and said to the birds, “You’re free.”

An interesting thing happened; the birds with the cage door wide open just would not come out of the cage. They had been in the cage so long that freedom was now available and they just would not come out, so the gentleman had to put his hand in the cage and bring them to freedom. I suspect that there are lots of individuals in this society who have been dependent on Government, dependent on leaders, dependent on representatives, that they need to be brought to the mountain top of hope and be shown a place of freedom and independence.

I say today, Mr. President, that this present Government, the People’s Partnership Government, in its mandate of serving people, one of the pillars of this service is to bring men and women in Trinidad and Tobago, especially those who are underprivileged and those who are in need, to a place of independence where they can move up to the mountain top of hope and have a future of development and expansion. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Deyalsingh: “All yuh hoping.” [*Holds up newspaper*]

Sen. T. Baynes: I want to say in conclusion that we have ventilated in this Senate extensively the strengths and weaknesses of the service. We have had different perspectives and so on, we have agreed on some things and we have disagreed on some things, but I would want to suggest that these strategies, when we implement them and if implemented, these are things that can impact the fight on crime in a very positive way.

The first one is this: we should encourage and support the Minister of National Security as he continues to give leadership over this service. [*Desk thumping*] The second one is that we must vigorously continue to focus on community policing, as we have seen it has been reintroduced in some of the

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divisions already, we must pursue that vigorously because we agree that effective policing can only be realized when there is a partnership between the police service and the communities. [*Desk thumping*]

4.10 p.m.

The third thing is that, we must investigate—this is critical, Mr. President—the social factors that contribute to criminality in this country. We must investigate this thoroughly, and when we find the solutions, implement them with dispatch. The next thing is, we must aspire to provide adequate transportation for the police service. And the final one is, rally the entire country in the fight against crime, getting the country to understand that safety is everybody’s responsibility.

Mr. President, I am convinced that we are on an upward path and I am convinced despite what has been said on the other side about the attempts to demonize the Government and all the negative things about the Government is this and that, I believe that we are on a positive path. We would not sit idly by. We realize that these days are days for strong governance, not necessarily popular governance. It would be idealistic if we could win a popularity contest in the sphere of governance, but we are not always popular. It requires strong governance and especially in this honourable Senate the words of Sen. Drayton stay in my mind, “That in this Senate we must pass good legislation, we must thoroughly ventilate all the issues and so on.”

I feel very privileged to be able to contribute to a debate as this and to say again that we must aspire to be balanced in what we present in this honourable Senate. That while there is a perspective that may be—let us say there is a PNM perspective, that is not the only perspective that exists, particularly in the context of Tobago. That is one of the things that I have harped on in this Senate even when Sen. Cudjoe speaks, I always say that that is a perspective of a certain group of people but it does not represent the entire voice of the people of Tobago, and there must be balance. [*Desk thumping*]

And so, Mr. President, I would want to say that we are well on the way to improving safety and security in Trinidad and Tobago. We are not where we would like to be but certainly we have decided—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Senator: We are not where we were.

Sen. T. Baynes: That is right, we are not where we were. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. President, on that note I would just want to say thank you for the opportunity.

The Minister of Gender, Youth and Child Development (Sen. the Hon. Verna St. Rose Greaves): Thank you, Mr. President, and a pleasant good afternoon to the national community and all Members in the Senate. Before I begin to speak on the Motion, I want to say to the two young men in this Chamber today, Sen. Kevin Ramnarine and Sen. Deon Isaac, I feel extremely proud of them today. I think that when Sen. Ramnarine was being ribbed he never fell into getting into a squabble. He has represented himself well—[*Desk thumping*] and Sen. Deon Isaac, I remember my mother had a thing, and older people would say when your children do you proud, “Yuh raise meh nose”. Yeah, it had a lot of connotations about that raising of the nose, but that is how I felt this afternoon. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Beckles: That is the balance, Sen. Baynes, of which you speak.

Sen. Baynes: I have no problem with that.

Sen. The Hon. V. St. Rose-Greaves: I want to caution them, however, that you see people like me, my age group, sometimes they do not like to see you all present the way that you do. It is easy for you to fall into some of our behaviour, sometimes. [*Desk thumping*] So I just want to say that when we are talking about new politics and we are talking about doing things differently, it rests on the younger people to really reach that stage like us. So thank you very, very much. [*Desk thumping*]

“The strengths and deficiencies of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and its impact and potential in the fight against crime”, for me policing has always been a noble profession. I have always seen it as a noble profession in spite of all the things that we have been experiencing. All the things that we say sometimes and all the bad experiences that we may have, I continue to see it as a noble profession. The police put themselves in harm’s way very often to protect us. They provide a feeling of safety no matter what we think of them. Because in spite of everything that we say about them, if something should happen to us, after we bawl “Oh God” the next thing is “Police”. And for some reason we continue to depend on them to afford us that protection and that feeling of safety and security. For many of us the challenges are very easily identified.

I sat here for the past several weeks, and we have been talking about the challenges. On one sitting, not the one before this, the one before that, the “ticker tape” on the Parliament Channel said, “the deficiencies”. There was nothing about the strengths. It just talked about deficiencies, because I think we were so much involved in pointing out all that was wrong and that was important for us to do.

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Because I see we have come to a point now where we have gone through the deficiencies and we are now willing to see what the strengths are. For me a strengths approach demands that we do that, that we acknowledge the challenges but we see the strengths, and we take the strengths and see how we can use them to help us to treat with some of those challenges that we have.

So we have talked about the corruption, the racism, police killings, torture, abuse, people dying while in police custody, the police as perpetrators of violence, and in the newspapers—I mean on any given day the newspapers would tell us a story—today’s newspaper for instance, stories about things that police do, some of them are horrible and must be condemned. We are not saying that we are dealing with “saints and angels” here. There are people who do bad things and we must condemn them. But we cannot take a brush and just wipe out the group.

We all have stories about police. We know of George Daniel and the Disabled Peoples International, who were beaten by the police, he was thrown from his wheelchair and he survived that. Those of us who previously mentioned who came through the 1970s and those of us who understand the struggles of 1937, we know what police can do. As a matter of fact, there was a song that spoke to, “Do you know what police can do” and we are very much aware of some of those things, but we must continue to understand that that is not a majority.

We talked about some things that police do and I want to remind us that we cannot look at the police without looking at our society. The police service is a microcosm of this society. Where do our police officers come from? They come from our homes, from our villages, from our communities. They are our sons and our daughters. Very often in one house you have one son or daughter who is a police officer, and one son or daughter who is on the other side of the law. How do we manage those situations? The things that the police do—I know that we have had some videos recently showing police officers breaking down a door, kicking down somebody, beating people at the Panorama and so on, and I can tell you that is who we are as a society.

There is not one place in the society where I can go, in any one gathering or room where there are not one or two people whom I can identify who have either beaten up somebody, beaten their wife, break down their children’s door or done something like that. I want us to always remember that when we are treating with these issues we have to take a look at ourselves as a society. So I was very happy when people were talking about socialization, how we are socialized and how we socialize our children and so on, because it would give us a lot of insights into who we are.

Mr. President, the question of violence is something that we must pay some serious attention to. We talked about it a lot, but I wonder very often if we are really serious about it. While we are talking about challenges, inefficiencies and so on, we also have to look at the conditions of work for police officers, the state of police stations over the years. Police officers have had to live almost in dilapidated police stations, pigeon droppings, rats, collapsing floors, furniture that is eaten by woodworms and termites and so on. And we have to understand people's condition of work has a lot to do with their performance; the tool for the trade has a lot to do with their performance. So we have to try to look at this thing in a more wholesome manner to see how one thing connects with the other and drives the other.

We have to treat with issues of risk. "Which one of us, getting up out of our beds to go out there and face gunmen with bullet-proof vest that perhaps not of the quality that the gunmen have, with weapons not of the quality sometimes that the gunmen have?" What of the conditions that we over the years have put in place in terms of injury, in terms of health care, in terms of compensation, not just for the officers but also for their families? What about the communities that they come from? How do they put their communities at risk by simply residing there?

We have had a lot of instances where police officers have had to leave their family homes and go to live outside of the district because they saw themselves being at risk. Those are the things that we have to focus on. Again, I am suggesting that very often we get caught up in what we lack, what is bad and we do not see what to use, what we have to strengthen our position, and that is what a strength approach is about.

A strengths approach is about acknowledging and respecting people and their intrinsic worth, what they bring to the table, their capacity, their rights, their personality, how do they function in their jobs; a strengths approach talks about collaboration, sharing of information and skills, team work, decision making, a sense of hope.

How do we give a sense of hope? We are all down in a hole sometimes when we talk about the police almost as if, well, we have no hope, they are not going to do anything. How do we give a sense of hope in terms of people understanding that we must take an approach of possibilities that we can do the job if we understand what we want to get done? How we are going to do it so that we do it in ways that are collaborative, supportive and forward looking with forward thinking, with motivation and a sense of power? Not the power that many of us think that we have—power over, power to abuse, power to do what we want, power that releases the innate things in us, the possibilities in us, so that we can treat with the problems that are before us.

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One of the good examples for me of community policing is the question of domestic violence. For many years in this country if a man and a woman have a “fallout”—if there is a domestic violence matter and you go to police station they would tell you that is “man and woman business”, they “ent” business with that. Very often women would think that their reports were taken; the reports would not have been taken. We have seen over the years that training has been done. The police has been engaged and the women’s organizations, CAFRA and working women, the Network of NGOs, worked with the police to train the officers to make them sensitive and aware of some of these issues and that they came on board and we saw a community policing vision established which was functioning.

We saw an increase in reports, an increase in prosecutions, an increase in people now willing to stand up and say, “I am a victim of abuse. This is happening to me and I want help.” Because they knew that the police, the men and the women—we saw the involvement of more female police officers doing that kind of work, and for some reason we no longer have that unit. What we have now, we talk about, is a philosophy of community policing.

4.25 p.m.

To be very honest, the community policing unit and division is something that I truly believe needs to be revisited and to seek to reinstitutionalize it because it did make a difference, and I am certain it will continue to make a difference. If you have to treat with communities, if you want to get people to be on a friendlier basis, a more respectful and supportive basis with the police, there is a particular approach that we have taken already that has worked for us and I see no reason why we cannot try to see how we can make it function again.

The police service has a history of about 200 years. It is an institution. We have over 7,000 officers, men and women. We have moved from one in 10 women, I think to now two or three in 10 in the service. We have things over the years that have worked for us. The police band is a gem, I think, and over the years we saw them go into communities and do lots of work in terms of bringing communities together, and those are things that we can explore. [*Desk thumping*]

When the police youth clubs started, I was not very supportive in a particular way, because I have always been very afraid of the militarization of our country. I was afraid that the young people would be influenced to be more not, you know, not just militant, because militancy is good, but it is something about it that—it is the way that we want to harden our young people sometimes, because we see them—especially the young men—as if they are too soft and they are not strong.

So I have always had that kind of challenge. But one of the things I have to admire—and I think we have to pay homage to the people who stuck with the police youth clubs—is that they were committed; they never gave up; they did what a lot of people did not want to do or could not be bothered with. We had people like Enid Reid many years ago; Sheila Prince in the Beetham, Charbody now in Diego Martin; Winston Cooper, and so many police officers who just gave and gave and gave of themselves in a time when that was so sorely needed. [*Desk thumping*]

We have seen SRPs move from being called something resembling police to full absorption into the police service, getting respect and feeling more confident in themselves, and playing a part in the society that has assisted all of us. We know now that the police have more research and data collection so that we can get statistics more easily than we did some years ago. We see that they disseminate public information on an ongoing basis, until sometimes we “steups” when we see them on the television again. But that is good, because they are communicating with us and we are getting to know what is happening.

We have also seen that previously when you went to the police station and when you thought that you had made a report, there was no report recorded. We saw over time that they now have to issue a receipt to persons, so that you are sure that your matter has been recorded. That is growth.

I just want to share a story—and sometimes when I share these stories people get into a quarrel that I am making them up. I do not have to make up stories. My life’s work has given me sufficient stories to demonstrate. Several years ago as a social worker in the government service, a young girl about eight was brought to us, because she was being sexually abused by her father since she was age three or four. The story of that child was so bad and so horrific that she eventually started talking to the post; talking to the shower curtain; talking to the bushes, because there was little or no resolution to her matter.

The police went to that child to take evidence and information no less than five times; different groups of police officers. And I was horrified, because I could not understand why they would be putting this little girl to relive this horror over and over and over and kept saying that they have lost the file or they had misplaced it.

After some thinking and some talking, I came to recognize that the problem was that they really did not know, and that is a critical thing for us to think about. We have a lot of people doing things and we are judging them without understanding that sometimes they do not have the information that they need; the know-how, the tools to do the job that they want to do.

That takes us into training. It was mentioned before about the importance—

Mr. President: At this point, Senator—it is now 4.30 p.m.—I propose to take the tea break at this point, but before we proceed, I would like to congratulate Sen. Sydney on his maiden contribution. [*Desk thumping*]

This Senate will be suspended for tea until 5.00 p.m.

4.30 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

5.00p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Mr. President: Senators, before the break, Sen. St. Rose Greaves was on her legs. By my calculation she has another 28 minutes of original time.

Sen. The Hon. V. St. Rose Greaves: Thank you, Mr. President. I was at the point of speaking to the issue of training and that sometimes people do not do things in the way that they need to be done because they simply do not know, and it is unfortunate that we expect of people things that they do not have the capacity to deliver.

So, on the point of training, I believe in the power to change through training, and I think that in terms of recruitment in the police service we get our police officers young. It is between 18 and 35, if I am not mistaken, and I think they are still at a time when we can infuse in them some of the qualities that we want to see in our police officers. That does not take away the importance of infusing some of those qualities in our children from very young, the basic things of respect for self and each other and so on, and how our police officers are trained. We have to treat with the curriculum.

I know that many years ago—I do not know whether it is still the same way—we complained about police officers who shoot to kill, but the baton, or whatever it was, the first prize was usually given to the best marksman. I think that was what they called it. But whatever it was, the target that you were shooting at, you had to shoot at a particular point in the body which did not speak to maiming or taking somebody out of action without killing that person.

I think those are some of the things we have to look at. How do we train people so that we do not go for the jugular, in terms of we are shooting to kill or we are using excessive force.

We train them; we spend a lot of energy teaching them how to march well. I mean, our police officers are great in terms of parades; how to shine their shoes; how to make their beds, but we have to go somewhere else in terms of putting some of that effort to help them to think, to reason, to negotiate from very early. It

must become part of what they do, as second nature; to develop their psychomotor skills; to help them to think on their feet so that at a moment's notice and in a crisis, they know automatically what should be done, and done in ways that would not cause harm to themselves or unnecessary harm to others.

We have to treat with the issue of self. This is something that I recommend not only for the police service but for all of us; that whole question of knowing self; building self; "Who am I? Who am I in a particular context and what is required of me? How do I treat with this situation in terms of the context that I am standing in?" You find that if you know who you are, then you do not have to stoop for anybody to stand. You do not feel threatened by anybody else's advancement. People can hurl slurs at you; they can tell you whatever they want, you know who you are and you stand firm in that so you do not feel less than.

We have to deal with a major challenge that we have. That whole question of ego and arrogance, the emotional centre of so many of us needs to be strengthened and to be developed so that we do not lash out; we do not think that it is win or lose; that we can reach for win-win situations. We have to train to build competencies. We think that people know how to do things, but we have to realize that sometimes in training we even have to give people the language, the words, that they must use in a particular situation.

I have seen it happen when we try to train parents in terms of how to treat with their children. We would tell them, "Tell the child not to do this", but you do not tell them how. We tell parents, "Teach your children about sex", but we do not tell them how; we do not give them the language. So that we grow up in a society where we tell people a lot of what not to do—"Don't, don't, don't"—but we do not tell them what to do. So our training must take on a face and a direction that speaks to that.

We are bringing legislation, and we have had legislation passed: DNA; Anti-gang; child abduction; protection of children, and so many other things coming with it, and we have to develop the competencies so that the police officers can feel comfortable in terms of treating with the aspects of the legislation that would come before them.

Training must be improved. I cannot overstress that, and officers must be given greater access to training, not just at home but, certainly, wherever the training could be available and where the needs are. In the public service we know that very often we do not do the targeted training even in terms of university. Where do we need specialist areas? Somebody talked about specialist training. We must have areas where people get specialist training.

I know over the years there was a place called the Joint Services Staff College that, as far as I can remember, was doing some good work. I am thinking that there are things that sometimes we must revisit, even if it means that we change it, we add or we shift. But we seem sometimes to have things working and simply because it, perhaps, is not of us, or it is somebody else's idea, we feel that we must do away with it rather than tweak it; see what can work; how we can improve on it, because in the long run who would benefit or not benefit are the nationals and citizens of this country.

We must treat with the issues of ethical conduct, and we cannot overstate the question of trust; how do we rebuild trust. This is one of the things you hear all day, every day on the call-in programme in any conversation: We do not trust the police; we cannot trust the police. Trust is not an easy thing to rebuild. When people lose trust, it is a dedicated process, a number of things have to be done in a methodical manner to try to rebuild that trust, and we have to try to do that. There is a science and there is an art to these things, and we have to learn how to get the science and merge it with the art so that we can get the impact that we want.

My major area of concern, however, is about the care for police officers. I think if we examine the budgets of the past, and even in the present, even the agenda for change which supports the 21st Century Policing, we would see money being assigned for guns, tools, hardware, software, cars, belts and all kinds of tools, but when you look at the budget in terms of care for the officers, it is usually a very small portion of the budget, and I think that is a shame for all of us in this country.

Police officers are out there putting their lives on the line. They leave their families. They want support. Even in cases where someone may be killed, they are the ones who have to go to treat with this person; with the dead bodies. We know that we have police killings and so on. What is the debriefing that is done for them? What kind of care are they afforded?

I have heard senior officers in the Government service over the years boasting about how much money they have sent back at the end of the budgetary cycle, and when I asked, "Well, what was this money for?" "Well, that was for counselling, support and rehabilitation and health for the police officers." "Why have you sent it back? You want to tell me that you could not find officers who would go for this treatment that they need to get?"

Sen. Deyalsingh: It is a macho thing.

Sen. The Hon. V. St. Rose Greaves: No, there are officers who are willing, but people just do not care enough to ensure that they go. And it is a lot of places. It is something we have to look at. The question of mental wellness, you have people carrying guns and meeting people in the streets carrying guns, and yet we are not doing the psychological assessments. We want to do—which is the test that we do when you are telling lies?

Hon. Senators: Polygraph.

Sen. The Hon. V. St. Rose Greaves: The polygraph test. We focus on polygraph tests, but we are not talking about psychological testing in terms of finding out where someone is; how they are feeling; how things are affecting them. [*Interruption*] But there is not enough of it.

5.10 p.m.

The police service of 7,000 people at one time for a long time had two social workers—two social workers who themselves a lot of the time were in need of care, because they had to deal with so many issues on an ongoing basis. That number has been improved. I think we are probably between seven and 10—but, for 7,000 officers. So, we need to have social workers and psychologists attached to the police service, so that people can be debriefed, their families can be supported and they can be helped in the way that they need to have that help and support. I think that we must treat with some of those issues or else we would be literally spinning top in mud.

I want to talk about change management for a bit, because I think the 21st Century Policing has a little bit to do with how we manage change. For many years, we have complained about poor service delivery of the police service, we have complained about low visibility or no visibility, slow or no response, discourteous officers, et cetera.

Mr. President, 21st Century Policing from my observation—I had my own concerns very early—it started in the Western Division first. I think for a lot of people, while it was going on, people were not even aware that it had started. I had my concerns and I talked to a lot of people. I talked to police officers. I talked to people in the communities. I questioned—I was worried when I heard that police stations were going to be closed. Because, I know, particularly in the context of family violence, many nights if something should happen to a woman and she has to flee with her children, or somebody in her household has to flee, the first place they would head is to the police station.

So, I was very disturbed and I asked a lot of questions about that. Then when I was told that police officers would be on the street, they would be deployed, they would be in their vehicles, I was even a little more concerned. Because, I said, I wonder if we realize the fire power that is out there and perhaps we are making sitting ducks of our police officers.

Some of the police posts were closed. I am actively pursuing whether they would hand over those to us at my Ministry, because the police cannot work alone. So, we need to deal with the social aspects and the support aspects and so on. I have come around in terms of understanding the 21st Century Policing, and I think, that one of the things we have to do sometimes with new projects or programmes, we need to give it a chance. Sometimes we do not give things a chance.

I understand the situation of Tobago. Tobago has its own peculiarities in terms of geography and in terms of culture and so on. And, yes, we have to be very careful that we do not do things in Tobago as we would do in any other place. Each community has its own dynamics and sometimes we have to keep that in mind. But, I would ask and urge that we give 21st Century Policing a chance. Let us say what we are not comfortable with, let us say what are the things we think we should improve on, but I think that very often we do not do that.

For me, 21st Century policing increases the visibility and active deployment that allows for a conscious and continuous presence in the streets and communities. It says that it helps with work/life balance of the officers which is very important. Because, a lot of officers do not have sufficient time to spend with their families and so on. So, I think that we have to treat with that and we have to give things a chance to develop.

I want to say here and I want to say it firmly, I stand firmly in support of the Commissioner of Police and the management of the police service. [*Desk thumping*] I think that when you have people leading an organization like the police, you consider it a bird in the hand. I think it is an asset. I think that what we are seeing, perhaps, is some transformational leadership. We have people who are sensitive to issues of human rights and who are very aware of the need for accountability. And therefore, you must get some resistance when you come to ask people to account in any situation of change.

I do not know how Commissioner of Police Dwayne Gibbs survives with the things that are said to him, of him and about him. I think that we are very cruel sometimes with people who are out there doing service, working for us and so on,

the things we say about people, the ways that we say them. We understand that in the age of technology, when you are finished beating up on somebody here, all over the world you have tarnished that person. And, if that person has to look for employment it would colour—it would certainly colour what they have to say or what people would think about them and how they would be assessed.

Many of our comments in the media from the talk shows and so on can be deemed xenophobic, racist and judgmental. I think we have to come to terms with those things. We undermine the respect when we castigate and demean someone who holds high office. We have someone to whom thousands of officers have to look up to, but, we say all kinds of things about them; we disrespect them, we delve into their personalities and their personal life and we really do not think about the consequences of those things.

We have to come to a place where it does not only apply to Commissioner of Police Dwayne Gibbs or Deputy Commissioner Jack Ewatski, it must apply to all of us; that we cannot, just to score points or to make a point, say things about people in the horrible ways that we do. If they are doing something wrong, by all means. But, we have to draw the line somewhere. I think it is unfortunate that you should have the head of the police service being disrespected over and over and over, without sound evidence.

We have had, over the years, 10 local Commissioners of Police, and, I think that is over 40 years. The longest that we have had one was nine years. I just want to go down the list quickly here. We had Commissioner of Police Francis Eustace Bernard. He was the first local appointee, 1970—1973, three years; Commissioner of Police May 1973—1978, five years; Commissioner of Police Burroughs—he is the longest, nine years; Commissioner Rodriguez, 1987—1990, three years; Commissioner of Police Jules Bernard, 1990—1996, six years; Commissioner of Police Noor Kennedy Mohammed, 1996—1998, two years; Commissioner of Police Guy, 1998-2003, five years; Commissioner of Police Everald Snaggs, 2003—2004, Commissioner of Police Paul, 2004—2008; and Commissioner James Philbert, who had existed in a state of uncertainty; four extensions and after 35 years of service, he was there from 2008—2010.

I want us to think about that. Let us do some examination of how the Commissioners of Police performed in the context of how long they stayed. What were some of the things that were good that they did? How do we carry over those things to some of the things that were successful and that we want to do?

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I want to read from this book by Commissioner of Police Jules Bernard, *Against the Odds*. And, Chief Justice Sir Issac Hyatali, who wrote the Foreword for this book, he was talking about some of the things that Commissioner of Police Bernard said when he started and when he ended. Mr. President, please bear with me, I have to do a couple of these readings because I think it is important for us and for the national community to remember some of these things:

As police officers we must loyally serve the government of the day, which has been elected by the free will of the people. In the course of our careers as policemen we will see the election of several such governments. Each new government must, however, take office with the assurance of our loyalty. Remember governments come and go, but the police service goes on.

I want us to hear what he said:

We in the police service must leave politics to the politician. If we were to indulge in politics either individually or as a service, we compromise ourselves, make the service suspect and render ourselves unfit to carry out impartially directives which are not consonant with our own beliefs. We therefore must restrict our political activities as much as possible to the exercise of our vote.

Then on another occasion here, no Minister he said, can tell him—and this is a point that he was making. The point made by Lord Denning was that the police officer in the matter of prosecuting suspected persons and enforcing the law is not the servant of anyone save the law itself. And, I quote:

No Minister—he said—can tell him that he must or must not prosecute this man or that one, nor can any police authority tell him so. The responsibility of law enforcement lies on him and he is to be answerable to the law and to the law alone.

I want us to think on some of these things.

When he was leaving the service his farewell to the service, part of his speech said:

I held it to be the duty of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis as it is of every chief constable to enforce the law of the land. He must decide whether or not suspected persons are to be prosecuted and if need be bring the prosecution or see that it is brought.

I want perhaps for us sometime to delve into some of the history of the police service, some of the things that have happened, some of the times when people have interfered, some of the times when perhaps the police service was at its lowest and how they managed to come out of that. I think if we are to treat with crime, if we are to treat with crime fighting, if we are to ensure that we get the police service that would help us to treat with some of these things, that would truly protect and serve with pride, we must take an approach that deals with lots of other issues in the society. Not just crime and violence, but, certainly issues of culture, issues of behaviour, issues of how we socialize our children, how we ourselves behave; what are the things that we do, what are the things that are important to us, what are the things that we teach in our schools.

I am again asking all of us, let us understand that crime as we have all been saying and we all acknowledge, is not new, it has come over time. It is all over the world. We live in a world where we have migration to and from. We have all kinds of things to deal with. And therefore, let us open our minds, let us look for the answers wherever they might be, let us revisit some of what we have done, let us use our indigenous knowledge and our experiences and let us see if we gain small successes and try to build on them and hold people accountable. It is critical and it is important for us to hold people accountable. If people know that they can get away with things that they do, then they would continue to do them.

We must treat with issues of the Judiciary. We must deal with the issue of the politics. There are so many things that we have to do. But, we have to be consistent, we have to be committed. I want to say that we have to develop processes which would be beyond reproach. That does not say that mistakes would not be made. We must acknowledge those mistakes and we must seek to see how we can do better.

Recently, for International Women's Day a group of police officers, female police officers, came to me and they were talking about the incidents of sexual harassment in the workplace, which they are working on, and on which I have agreed to work with them. But, that also means that we have to do a lot of sensitization in terms of gender relationships in the workplace, people's rights and so on, and what are the things that we have to put inside of there and how do we manage our relationships as men and women, as women and women, as police officers and the public, as police officers among themselves.

Mr. President, as I end, I want to say to the members of the Spiritual Shouter Baptist community, heartfelt greetings and best wishes as they commemorate their holiday.

5.25 p.m.

I also want to commend and congratulate Sen. Barbara Gray-Burke. I know that she is about to open the first phase of the school, and again, I am going to put on offer my services to assist with the development of the curriculum and whatever else needs to be done so that we can get the best for the institution.

Mr. President, this is a huge job. This Motion has taken a great deal of time for us to discuss, and many things have been said, and I want us to take those things seriously. I want us to continue to do the analysis, continue to treat with the issues in ways that would bring some success. We know that we have challenges, huge challenges in this society, and we would be foolish to tell ourselves that we do not. But, let us look for some of the strengths. We are good people. There are people out there who are willing to help. We have talent in this country that we have not even begun to tap into. Let us tap into those talents, let us acknowledge our strengths and let us use those strengths to help us to deal with some of these very, very serious challenges. I thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Archbishop Barbara Gray-Burke: Thank you, Mr. President. I rise to join this debate, something very close to my heart, and I want to speak about it this afternoon. This afternoon, we, the Spiritual Shouter Baptists, want to say that we are thankful to God firstly, and thankful to our brothers and sisters of the Partnership. I call them brothers and sisters of the Partnership. I want to say that we obtained a gift; that gift of our first primary school. [*Desk thumping*] Nowhere throughout the world do they have a shouter primary school. Why is it so dear to our hearts? It is because this was the group that was outlawed in 1917 and banned. They deemed us an outcast because, just for serving God, they did not understand our way of worship, so they outlawed and banned us. No government seemed to appreciate us. But, the Partnership—United National Congress also gave a parcel of land and a national holiday to commemorate those who have gone before, our ancestors who were beaten and imprisoned. I want to say here, this afternoon, thanks to the hon. Prime Minister, Kamla Persad-Bissessar SC, and my brothers and sisters of the People's Partnership. [*Desk thumping*]

Fourteen years—it might sound, you know, why I said thanks to her. For fourteen years, we have been pleading to my other brothers and sisters of the PNM for a primary school and they never looked at us. They fooled us and did not give it to us, but this is why I greeted firstly with thank God. They never gave it to us. But, I and many others want to use this primary school to see if it can deal with the youths. We are certain the youths—because we have a lot of misdirected—have no direction where they are going so we have already lost a generation. So,

for this cause, we are going to use this school effectively to keep the young ones from five—we are going to groom them, from five years until they meet common entrance, that a life of crime does not pay. We do not want them—the school is in Maloney and we are going to try to broaden the outlook throughout the East/West Corridor because we cannot afford to lose another generation. [*Desk thumping*]

I want to say, Mr. President, that I will be discussing with the hon. Dr. Tim Gopeesingh and my tertiary brother here, Sen. The Hon. Fazal Karim, about getting into the curriculum, whether it is swahili or some form of African language. Because when you travel out, you are unable to communicate, or even now, as your African brothers are coming into the country, you do not have your own language even though we are in Trinidad and we have English. If the East Indian man goes to India, he can communicate; if the Chinese man goes to China, he can communicate; we cannot communicate with our brothers.

Sometimes we are seeing trouble to understand what our African brothers are saying to us. So this is one of the things that I am aspiring and hoping and trusting in the same God that delivered us, the same God will help us to get that on the curriculum. So we are able to transform because the young people—I sometimes go on the block and talk to them, wanting to know why they are involved in crime. Sen. Hinds—I am calling him brother Hinds—knows that sometimes we do try to curb those youths who have no direction in Laventille.

Hon. Senator: Yeah, right!

Sen. Archbishop B. Gray-Burke: I want to tell you that sometimes they are looking for their roots. They would go by Orisha and they are looking and digging and searching because they cannot identify who they are. But, if they were educated in a particular way that they could communicate with their African brothers—that is why they are taking all kinds of different names and they are going and joining—when the black power came out, many of the youths gravitated to the black power. It is because they were seeking their identity. I think it is time now that we should be able to identify who they are and what they are about to do.

I want to say here, the EFCL are very hardworking people. I want to tell you that I worked very closely with them and I want to give them some praise in this Senate. There is a lady there called Ms. Cheryl Simmons, (Project), and that lady made my heart—sometimes tears come through—all on the building climbing up, and I heard that they were giving the EFCL some thunder in here. I want to tell you that I have worked closely with those people and those people need to be commended. These are the things. We are not only to bash people and only talk about the wrong, this bad and that bad; we have to commend them too.

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These people at the EFCL are very, very hardworking people and I want to say thanks to them also because the school was started in December, and the first phase is completed, furniture and everything; it is just to go. The second phase is almost completed. Schools, we know, take nine months, take a year, to be completed but this just took a mere two months and this is commendable. Dr. Tim Gopeesingh took an interest, himself and Hon. Clifton De Coteau. These men need commending publicly. [*Desk thumping*] When people—[*Interruption*] I beg your pardon?

Sen. Hinds: Just say that they were in the Cabinet which send the police to lock up the same people you are fighting for.

Sen. Archbishop B. Gray-Burke: No, no, these people—I am not fighting for them. I have worked alongside them in the building of the St. Barbara's Primary School. I want to tell you that I saw the work they put out and I watched them day and night. They worked to make sure that everything was a success, and I want to say thanks to them.

Mr. President, we are going to celebrate on Friday, March 30, and I want to tell you that the hon. Prime Minister will be there to cut the ribbon, unveil the statue, and give us a heartfelt—a joy, make us feel as somebody in this country. We were born here, “we grow here” and we do not have any parent body anywhere. We are indigenous but yet we were treated as second class in this, our beautiful country of our birth. Since the Prime Minister could have given us that assurance, gave us that dignity, I want to say hats off to the partnership. [*Desk thumping*] The partnership will grow from strength to strength. It will have little hiccups but it is going to grow from strength to strength because the prayers of the faithful availit much.

I want to tell this Senate this afternoon, do you know that years upon years, the congress never celebrated with us? They celebrated “so” and we celebrated “so”. It seems to me like the PNM used to tell them do not come and celebrate. You know, “since the PNM out of office; they are celebrating with us on Friday. God bless! I feel good because it was for years we were hoping for that type of unity and it was not coming because Mr. Panday—“Dey saying dey is PNM and dey saying that I am in the UNC and dey would not celebrate with us.” This year they are here to celebrate with us because the PNM is out. Thank God! God bless! So we have the unity now. It starts now with the school. Thank you, Mr. President. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. Fitzgerald Hinds: Thank you very much. Mr. President, the Motion that is before the Senate has been rehearsed, the text of it has been rehearsed on diverse occasions thus far and there is no need for me to do so again.

I want, before I address some of the matters that I propose to, to just recall some of the contribution of Sen. Terrance Baynes who urged this Senate, looking at us on the Front Bench, to give support to the Minister of National Security and the Government as it treats with the question of crime. I agree with him and we are looking forward to giving support. In so doing, he reminded me of a calypsonian, a rasta brother by the name of Brother Musa, who has a beautiful song he rendered in 2012 entitled “Meh finger”. I want to give support, of course, with “meh finger” at the first opportunity. “Meh finger” is waiting to give support to Mr. Brigadier and the Government for the management of this country.

The Senator also said—and I did not smile when I said that; I am waiting, according to Brother Musa, and thousands and thousands of people out there are waiting to give support to Trinidad and Tobago with their finger.

Sen. Baynes also told us that the country, and I am quoting him, “was on an upward path”. Sen. Burke just told us that the partnership is solid and going well. Obviously, she was too busy preparing her speech today to have read the *Trinidad Guardian* where the Chairman of one of the partners, the second in the line of partners in the coalition, describes it as fragile.

I just want to quote him briefly before I get into the matter. He said—that is Mr. Joseph Toney, the Chairman of the COP, painfully expressing the pain and the angst of the thousands of people who foolishly and blindly joined up with the UNC thinking that it might make some contribution to new politics. But we know, no leopard “does” change its spots, whether it was yellow or orange, “it eh changing.” We know the UNC Government. Hear what he had to say. Belatedly he would discover this:

“As far as I am concerned, at this point in time the People’s Partnership is a fragile entity, given the developments that took place last week,...

His call comes in the wake of demands from another member party of the PP Government, the Movement for Social Justice...”

Sen. Abdullah who spoke earlier.

“for a leadership meeting to ensure there is cohesion in the work of the Government.”

5.40 p.m.

He went on to say:

“There have been some distrust created and we have to erase that if we are to gel and go forward.”

While Sen. Burke and Sen. Baynes speak so gleefully about the solidity of the partnership, the reality is quite different but I wish you well. I know that it was stuck with saliva, and that is not a secure bond.

Mr. President, not wanting to be distracted by the business of the partnership I am not too concerned. I have listened to Sen. Baynes in this Parliament before and he spoke about all the issues and police being ventilated. As he used the word “ventilated” I thought of Tobago and I thought of Hurricane Flora. There was a lot of sound and fury from him today. He huffed and puffed. If that was in Tobago, it is worse than Flora. He caused trouble. He told us, after all of the huffing and puffing, he would not tell us that Sen. Deon Isaac was wrong when he stood here today and told this Senate that the police stations, two of them, Old Grange and Charlotteville, are shut at 9.00p.m.

I remember when the Maraval Police Station used to be shut a few years ago when I was the junior Minister in National Security and we put an end to that. We said: “No, this thing is a 24-hour operation.” I was shocked to learn from him that they are shutting down police stations in Tobago in the name of 21st Century Policing and I was also shocked to learn that the CID is not working on weekends. They are behaving like the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Security now. They are behaving like elements of the Government. “Just now they are only—is party every day”.

Talking about that, the police almost had to be called out in Phillipine. I know Sen. Burke did not read today’s newspapers. She did not see the headline where the neighbours in Phillipine, the Prime Minister’s immediate neighbours, want to flee and the Commissioner of Police has to pay attention to this. It may require crowd control duty on the part of the police. It is about noise pollution. It is about nuisance. It is about disturbance in the neighbourhood night and day, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, “is fete after fete after fete after fete.”

To make matters worse, threeo’clock in the morning, two o’clock in the morning, “the helicopter coming and making noise to disturb everybody, while it is wine, woman and song in the neighbourhood. Sorry, wine, woman, man and song.”

A disgrace! And Archbishop Burke stands here today and gives praise. I told you in tea break when I go to heaven and I am right on the inside of the gate—I do not want St. Peter’s job. He would have challenges dealing with you all—I want to be able to watch him, as you all approach the gate and see how he would treat with those challenges. When Sen. Tewarie arrives, for that matter, and he remembers Clico, the role he played there and the role he played at the University of the West Indies—talking about the University of the West Indies, Sen. Burke tells us today that there is this celebration and I commend the Baptist fraternity. I commend the UNC for providing a school for the Shouter Baptist family, but it is not the first in Trinidad. We have the Horquette Baptist School in my—*[Interruption]*

Sen. Abp. Burke: A different brand.

Sen. F. Hinds: They are different to you. I thought all God-loving children were God-loving children. So they are different! But there is a Baptist school in my former constituency, called Horquette Baptist School, which has been there from time immemorial. That is one.

Secondly, in the absence of that primary school, let me remind you that there are approximately 700 schools in this nation, of which approximately 200 are primary schools. You are now saying that there is only one Baptist school. Where did all the Shouter Baptist children go from independence to now?

Sen. Verna St. Rose-Greaves, I understand, is a Spiritual Baptist and I commend her for that, but she went to St. Joseph’s Convent. She did well, particularly well. She speaks well. She looks well. Look how wonderfully regaled she is her today. Today she is a Minister of Government. She did not go to a Baptist primary school but she had the benefit of an educational opportunity in Trinidad and Tobago like all other Baptist children and she made use of it. *[Desk thumping]* I am saying, fine. I am happy. I wish there would be one, two, three, four, 10 Spiritual Baptist schools because God knows, we need it.

I only wanted to remind you that that the thing did not begin with Mr. Panday and that school. The children of the Shouter Baptist faith continued. I also want to remind you en passant that though the legislation to repeal the prohibition against Shouter Baptists took place in 1951 and was passed in 1951—*[Interruption]*

Sen. Abp. Burke: Albert Gomes.

Sen. F. Hinds: Let me tell you this—do not distract me, Archbishop, I love you.

Sen. Abp. Burke: And I would correct you.

Sen. F. Hinds: I thank you very warmly. However, let me continue to have you know that from 1956, when the People's National Movement engaged in the governance of Trinidad and Tobago, small or large, there is absolutely no record of the police whom we debate here today, going to stop any Baptist meeting or break up any Baptist celebration anywhere in Trinidad and Tobago, from 1956 to today, none. Notwithstanding Mr. Panday's skillful political intervention, to the commendable benefit of the Baptist fraternity, the children of the Spiritual Baptist faith were not denied their right to worship, nor were they denied the right to access the best that Trinidad and Tobago could have offered in terms of education and Sen. Verna St. Rose-Greaves is evidence of that. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. President, as we proceed along this wonderful road may I take a drink of water for this? Pure, unadulterated water and my neighbours do not want to flee because it is water that I am drinking.

Sen. Beckles: Three sips.

Sen. F. Hinds: I would have another, I would have another and I would have another.

Sen. Beckles: There is significance in that.

Sen. F. Hinds:—as I ask that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Jah's sight.

Mr. President, when this Motion was filed many months ago, in October actually, one anticipated that the police service—because I used to be a member of the police service, proudly so, a police instructor. I had the benefit of training many a police officer and many of them have senior ranks in the police service today. When I trained as a police officer, the situation was markedly different to what it is today.

I bring this Motion to a close today after so much has happened, even since I had filed this Motion for the discussion of this Senate. I hope that the Government, again I am sharing this with Sen. Burke, treats the deliberations of this Motion seriously and garners from it a number of very important points that have been made along the way and make copious notes and to attempts to improve the situation, having had the benefit of the thought of the Senators of this honourable Senate.

I bring this Motion to a close today when one sadly must admit that the morale of the police service and the reputation of the police service are perhaps at their lowest. I bring this Motion to a close today, in circumstances where the Government appears not to have the requisite capacity, skills, wherewithal and the goods or a clue, if I may use a policing popular term, to deal with the situation. It was CLR James who told us a sure-fire sign of the failure of leadership is when we appear unable to find solutions to the problems that afflict and confront us.

Sen. Ramnarine: That was before the house arrest or after?

Sen. F. Hinds: I bring this Motion to a close in circumstances where the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, all of them representing elements of that Government, including Sen. Lyndira Oudit—[*Interruption*]

Sen. Abp. Burke: Water is good for you.

Sen. F. Hinds: You see—I would take a sip for that—now she is sitting opposite to me. She is not sitting on my right so I have no fear of Standing Order 43(1), inappropriately applied as it was recently. However, I do not want to be distracted as I have always asked.

This Government has really betrayed the trust, confidence and respect of the people. Sen. Verna St. Rose Greaves, you made the point—and you made it so eloquently, riding on a rhythm of truth as we approach Shouter Baptist Liberation Day—when trust is broken, confidence is lost. You heard Joseph Toney. You heard the neighbour at Phillipine. You heard the many people. When trust and confidence—listen, you do not even trust each other. Abdulah do not trust you. You do not trust him. You do not trust Jack Warner. He does not trust you. I am so sorry, but that is the truth and truth remains the highest principle. It is a sham of a partnership and the people in this country have lost confidence.

I want to say to Sen. Tewarie, who spoke on this Motion, he gleefully banged the desk today when one of his colleagues, I think it was Sen. Baynes, made the point and Sen. Prof. Ramkissoon made the point, that the crime did not come overnight, it took about two decades and it cannot be resolved immediately and you banged the desk gleefully, Sen. Tewarie. We always knew that and we always said that, but the treachery and the betrayal comes or came when you, wanting to become the Government, dishonestly, inaccurately and lyingly told the country that you could fix it in a moment. That is where the treachery is. We all knew that the thing is a long-standing problem.

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Sen. Verna St. Rose Greaves, with her sociological background, demonstrated it with great aplomb and accuracy today and so did Sen. prof. Ramkissoon, but the treachery of which I speak came when you, wanting to become the Government, lying, treacherously, deceitfully and deceptively told the entire country that this is a problem you could fix in a flash.

Sen. Deyalsing: A 100-day plan.

Sen. F. Hinds: In 120 days or a 100-day plan, and that is where the treachery came in.

Sen. George: Never said that!

Sen. F. Hinds: Never said that? You never said a lot of stuff and you promised and you lied along the way. Now, what the people are seeing is self-seeking and greed and the wholesale rape of the Treasury. [*Interruption*]

Sen. George: You are grasping at straws.

Sen. F. Hinds: That is what they are seeing, whether it is in the education facilities, whether it is in PTSC. Wherever we turn, that is what we are seeing. One citizen told me, a police officer, let me link it to the Motion and this is the truth—[*Interruption*]

Sen. George: Do you ever speak that?

Sen. F. Hinds: Mr. President, could you? I am getting a muttering coming from the Leader's Bench, a disturbing noise. He told me this thing was like cricket, the UNC was in the slips and in the gully while the PNM was batting, waiting for the ball to "ketch de PNM out" and you could have thought that, having done so, they want to go and bat and make more runs and play with the nobility that is expected in cricket. Once "dey ketch de ball", he told me, they grabbed the ball, "through de cane and off they gone. Tief de ball and gone" through the cane.

Sen. Karim: "It have no more cane."

Sen. F. Hinds: "You hear Sen. Karim?" I only mentioned cane and he said: "and dey run through de cane in ah yellow Jim boots which cost \$5,000, in ah yellow Louis Vuitton."

5.55 p.m.

Mr. President, I bring this Motion to a close in circumstances where the police are called upon to preserve the peace, detect crime and prevent crime. In a difficult and complex society comprising our East Indian brothers and sisters, our Syrian and Lebanese brothers and sisters, our Chinese brothers and sisters and our African

brothers and sisters, it is a very difficult and complex society, and there is a mixed element too. All the strains I have just identified, they confluence into Trinidad and Tobago, with a mixed element too and, of course, foreigners, persons who come here—now “they coming here pretty easily and perpetrate crime.”

May I thank all the Senators who contributed to this debate. Very useful contributions have been made. I want to thank each and every one of them; and in particular my colleagues on this Bench. [*Desk thumping*] May I also thank Minister Louis Farrakhan for his visit to Trinidad and Tobago over the last few days. I listened to him, I attended the meetings that he had and some of his thoughts I found particularly inspiring. I know that he is accused of being a racist and of being anti-Semitic. All I can say is that when I listened to him while he was here, I heard nothing racist from his mouth, I heard nothing anti-Semitic, therefore, I found all that he said very inspiring.

Mr. President, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service I imagine, like all police services, have a duty to protect us, but protect us from what? And from whom? And where? And why? The main problems that confront us it appears, are the problems of guns, the wanton use and access to guns and drugs.

When Sen. Isaac was speaking earlier, and I countenanced that situation which took place in this country since May 24, 2010, the wilful or reckless dismantling of some of the security platforms that were put in place to carry out the job of protecting the citizens, I shouted across the floor, much to the chagrin of my neighbours, my colleagues, “Somebody letting the cocaine pass.” Because I have seen many things—I spent some time as a junior Minister in the Ministry of National Security. I spent some time in the police service, and I spent all of my life, virtually all of it—perhaps with the exception of seven years while I studied abroad—in Trinidad and Tobago, concerned about Trinidad and Tobago.

I want to know—this Government has within its bosom at least one or two chairmen of state corporations who are under investigation by the very Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, because drugs were found on their compounds, in their vehicles and it required an investigation. They happily dismantled the security blanket we had tried to put around this country. “Somebody letting the cocaine pass,” and then coming to tell me about crime in Laventille. Sen. Deyalsingh had to ask one of them across the floor today, some one of them. Who was it? I think Sen. Baynes. [*Interruption*]

Sen. Deyalsingh: Sen. Abdulah.

Sen. F. Hinds: Sen. Abdulah, a man who ought to know better, but he has become softer as the months have gone by. I understand this is why Mr. Roget and they

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are demanding more of him and comrade McLeod. “Comrade McLeod took off, he gone” because the ministerial office is much more attractive at this time.

Hon. Senator: Yellow boots.

Sen. F. Hinds: Oh yes. And comrade Abdulah, as they call him, is now balancing, one foot in one foot out, “he threatening de Government”, but you know, his time is coming when he will have to decide. You cannot worship God and mammon.

Sen. Abdulah: You only worship mammon all “de” time. [*Laughter*]

Hon. Senator: “Dat is de truth.”

Sen. F. Hinds: I never worshipped mammon yet. I stay PNM.

Sen. Abdulah: “Dat is de problem.”

Sen. F. Hinds: I never worshipped mammon yet.

Sen. Abdulah: “Dat is de problem.”

Sen. F. Hinds: And I will tell you about mammon in a little while. “You just gimme one moment, ah coming to it.” [*Interruption*]

Hon. Senator: “Because you is de boss.”

Sen. F. Hinds: “Ah say ah coming to it, you be patient, doh drag me along, ah coming.”

Sen. Abdulah: “Yuh dragging yuh self down with de balisier.”

Sen. Abp. Burke: Big balisier.

Sen. F. Hinds: Everyone understands that it is guns and drugs that are causing the problems in Trinidad and Tobago, ignorance too, much of it comes down to sheer ignorance; the consumption of drugs and the mixture with alcohol too, wanton violence as I pointed out. These are some of the things and the gangland activity that takes place around it; everybody understands that.

Everyone, especially the Government, believes that the main source of crime is in the so-called communities along the corridor, the ghetto communities, and “doh pretend fuh me. Dat is what they think.” They think it is only Laventille, Beetham, Carenage and John John. Sen. Deyalsingh had to ask quite poignantly and quite seriously, the big drug merchants in this country are not known to have come from Laventille.

Sen. Deyalsingh: Answer that.

Sen. F. Hinds: And most of the persons who were hanged—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Senator: “Dat is Mr. Big.”

Sen. F. Hinds:—did not come from Laventille—who ordered the killing of all the families and all this kind of business; they did not come from Laventille. And this is why Bro. Farrakhan was so right when he addressed us in Trinidad and Tobago recently. This is why I clung on his words [*Interruption*] I did not “clown,” I did not call you. And that is why—please forgive me for that—why I clung to his words. He understood where the problem lay, he understood why. He told us it had to do first with the mind. I will always say your head shapes your world, it is the mind, because I grew up around it all and rejected it.

I chose a certain path, and I always understood that success and failure are very personal things, and I always understood that the greatest motivation for wanting self-improvement, to improve my family and to improve my community was the very poverty in which I found myself as a boy. I understood that, many children of those communities understand that. Sen. Verna St. Rose Greaves, like myself, understood it, and our parents accentuated the need for education, and saw education—thanks to Dr. Williams who made it available to so many more of us—as a tool for social mobility—but the mind and the culture.

We all know that there are things about our culture that are inimical, harmful to us and we need to be strong enough to just change it. That is it. And every person has the power to change themselves, to change direction if they so desire, we understand. But this Government is a threat to those very communities but they do not yet know it, my job whether you like it or not is to tell them that, to teach them that, that you are a threat to them. You are a dangerous threat to them.

Hon. Senator: By giving them education?

Sen. F. Hinds: And this is where, as I said, this Government comes in. So Archbishop Burke, I congratulate the Spiritual Baptist community as we move towards Shouter Baptist Liberation Day; I participate every year. Many of my relatives came up in the Spiritual Baptist faith. We are all very proud, but we do not want you taking one little thing and making so much of it. I mean, it is to be grateful yes—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Senator: Oooooooh!

Sen. F. Hinds:—but you do not have to miss sight of the danger of which I speak. You may find that you are going up the down escalator. [*Laughter*]

Sen. Abp. Burke: Poor thing.

Sen. George: “Poor thing, yuh right.”

Sen. F. Hinds: When the issue of silk came up recently, Karl Hudson-Phillips, Queen’s Counsel, described the conduct of the Prime Minister—*[Interruption]*

Sen. George: Mr. President, on a point of order, Standing Order 35(1).

Mr. President: Yes Senator, you cannot introduce the conduct of any Member of Parliament except—*[Interruption]*

Sen. F. Hinds: What, 35(1)?

Mr. President: Well, I am saying you cannot introduce the question of the conduct of any Member of Parliament except on a Motion especially put before this Senate and, therefore, you would not be able to continue in that vein.

Sen. F. Hinds: I thank you very warmly, Mr. President, and I should be guided. You know, I follow the rules of this Senate very steadfastly. Unwaveringly I follow the rules of this Senate, you know that. He described it as misguided vanity; those words came to my heart and my mind as I contemplate this issue of the police service as we discuss it. The police provide security at the Prime Minister’s residence at St. Ann’s. That is part of their duty. Is it not?

Hon. Senator: Yes, of course.

Sen. F. Hinds: Yes. And we are dealing with their strength and that is a strength, they provide security at the Prime Minister’s residence. While they were providing that security, when the Prime Minister went in, in 2010 she wanted all the security cameras removed. That is a fact. We do not know why, we can only speculate—something she did not want the security persons to see. You see what I am saying as they provide security?

Sen. George: He is again imputing improper motives—the conduct of a Member.

Sen. F. Hinds: No, Mr. President, that cannot be.

Sen. George: Yes!

Sen. F. Hinds: That cannot be right.

Mr. President: I do not think you are imputing improper motives. What I did say, on the other hand, is that you cannot bring into question the conduct of the Prime Minister or any other Member of this Parliament.

Sen. F. Hinds: I am guided and I should not do that. Let me speak only about the lift then. I am not speaking about anybody's conduct.

Sen. Abp. Burke: "Buh why yuh doing dat?"

Sen. F. Hinds: I am speaking about a lift. [*Interruption*]

Sen. Dr. Tewarie: What does it have to do with—[*Inaudible*]

Sen. F. Hinds: An expensive lift, worth they say about \$1.5 million fit for a six storey building, put in a two-storey home—the police provide security at the Prime Minister's residence.

Hon. Senator: That is irrelevant.

Sen. F. Hinds: Oh yes. Mr. President, I have had the opportunity to go to that place and I probably could understand why. Some of my friends must have visited because the police have the task of providing security. You see the link? [*Laughter*]

Hon. Senator: No.

Sen. George: Standing Order 35(1). Mr. President, there is no link there. Please.

Sen. F. Hinds: Take your seat! Could you take your seat!

Sen. George: "Yuh cyah talk to me like dat."

Hon. Senator: Shut up!

Mr. President: Sen. Hinds.

Hon. Senator: "Take yuh time. Take yuh time. Mash yuh brakes."

Mr. President: Sen. Hinds, all I am asking is that you draw the reference to how it is related to the particular debate on hand. [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. F. Hinds: Thank you very much, Mr. President. All I was saying is that the police have the task of providing security at that residence and all of Trinidad and Tobago; that is within their jurisdiction. And, therefore, in protecting the Prime Minister, any visitor to the Prime Minister's residence falls under the purview of the police in terms of providing security. That is all I was saying.

Sen. George: No. That is not all you are saying.

Sen. F. Hinds: Well, I am saying it now. Just let me press on.

Hon. Senator: They would have to be escorted.

Sen. F. Hinds: I am trying to figure out how that elevator would assist in providing that security. First of all, we are told and we have observed serious abuses of government authority using the police service and the regiment in this country. And let me give you a perfect example before I come back to what I was saying.

6.10 p.m.

We are told, Mr. President, that as we speak—and this is a perfect example of the abuse of office—the Prime Minister has a grandchild attending the Cedar Grove Primary School in San Fernando and three soldiers and two police officers are made to spend the entire day at that school. That is what I am saying. [*Crosstalk*] I am saying that that is an abuse of the power of the State, that is what I am saying whether they like it or not, because we need these police officers to be on the beat to deal with the issues that they speak so much about. That is all I am saying whether they like it or not. And they have said that about other people too in the past, so do not kill me with any deceit today.

Hon. Senator: Take two more sips.

Sen. F. Hinds: It is an abuse. And the police are now being asked to virtually monitor and secure two different locations that the Prime Minister stays at. That is the reality. And issues have been raised only this week around the national community about the fact that the Prime Minister lives at her personal residence elsewhere and the police provide security there.

Sen. George: Mr. President, again 35(5). He is imputing improper motives to the Prime Minister.

Sen. F. Hinds: What is improper about that?

Sen. George: Why are you talking about it if it is not improper?

Sen. F. Hinds: Because I am free to do so.

Hon. Senator: “No, yuh not free.”

Mr. President: Sen. Hinds, I will allow you to continue but you are at times either not onto issues, you are proceeding outside of the ambit of this debate and at times you are bringing in to question the conduct of a Member of Parliament, neither of which you are permitted to do.

Sen. F. Hinds: Thank you very much. Mr. President, I was talking about the fact that the police—they have 7,000 members. We indicated that there should be at least 10,000 and we went on a recruitment drive. When we attempted to do that we discovered that the police training college was not suited, not capable of training 250 officers at a time. I remember going there with Minister Joseph, and he immediately got Cabinet to agree to \$3 million to conduct some repairs and expansion at the police academy, and that was done. So if they tell you today that they are training 250 at a time, it is because they met it so, all done by Minister Joseph and the PNM. [*Desk thumping*]

Because when we called on the police commissioner to train and produce more police, he told us the facilities could not accommodate it. Today, the women police training dormitory has been expanded and modernized, and so too all the other dormitories. So that we need about 10,000 police officers to improve the rate per hundred or per thousand of the citizens. And I am saying given those limited resources, they have the task of providing security at the Prime Minister's residence and also at her private home in the Philippines—I am not casting aspersions on her conduct—and all those persons who live at those particular residences or who visit. That is the point I am making. You will never get it. [*Interruption*] You, get me? [*Laughter*] No, no, no, I am not that type of man. So that is the point I am making, Mr. President.

And there is a debate in the national community as to the use of police resources in that respect. And I not calling anybody's conduct into the debate. I am not doing that. The question now arises as to whether that is an efficient use of the resources of the Trinidad and Tobago police service. Because they have to guard both—and it is costing the State money. That is the point I am making as I proceed. [*Crosstalk*]

So, Mr. President—I know, I know. I hear my friend, Minister George saying it is a non-point because he has become blind, he cannot see.

Sen. George: I cannot see any of the points that you make. [*Crosstalk*]

Sen. F. Hinds:—and we understand, and we also have been told.

Sen. George: Listen to hearsay. It is all right. That is all you are doing, listening to hearsay.

Sen. F. Hinds: I know, I know. Mr. President, let me continue. Mr. David Cameron, the Prime Minister of England, described as a twisted moral code that which Sen. Verna St. Rose Greaves tried to address earlier, what is happening with the young people of his nation, the United Kingdom. He said that they have been brought up in a twisted moral code. He says:

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...gangs are a major criminal disease that has infected our streets and communities.

In terms of parents he said, sometimes either there are no parents about, there are none at home and when there are, they do not care or in many cases they have lost control of the children. And he offered to Britain, when he spoke about a year ago, or a few months ago when they had serious upheaval there, a whole policy programme dealing with creating stronger families.

In an attempt to explain the occupation of the residence at St. Ann's by persons who are not officials—not a Prime Minister, the sister of the Prime Minister—the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communication told us about family life and strong families. And many people in the community took offence. Because they got the impression that he was saying that that is a function of strong families. No problem with that, some of us agreed. A strong family is important, but not at the expense of the taxpayers of this country. That is all.

So Mr. Cameron went on highlighting the need for strong families. He also highlighted the needs for higher standards in schools; pride on the part of the students and the young people; the need for hard work, no excuses for laziness and poor performance. He called on the teachers and educators and administrators in schools to strengthen the weakest schools because that clearly is part of the problem.

He said that for Great Britain henceforth, the focus had to be on the distinction between right and wrong, something that escapes this Government. They do not know—you all do not know the difference between right and wrong.

Hon. Senator: You do?

Sen. F. Hinds: Yes, I do, we do. You do not. The other day when a certain issue came up—I do not know if this is being investigated by the police—about a credit card recently the Government gathered together to protect their colleague from an obvious wrong. They do not know the difference between right and wrong. That is why you cannot provide leadership to this nation. The focus is on stronger moral codes, personal responsibility, and that persons ought not to be rewarded for bad behaviour. [*Interruption*]

Sen. George: Senator?

Sen. F. Hinds: Go right ahead.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

The Minister of Public Utilities (Sen. The Hon. Emmanuel George): Mr. President, in accordance with Standing Order 9 subsection (8), I beg to move that the Senate continue to sit until the completion of the matter before this honourable Senate.

Question put and agreed to.

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

Sen. F. Hinds: Thank you very much, Mr. President. I was reminded the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Mr. Ewatski, telling the country in an interview, recorded by Geisha Kowlessar in the *Guardian* of Monday September 19, 2011. And I want to quote—well he was actually saying that the police service is heading in the right direction. That is Mr. Ewatski, after one year on the job. And we have heard something today on this whole concept of 21st Century Policing. And Sen. Isaac pointed out to us one of the effects of 21st Century Policing is the fact that they have been shutting down police stations and that is true.

In the central area for example, I am told that 21st Century policing means having closed down all the police stations and there is now one police station in Chaguanas.

Sen. Karim: That is not true.

Sen. F. Hinds: The others have been shut down.

Sen. Karim: That is not true.

Sen. F. Hinds: Well, Sen. Karim, you are speaking, but the Minister of National Security is as usual, very quiet, missing in action in all of this.

Sen. Brig. Sandy: I do not need to respond to you. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. F. Hinds: I know. You do not respond to “nothing”. You do not need to respond to “nothing”. You never know anything, you respond to nothing— [*Interruption*]

Mr. President: You may not bring his conduct into the debate.

Sen. F. Hinds: And that is why the country thinks that the advisor to the Prime Minister is the National Security Minister. The country does not know who it is.

Sen. George: They know it is not you. [*Laughter*]

Sen. F. Hinds: I know—[*Desk thumping*]*—*when we were in the police service they used to say, “Obey your last order and draw your pay straight”. That is it. But 21st Century Policing, as I was saying before my friend, the Brigadier, intervened—

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

Motion made: That the hon. Senator’s speaking time be extended by 15 minutes. [*Sen. P. Beckles*]

Question put and agreed to.

Sen. F. Hinds: Thank you very much, Mr. President. We understand what they are trying to do with 21st Century Policing. I am not saying that it does not have its benefits, but members of the police service are saying they are not sufficiently resourced in order to do it.

So there was a case in Longdenville where—I think I said this sometime ago but I want to remind this Senate—a family was attacked by cutlass wielding bandits, they fled their home, went about 45 seconds down the road to the police station, the bandits pursued them. Apparently, the bandits knew that the station was a building but there were no police in there, destroyed their car which they “parked up” outside of the station compound. The family ran into the police station, the single police officer in there, a woman police, opened the door in time to protect them.

They went in, locked the door, the bandits broke the glass on the station door—and we would discover after that this is the result of 21st Century Policing because that Longdenville police post was shut down. So members of the public think it is a police station when in fact it was just an empty shell, a building with a sole police officer there guarding the building, rather than there to take a report or to offer protection to people.

So police officers are saying that they have not really been consulted and brought on board, they are not equipped to deal with this new situation and the public is certainly not aware, so this thing is very, very dangerous. So you may think that you see a police station and the next thing you know, there is none.

Mr. President, as we come to the end of this debate on this police Motion, we have heard lots of contributions on the strengths and there are many. I am one person who has always offered praise to the police service. I know it is the Government’s responsibility to provide policy direction and to provide the means

and the resources. It was in the last administration that the police had called for their own budget so that they could make more intimate decisions as to how they utilize that without the impediments of having to go to National Security and to compete with the fire service and the army and everyone else, prison service and the like, and the administration. Now the police under Head 64 has its own budget. That was a call by the police service. We facilitated that.

We have heard a lot in this debate about the strengths and we have heard some of the weaknesses. It is my earnest prayer that the Government would have taken notes, as indeed I have, because a time will come when they will be called upon to account for their management of crime and crime prevention in this country. A time will come and we hope that they make use of the thoughts that have been offered by this debate.

6.25 p.m.

Mr. President, just before I close, I remember the contribution of Sen. Dr. Tewarie. He expressed a number of thoughts, and he told us we should not play the blame game. He will notice that in this debate, the Government is free to amend this Motion if it felt that it was critical of the Government, and there will be no need for that, because no one was criticizing the Government. We were just taking note of the state of affairs of the police service.

We are of the feeling and we are of the belief that a number of very sound policies that this Government met when it came into office were interfered with only because of political jealousy and political nonsense.

Sen. Dr. Tewarie: We promised change.

Sen. F. Hinds: Sen. Tewarie is telling us how the Government promised change. Well, we are not seeing too much of that. We were told that the state of emergency was a major plank in your attempt to deal with crime, and now as Bro. Farrakhan understood and everyone in Trinidad understood, it was simply a mad hatter scheme that led you to arresting about 8,000 people in this country on old warrants and all kinds of things, and releasing them yet again.

You had recovered about 151 guns during the 107 days of the state of emergency, and we told you that was the tip of the iceberg. And, today, the police continue to recover, and there are many more guns out there. We called on you to put in place a sustained gun retrieval programme, giving the police an incentive to go out there on that gun retrieval programme. We told you that, and you scoffed at it, and now the murders have started to run again.

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The people are frustrated. You will notice the number of fiery protests that the police are called upon to deal with every day for the last two days. In Penal and Siparia, the people are angry and frustrated, and it falls right back to the police.

So it is quite clear, Mr. President, that some leadership is necessary, and this Government is unable to provide that. This Government is unable to provide moral leadership, because what the country is seeing is a team that is now in office not able to rise to the standard of the office that they now sit in. And as Michael Harris told us, and I quoted here recently, this Government is destroying the immune system of this country to protect its own institutions. Every institution has come under attack, including the police service and, therefore, we are approaching hopelessness.

I would not say that we are a failed state like Sen. Dr. Tewartie used to be up and down this country saying.

Sen. Dr. Tewartie: I said it once and I said it was heading for failure if we continued down the road.

Sen. F. Hinds: Oh, I see, you are changing your tongue now.

Sen. Dr. Tewartie: That is exactly what I said.

Sen. F. Hinds: So Mr. President, as I conclude, I want to call on the Government—I mean, a number of Senators spoke and said interesting things, but time has run—to take seriously its responsibility to govern this country. As I said, a moment ago, for one thing, we need to improve the numbers in the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. The other thing is, we need to improve its morale. When police officers see Government Ministers behaving the way they do, and see the pinnacle of your Government behaving the way they do, it does not do anything for morale. I want you to understand that.

The police are now grappling—and I hope that by the time they settle their negotiations, that they will get to the 9 per cent that Sen. Abdulah and the OWTU forced at Petrotrin and otherwise, and the police would not have to resort to the behaviour of the people at TCL, but we will hope that the Government will understand that it will protect the country's revenues.

I can tell you, Minister Dr. Tewartie, as the Minister of Planning and the Economy, a lot of raping of the Treasury is taking place everywhere. Last week, I came across a situation where \$1.5 million was given to a contractor to paint over the Priority Mall in the Croisee in San Juan by the Minister of Transport; his Permanent Secretary, perhaps. The work stands unfinished, the contractor is gone, and the money has been paid.

Sen. Maharaj: On a point of order, Mr. President, that is untrue, again, like on the first occasion last week. The painting did not cost \$1.5 million and the work is not at a standstill as you say.

Sen. F. Hinds: I said the work is finished, the contractor is gone.

Sen. Maharaj: The work is not finished.

Sen. F. Hinds: Okay, thank you very much. Well, we will ask a question and we will get the figures and we will find out.

Sen. Maharaj: I would prefer if you ask the question.

Sen. F. Hinds: Mr. President, the Minister got to his legs, but last week when I spoke about the way the judges have been treated in this country in relation to the car park, he did the same thing. He got on *Hansard* and recorded that it was not so but, in fact, the Minister did not tell us the whole story. The judges have been moved from where they were and are now made to scramble with members of the public for a car park in the main parking area, and there are serious security concerns. The police are not there to protect them. They have to come out their cars and move the caution tape and line up in the line with all the members of the public who they may have passed sentence on yesterday—[*Crosstalk*]*—*all of that, and he did not tell us that. So I cannot trust that Minister.

Mr. President: Sen. Hinds, you cannot talk about—

Sen. F. Hinds: I did not say I do not trust him.

Mr. President: You cannot bring into question his conduct. You can take out a Motion if you want to bring into question his trustworthiness, but you cannot, in this debate, bring in that question.

Sen. F. Hinds: I thank you.

Sen. Maharaj: On a point of order, Mr. President. The Airports Authority is revisiting the whole VIP parking arrangement. If the Senator is unaware of it, he could bring a substantial Motion.

Mr. President: If Sen. Hinds allows you to intervene you may, but I do not see a point of order in what you raised here. [*Desk thumping*]

Sen. F. Hinds: So, Mr. President, I know I cannot say that I do not trust him, but I cannot say that I trust him. I am not in a position to say that I trust him.

So, Mr. President, as I conclude, I am very thankful, again, to all of my colleagues in this Senate who participated in this very lively debate.

Sen. George: I think I need to correct something that the Minister—

Sen. F. Hinds: What is the point of order? You will get your time to speak later. Mr. President, what is going on here? He cannot do that. He will have his time to speak.

Sen. George: He said something quite wrong and I want to correct it—

Mr. President: I understand that.

Sen. George:—before it goes on the record.

Mr. President: Certainly, Ministers will be permitted to make a statement if that is what you want to do at the relevant time. We will allow Sen. Hinds to conclude, and then we will consider whether a Minister would like to make a statement, and I will consider that issue at that point. Sen. Hinds, will you wrap up?

Sen. F. Hinds: I thank you. It is not my fault that the Minister does not understand the rules of this House, but I trust he would learn. So, Mr. President, as I was saying, before Sen. George interfered with my line of thought, I was thanking all of my colleagues in this place for their thoughts.

I have made copious notes about the contributions; whether it was Sen. Dyer, she did not say much, but I think something she said I wanted to address; whether it was Sen. Drayton, Sen. Prof. Ramkissoon and our new Senator, Sen. Sydney who spoke today, Sen. Ramkhelawan and all the Members of the Government and so on who spoke, they should not see this Motion as a criticism of the Government.

This is simply a call, as I said, to take a look at the police service, a very important platform—security and safety of the citizens which is an important issue—and we did what we had to do up until the time we demitted office, and this Government, according to Sen. Dr. Tewarie, has promised change and we are not feeling any better. Things seem to be spiralling terribly and further out of hand. The murders have begun to flourish again in the society. I mean, today, we have more murders than days in the year. We were expecting that your big tool of the state of emergency would have brought relief, and as I was pointing out a while ago, it has not.

The guns continue to come in undisturbed because there is no one out there watching and no one dealing with it as they could. The helicopters that are used in the fight against crime have now become airbuses for the Government, Prime Minister and Ministers to and from south Trinidad, at great public expense.

Sen. George: Will the Senator give way?

Sen. F. Hinds: Just excuse—I am winding up.

Sen. George: Will the Senator give way?

Sen. F. Hinds: No, I am not giving way at this point. You can speak after. The President told you that. The helicopters are not being used, in our view, to fight crime and to protect the citizens of this country. Resources are being abused, and I gave a very simple example where at least five persons are made to spend eight or seven and half hours per day at a school—unheard of in this country.

I made the point as well in closing that even the residence, the official Prime Minister's residence, the police have to provide security there and they have to provide security elsewhere, and other persons are occupying the residence at St. Ann's. All these things are happening and these things are just not right.

So I call on the Government to take note and, hopefully, to get its act together if not, like me, the people of Trinidad and Tobago would have found you wanting in terms of your management of crime through the use of the police service. You will recall that we rearranged the Constitution and the Police Service Act in order to give the commissioner substantially more power than he previously had. We did that.

We came to this Senate, over the objection of the then Opposition, your colleagues, and some are still here. We amended the Constitution; we have now given the commissioner teeth and he can hire and fire. It is only the Police Service Commission that deals with the appointment of the commissioner and the deputies, and all other ranks the commissioner could deal with. He has his own budget and, therefore, we did what we had to do up until that time.

The task now falls to you to continue, and we wish you well. We are not very impressed with how you are going so far. The country is not very impressed. I remind you of all the fiery protests, and I conclude by saying that, like me, the people of Trinidad and Tobago are waiting with our finger to dismiss you at the first opportunity and bring this country, and in keeping with the Motion, the police service, back to some order and good governance yet again. Mr. President, I thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. President: Are you moving the Motion?

Sen. F. Hinds: In keeping with the formalities, Mr. President, I want to say in conclusion, I beg to move.

Mr. President: Leader of Government Business.

Sen. George: Mr. President, I wish to just reply briefly to some of the things that Sen. Hinds just said. I would like to reply under Standing Order 33(2).

Sen. Hinds: Mr. President, I object. He cannot do that. That is not permitted by the rules.

Sen. George: I am asking him to rule on it.

Sen. F. Hinds: Okay.

Sen. George: I am asking the President to rule on it.

Mr. President: In Standing Order 33(2) the Motion itself is, I think, non-critical of the Government. It is a matter merely asking the question as to the strengths and deficiencies of the police service. Standing Order 33(2) would appear to give a Minister on the Government side the right to reply finally, if, in fact, the Motion is critical of the Government or reflects adversely on it. I do not think that the Motion itself is either adverse to the Government or critical of the Government.

I understand, on the other hand, that the Minister is concerned as to whether certain matters stated by Sen. Hinds are factual or not. I would, therefore, urge him to take another opportunity when he could make that known to the public, but we will now put the question before this House. [*Desk thumping*]

Question put and agreed to.

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.

6.40 p.m.

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, April 03, at 11.00 a.m., when we will continue debate on the Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxins Weapons Bill.

Mr. President: Hon. Senators, leave has been given for a matter to be raised on the adjournment of the Senate. I therefore now call on Sen. Penelope Beckles.

**Santa Rosa Prison Facility
(Govt's Failure to Obtain Statutory Approvals)**

Sen. Penelope Beckles: Thank you kindly, Mr. President. Let me join with my colleagues in welcoming you back to the Senate. I do hope that together with all the other members of the delegation you had both an enjoyable and educational trip.

The first Motion is No. 2, that is, the Government's failure to obtain the necessary statutory approvals for the construction of a prison facility in Santa Rosa, Arima, as well as the Government's failure to consult with the residents of Santa Rosa and environs before the construction of the said facility at Santa Rosa.

I just need to say that this Motion actually qualified on September 12, 2011. Events have overtaken since I filed this Motion, but nonetheless I would still proceed to deal with it as I intended when I filed it some seven months ago. I am dealing with two issues, the issue of the statutory approvals and the issue of consultation. Subject to any correction that the hon. Minister may make, my information is that when repair work was done and improvements, there was an existing shell. It is a facility that is well known to me, because it is directly opposite to where I have lived for at least 30 years; I am familiar with it. It was a shell, and I know quite a lot of work was done on that facility in record time.

My information is that at the Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation and the Town and Country Division, no application was made for any renovations or repair work to be done to that facility. As I said, that is subject to any information that the hon. Minister may provide, because that is very specific in my Motion. I do not know if since the completion of the facility with all the additional works, the putting up of the fence and all the other things and further work on the roof, either the owner or the Government, who is the lessee, applied and complied with all the statutory approvals to have it brought into compliance with the Government's rules and regulations, as it pertains to doing repair work.

I just want to go straight now to the issue of consultation. The rules and regulations for the Emergency Powers Regulations, the legal supplement is actually dated August 21, 2011. When the hon. Minister of National Security responded to the question filed by Sen. Hinds, the hon. Minister indicated and I quote, that:

The decision was taken in principle and later a contract on August 29, 2011 for rental of the property by the Ministry of National Security. Subsequently on Friday 02, September, the hon. Minister of National Security, acting in accordance with Section 5 of the Prisons Act, appointed the said facility as a district prison.

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Mr. President, this matter caused great concern and distress to the community of Santa Rosa and environs. I would say to the majority of residents, because of course there were some residents who, for a number of reasons, sometimes held the view that it may or may not increase security. So it was not every single resident who was in disagreement, but certainly the majority of residents were in disagreement. One of the major concerns was the failure to consult.

When the meetings were held with the residents, and I attended more than one, having regard to the answer that was given by the Minister, clearly the decision was already made to have this facility declared a district prison. As we speak, some of the residents and I are not absolutely clear as to exactly what it is, and I am hoping that the hon. Minister would finally clear up why and how long it would be there, and exactly what is the nature of it.

This facility has been referred to by various persons, either from the prison service, the police service or the Ministry of National Security. It has been called very recently a “reintegration centre”. It has been called a district prison; it has been called a detention centre; it has been called a correctional rehabilitation centre, therefore I would really like to know exactly what it is. [*Desk thumping*] I am asking that based on the information in the public domain.

Having met with the residents, there were certain promises that would have been made, and several promises fulfilled, I imagine, particularly to appease the residents who are really not very happy. One of my concerns in the construction of this facility is that it was stated that it was built, in the main, to deal with the persons who would have been arrested as a result of the state of emergency. The facility was rented for a period of six months, the cost of that facility to date being some \$60 million; \$5 million, the landlord indicated, to repair the roof. The modification and installation, \$50 million; office accommodation, some \$3.3 million, and it is being rented at the sum of \$850,000 per month.

Mr. President, you may or may not remember that the Commissioner of Prisons at the time made it very clear that the existing prison facilities were sufficient to actually hold all prisoners, including the ones who were arrested during the state of emergency. As a matter of fact, if we look at it, I think it would have been the *Trinidad Newsday*, the Commissioner of Prisons at the time, Commissioner Rougier, indicated that the prison population was about 3,800 and it was increased by 521, bringing the population to 4,321. He indicated that there was additional room in the high-risk facility for another 350 persons.

In other words, the Commissioner was saying at the time that the prison facility at Golden Grove would have accommodated any additional persons who were arrested. But the Government saw it fit to build this facility, whatever it is to be called. I want to make sure that I do not call it by the wrong name.

What is interesting about what has happened here is that when you pass Santa Rosa Heights, you would see that they had to build these very tall fences from the beginning to the end of Santa Rosa Heights. In order to construct this prison or centre, or what have you, the people living in Santa Rosa Heights themselves now have to be almost in a prison and in a jail.

Sen. George: That is what they asked for.

Sen. P. Beckles: Sure, that is what they asked for. They must ask for it, because they are asking for protection from a prison.

Sen. George: [*Inaudible*]

Sen. P. Beckles: I have been living there for more than 30 years, and I am very certain that if some people asked for that it would have been the people in the minority. Being in the meeting, people asked specifically for that fence to be put up because they were afraid of persons leaving the facility and coming into Santa Rosa. That was the reason they asked for it. I know you were at some of the meetings. I know Minister Dyer-Griffith was in the meeting. I was in some of the meetings, and I know that is precisely the reason that has happened.

At the end of the day, Mr. President, in Santa Rosa Heights the people are very concerned, of course, with that facility. The value of the houses is going to be depreciating, and whilst they have given a commitment that nobody from that facility is going to escape—I do not know why anybody would give that kind of commitment when we know, whether it be in court, from the prison cells, from the prison van or Golden Grove, even recently from the Royal Gaol right in Port of Spain, prisoners have escaped. But the bottom line is that the Motion is on two issues, one is the issue of the statutory leases and the other is the issue of the failure to consult.

When this decision was made, there was no consultation. So whatever the residents asked for, they realized it was a done deal and there was absolutely nothing they could do about it. As a matter of fact when the meetings were going on, more or less, the construction, repairs and everything were completed.

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6.55 p.m.

The reason I really want this situation cleared up is because what we have now is where the Government has announced that they are now going to have cable television for the new TT prison. So that it is clear, and I take the point that it is not a situation where all prisons or all facilities ought to be so punitive that people really cannot have any sort of benefits, but what exactly is it that Government intends? Are they going to renew the lease? Is it going to be a permanent facility? Hon. Minister, I asked you this when I read this particular statement from the Commissioner of Prisons very recently. [*Interruption*]

Mr. President: Sen. Beckles, you have one more minute.

Sen. P. Beckles: “It not a prison at all”—

This is what he has said, notwithstanding the fact that your answer says, it is a district prison, this is Mr. Martinez:

“It is not a prison at all, Martinez said, labelling the facility as a ‘reintegration centre’, where murderers and other criminals will be brought after ‘such time we determine they are at a stage in their incarceration for pre-release.’”

I must tell you that at the end of the day, the Commissioner of Prisons having said that, it has left me even more confused.

I really hope that you would bring clarity to the situation, and that the residents in Santa Rose Heights, having already accepted a situation that where a decision was already made, could be a lot more comfortable as to exactly what that facility has been really established for. Thank you.

The Minister of National Security (Sen. The Hon. Brig. John Sandy): Thank you, Mr. President. On August 21, 2011, the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, announced the Government’s decision to recommend the imposition of a state of emergency. On the said date, the President by proclamation declared that a public state of emergency existed.

We must recognize, and as indicated by Sen. Beckles, this has been on the table for approximately five months. Between August 21 and September 06, 2011, the initial period of the state of emergency, in addition to the intangible results such as increased feelings of security among citizens, the following was accomplished; 1,477 persons arrested for violations ranging from gang-related activities to breach of curfew; 184 persons charged for traffic offences; 1,745 rounds of assorted ammunition seized; and 45 firearms seized.

As Members of this honourable Senate would be aware, Government, after the first 15 days, took the decision to extend the state of emergency, by three months, effective September 06, 2011, with decreased curfew hours from 11.00 p.m. to 4.00 a.m.

As a result of the intensified law enforcement activities facilitated by the SoE, the adequacy of existing detention facilities came into question, as at October 30, 2011, 5,665 persons had been arrested. This Government considered it paramount to ensure that our citizens' human rights were not trampled upon, even those who had been detained. The Government, therefore, committed to providing facilities that were in conformity with international standards.

To address the situation, the Cabinet-appointed Inter-ministerial Committee to manage and monitor the activities relating to the state of emergency, mandated the Commissioner of Prisons to convene and chair a working group to urgently find a suitable alternative to house persons detained or arrested during the state of emergency.

In consideration of all the relevant factors, and after having considered and visited several possible sites, the working group recommended and Cabinet approved the selection of the old Neal and Massy plant which consists of two buildings situated at the 26 kilometre mark, Churchill Roosevelt Highway, Arima.

In keeping with section 5 of the Prisons Act, Chap. 13:01, of the Laws of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, on Friday, September 02, 2011, subsequent to the approval of the hon. Prime Minister, the Minister of National Security appointed the facility as a district prison. Legal Notice No. 174 dated September 02, 2011, gave effect to that decision. For the information of hon. Senators, section 5 of the Prisons Act states, and I quote:

“The Minister may by Order declare any Police Station or part of the station or other suitable place to be a district prison.”

Mr. President, given the urgency to provide arrestees under the state of emergency with suitable accommodation, the Minister, having appointed the facility a district prison, immediately proceeded to ensure that it was brought to a standard appropriated for its stated use.

In the first instance, it was necessary from the owner and lessor of the facility, to obtain approval to lease the facility to house detainees, as well as approval to construct cell blocks and security infrastructure, and to upgrade the electricity supply. These were obtained by September 14, 2011.

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In addition to these, statutory approvals were required from; one, Town and Country approval for change of use of facility; two, the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission for electrical upgrade and power supply; three, Government Electrical Inspectorate for HV and LV connection; and, four, the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service for safety infrastructure.

Mr. President, with the exception of the Town and Country change of use for facility approval, all of the requisite approvals were obtained prior to operationalizing of the facility, on a pilot basis, on Monday, October 03, 2011.

The delay in acquiring the approval was due primarily to the fact that the East Regional Office of the Town and Country Planning Division, located in Tunapuna, was closed for two weeks due to sewer problems. Eventually an arrangement was made for the Port of Spain office to process these applications. The Ministry did submit the necessary documents to the Port of Spain office, and approval was secured. I wish to assuage Sen. Beckles' concern, therefore, and assure her that the required approvals were obtained albeit belated.

It would have been ideal if we were able to obtain all necessary approvals prior to commencement of redesign work on the facility, however, you would recall, and agree with me, that the situation was one of urgency and did not allow the luxury of time. Notwithstanding that, the Ministry did take all the necessary steps to ensure that the approvals were obtained at the earliest possible date, and in adherence with all relevant laws of this country.

With respect to the issue of consultation with residents, the Government has at all times remained cognizant and respectful of the concerns that were being expressed by residents. We understood completely their anxiety. At the earliest possible date, therefore, I myself, took deliberate steps to meet with residents. Accompanied by Minister of State, Roger Samuel, MP for Arima, and key Ministry officials, we held our first meeting on September 27, 2011. At that meeting I gave my commitment to the residents that the Ministry, and by extension the Government, would partner with them to ensure that their concerns were all addressed.

At that meeting I personally apologized to residents for the delay in consulting with them, and expressed the reason for that delay. Subsequent to that meeting, the Ministry of National Security team has continued to meet with the residents on an ongoing basis, and Sen. Beckles is aware of that.

Between September 27 and October 28—and take into consideration that at the time of the Motion being raised, there were six meetings with residents, and dialogue with residents still continues to ensure that all their concerns are aired, and allow us to foster a partnership with them in developing and maintaining solutions that are mutually beneficial.

The last meeting that I attended, was just over two months ago, and at that meeting there were cordial relationships, and as a matter of fact, at that time the fence was yet to be completed, and we communicated as to how we would go about doing that.

Through this partnership a number of key concerns have been addressed, and allow me to share some of these. In response to their concerns regarding the naming of the facility and potential stigmatization of their community, it was agreed that the name of the facility would exclude any reference to Santa Rosa. The facility was therefore named the Eastern Correctional and Rehabilitation Centre, the ECRC.

Another critical issue for residents related to matters of security. To address this issue and ensure that residents' feeling of safety in their homes were maintained, a number of initiatives were implemented, a security fence was erected and they had indicated to us that many years previously they had requested that fence, without success. A police mobile unit has been deployed to the community, police and defence force visibility and operations in the area had increased and intensified, including air. The Commissioner of Prisons has agreed to implement a free shuttle service for visitors to the ECRC, so as to minimize a thoroughfare through the area.

Mr. President, we are continuing our work with residents to ensure that the existence of the facility does not, in any way, impact negatively on their community. In one instance there was a squatter of questionable operations in the area. We were able to have him removed.

We wish to thank the residents for their cooperation to date and we look forward to a continued fruitful relationship in the future. The Ministry of National Security remains committed to continue working with them to resolve any issues that may arise. Mr. President, on that note, I beg to move.

Mr. President: Hon. Senators, leave has been granted for another matter to be raised on the Motion on the Adjournment for the debate.

**Water Taxi Service
(Maintenance of Service)**

Sen. Penelope Beckles: Thank you kindly, Mr. President. The other Motion, whether or not the Government has failed to ensure the proper maintenance of the water taxi and its service in the interest of public safety. This Motion qualified on December 05, 2011.

You notice that the question is phrased in a particular way, so as to ensure that the Minister is given the opportunity to properly clarify the situation, as I am seeking some information. I do not intend to be very long, I am going to zero in on exactly what is the information that I am requesting.

My information is that a particular company and that is Hornblower Marine Services, was contracted by the National Infrastructure Development Company, a state-owned enterprise, and it was awarded a contract for the Trinidad passenger fast ferry fleet.

This water taxi project of NIDCO, as we know this particular project was intended specifically to reduce the whole traffic between San Fernando and Port of Spain, the service is commuter-oriented and will begin operations with—it was expected—with four high-speed passenger vessels, and the four-boat operation would route from Port of Spain to San Fernando. It was expected that there would be one large vessel holding up to 400 passengers with three smaller vessel carrying up to 150 passengers each.

I know since the Minister has assumed responsibility for the Ministry, he has given all the data in relation to the use of the facility. My specific concern in asking him whether or not proper maintenance has taken place is because my information is that the contract expired on October 23, 2011. I am further advised that they left Trinidad and Tobago and that at the time that they left, certain moneys were owed to them. I am advised that that contract was not renewed.

7.10 p.m.

During the period that Hornblower Marine Services left and Nidco appointed a new company to be able to manage these water taxis, there was a period when there was actually no company that was the holder of what we call the Certificate of Compliance. Now, I raised the issue sometime ago as to whether or not the licence to operate the vessel, which would have been vested in Hornblower Marine Services, was subsequently vested in Nidco or any other company.

The fact that Nidco has purchased those fast ferries and that you had this particular company, that, under international maritime law was given the operating licence, it does not mean that if they have left the country that that licence will automatically go to Nidco, because under the international maritime licence there are certain requirements that Nidco would have had to meet and they would not be able to meet those requirements because it deals with having a certain type of personnel, a certain type of training and a number of other things that are required by the International Maritime Organization in order to qualify for that licence.

So, Mr. President, my specific question, therefore—and I have not deliberately cast any aspersion, I have asked a question, so I am hoping that the Minister is going to be able to clearly say that, when that contract expired on October 23, 2011 that Nidco then hired—well, either rehired Hornblower Marine Services or Nidco hired a new company, and that company would have met the qualifications of the International Maritime Organization, and that is to say, by getting the appropriate licence.

The reason that licence is important is because that licence will ensure that the vessel is properly insured and that persons who are using the vessels can also access claims in the event that anything happens to the vessels or anything happens to the persons using the vessel.

Now, I am aware that some \$55 million was allocated by the Government—I think it was in 2010—for the purposes of building a ferry terminal, and I know that that \$55 million was returned to the Treasury and to date that terminal has not been constructed.

I am also aware that because certain maintenance on those vessels was either not done or not completed that certain warranty claims that were filed by Nidco were not able to be successfully claimed on those warranties because of the fact that the maintenance was not in keeping with the requirements of the International Maritime Organization. So, my simple question, therefore, to the Minister, is whether or not the maintenance as required by the International Maritime Organization and the maintenance as required to ensure that the vessels run on time to provide the kind or quality of service that the Trinidadians and Tobagonians deserve, if that matter has now been sorted and settled.

Mr. President, I am aware that during the last Caricom meeting—and the Minister himself has made the announcement—that Government is now going to extend the servicing and there would now be a Caribbean fast-ferry service and, if

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I recall correctly, I think, yes, the Minister indicated that the proposal on the table is to offer 100,000 seats each year at a reduced rate at some US \$10. So, I suspect by that figure, it would suggest that there may be some form of subsidy that would be offered to our brothers and sisters in the Caricom region.

So, Mr. President, I thank you and I await the response of the Minister.

The Minister of Transport (Sen. The Hon. Devant Maharaj): Thank you very much, Mr. President, and I thank Sen. Beckles for raising this Motion on the Adjournment. It provides, really, to answer an issue concerning the water taxi, which I think needs to be ventilated. Honing in on, specifically, the Hornblower Maritime Services licence issue and warranty claims, really, is just part of the bigger whole. When you speak about the water taxi, while the Senator mentioned four vessels in the water taxi fleet as owned by Nidco, it really speaks to eight vessels. There are four 27-metre vessels and four 41-metre vessels. So, the Motion on the Adjournment really speaks to the water taxi service vessels, and my examination and request from Nidco and those who operate it really asked on all their vessels, so the eight vessels.

These vessels were delivered to Nidco on September 13, 2010 by Austral Pty Limited of Australia and they were covered then by a two-year warranty, so their warranty extended up to September 2012. The eight vessels are, for the education of Senators who may not be aware: the *HC Katia*, the *HC Olivia*, the *HC Milancia*, the *MV Su*, the *HSC Calypso Sprinter*, the *HSC Trini Flash*, the *HSC Paria Bullet* and the *HSC Carnival Runner*.

Just to give you a little idea of the maintenance cost the country has incurred so far and the period in which they were covered: the purchase price for the *HC Katia* was \$12 million; the sailing period for that vessel was December 2009 to September 2010. We spent on that vessel \$338,538 in 2009 in maintenance cost; in 2010, we spent \$2,428,194 in maintenance cost and while it stopped sailing in September 2010 we are still committed to paying maintenance cost in order to prevent the boat deteriorating significantly. So, the cost there was \$225,625 in 2011; in 2012, no doubt, the figure will continue.

The *HSC Olivia* cost the country \$12 million and, again, it sailed from December 2008 to September 2010. In 2009, the maintenance cost for that vessel was \$284,919. In 2010, the maintenance cost for that vessel was \$3,027,194; 2011, again, \$266,000 for the *HSC Olivia*. The *HC Milancia*, \$12 million cost, maintenance in 2009 for purposes of grounding \$335,000; 2010, \$2.3 million and 2011 the cost continues at \$223,000.

The *MV Su* cost this country \$25 million and never sailed a single day. The cost in 2009 without sailing was \$958,000; the cost in 2010 for maintenance of the *MV Su* that did not sail a day was \$7.8 million and in 2011, \$711,000 for the *MV Su*. The *HSC Calypso Sprinter*, *HSC Trini Flash*, *HSC Paria Bullet* and *HSC Carnival Runner* cost approximately \$189,000 together for their maintenance cost.

The two vessels that are used right now out of the four that are in rotation that could be used—because I must underscore the fact that the four vessels: the *HC Katia*, *HC Olivia*, *HC Milancia* and the *MV Su* are all up for sale.

Hon. Senator: All up to?

Sen. The Hon. D. Maharaj: All up for sale right now. The *MV Su*, we just got a report from the Gibraltar company saying that we cannot even tow it from where it is located. The cost of towing the *MV Su* is more than the actual price of the boat itself.

Some of the expenditures that were incurred in the *MV Su* that we need to remind ourselves about: [Interruption] we towed the *MV Su* from St. Thomas to Curacao at a cost of \$2.4 million. The price of removal of water pipe on the *MV Su* was \$1.2 million; to move the *MV Su* from Turkey to St. Thomas cost this country \$4.1 million; Inter Isle construction and maintenance of the *MV Su*, \$6.9 million. These are some of the costs that we incurred amounting to a total maintenance cost of approximately \$27 million. The *MV Su* cannot be sold for a fraction of that price. It is up for sale internationally and we are now advertising it locally. The other three boats would go a similar way and, hopefully, we would recoup some of the expenditure associated with that.

The four vessels that are working, two are used on a rotational basis with an execution of 16 sailings per day. The *HSC Carnival Runner*, in particular, is in commercial operation. The *HSC Calypso Sprinter* completed its planned maintenance works at the docks at Nidco's, San Fernando facility and is scheduled for rotation with the *HSC Carnival Runner* after December last year. All three vessels have undertaken the mandatory annual dry-docking in order to complete their maintenance which is required. The high-speed craft safety certificate issued by the International Class Society, the Det Norske Veritas, attesting to their full compliance of international safety standards has been completed as of December 20, 2011. Well, the *HSC Calypso Sprinter*, however, is still undergoing some repairs. The *HSC Paria Bullet* went on dry docking in December 2011.

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Some of the maintenance costs associated with those vessels: the *HSC Paria Bullet*—its spare parts \$129,000; the labour cost \$60,000; the total cost gives you approximately \$189,000. The *HSC Calypso Sprinter*, similar maintenance and repairs \$22,000; freight \$5,000 and labour cost \$36,000. The existing maintenance that these vessels undergo include preventative maintenance where you have mandatory equipment checks, computerized marine planned maintenance, you look also at the corrective maintenance which is undertaken either by Nidco itself or Austral Shipping in those areas which are covered by warranty. The major depot maintenance is also undertaken. The three vessels underwent annual dry-docking successfully between the period September and November 01, 2011. The fourth vessel underwent its annual mandatory dry-docking in December last year.

The maintenance of the previous vessels, as I mentioned, still has to be done in order that the boats remain afloat, because the cost of lifting the boats, if they sink in the water, will be twice as much. The *HC Milancia*, and *HC Olivia* were all purchased at a total of \$12 million and are currently laid up at the coast guard facility in Hart's Cut, Chaguaramas. The *MV Su* cost us approximately \$65,000 per month to berth it at Inter Isle.

Sen. Hinds: Go ahead with Cato. He would cost you more.

Sen. The Hon. D. Maharaj: Who is Cato? [*Laughter*] From December 2008 to October 2011, Hornblower Marine Services provides the technical oversight committee—coming to the point you are saying. From October 2011, Hornblower Marine Services underwent a month-to-month contract in which Nidco assumed full technical oversight for the maintenance, manning services until they put out tenders on the international market and the local market. It was viewed that the Hornblower Marine Services contract was a disadvantage to the country. The prices for the management fee included US \$45,000 or TT \$229,000 so far.

Thus far, for the three-year contracted period as well as the four-month period for the HMS Hornblower, the total sum contracted was approximately TT \$11.7 million. This excludes in-country costs, such as managers' salaries, apartment rental, travel cost and per diem for external contract hires. The maintenance cost of the *HSC Olivia*, *HSC Katia* and the *HSC Milancia* was approximately \$1 million in 2009.

In 2010, the cost for those three vessels was approximately \$7.8 million and in 2011 was \$700,000. In total, for the period 2009—2011, the *HSC Olivia*, *HSC Katia* and the *HSC Milancia* received maintenance cost to the tune of

approximately \$9.4 million. All of these vessels have not been sailing since October 2010, but in order to have them in some kind of sailable condition we must undertake these repairs and maintenance.

7.25 p.m.

The *GC Olivia*, *HC Katia*, *HC Milancia* and *MV Su* have therefore received maintenance to the tune, collectively, of approximately \$37million for the three-year period, the same price paid for the initial acquisition of all three vessels. We continue to do what is required in terms of OSHA requirements, infrastructural developments where necessary. The IBF Fund which was mentioned for the \$59 million, those funds are allocated for the maintenance of the facilities in Port of Spain and San Fernando and those projects will commence shortly.

In terms of the impact of the maintenance and its tangible results, from 2008—2010, the amount of incidents involving passengers were eight. In 2010—2012, these were three. We saw a 62.5 per cent decrease. Incidents involving vessels between 2008—2010, four; in 2010—2012, one, a 75 per cent decrease; 2008—2010 incidents involving crew, were four. Zero between 2010—2012, 100 per cent decrease.

So we saw an improvement in terms of the incidents associated with any maintenance defects as a result of more aggressive approach to maintenance of the vehicles looking at the cost and value for money. In 2009—2010, there were 90 cancellations due to the maintenance problems on these various vessels. From 2010 to present there have been 48 cancellations, a decrease of approximately 50 per cent. Again a visible, tangible manifestation of a more rigorous maintenance schedule.

In 2011, there was no cancellation for maintenance failures. This clearly reflects that a continuously improving maintenance regime of the vessel is better than what previously obtained. The four vessels are due for maintenance and dry-docking in May 2012.

Hornblower left in November 2011—coming back again to the issue of Hornblower. Nidco is now operating the Water Taxi and has the requisite licences and certificates. Recently Nidco did an audit and passed in accordance with the IMO Conventions. [*Desk thumping*]

Thank you.

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The Minister of Public Utilities (Sen. The Hon. Emmanuel George): Mr. President, I crave your indulgence on two matters. First of all, in respect of the adjournment of the Senate, I had begged to move that the Senate do now adjourn to Tuesday, April 03, 2012 at 11.00 a.m. I had moved that time after discussion with the Leader of the Opposition, however, at the request of the very Leader of the Opposition of the Senate, I am now proposing to move that the Senate do now adjourn to Tuesday, April 03, 2012 at 1.30 p.m., so as to not inconvenience Opposition Senators.

**Spiritual Shouter Baptist Liberation Day
(Greetings)**

The Minister of Public Utilities (Sen. The Hon. Emmanuel George): The other matter that I crave your indulgence, Mr. President, and the indulgence of this Senate, is to say something on the part of the Government side to the Shouter Baptist Community in commemoration of Shouter Baptist Day which is Friday. I crave your leave, Mr. President.

Mr. President: Certainly.

Sen. The Hon. E. George: Thank you very much. Mr. President, as you know, this coming Friday, March 30, 2012, is the commemoration of the Shouter Baptist Liberation Day. It is well known that the members of the Spiritual Shouter Baptist Faith were persecuted for their faith during Colonial rule. The British were intolerant of the cultures and religions of other people. It was an intolerance which was underlined by a racist superiority. Of course, such a position was both false and unacceptable.

The story of the Spiritual Shouter Baptist community here in Trinidad and Tobago, and indeed elsewhere in the Caribbean, is one of great strength and courage; strength to endure the banning of their faith that came with the passage of the Shouter Prohibition Ordinance of 1917. That prohibition was to last until 1951. During the 34 years that they were banned from practising their faith, members of the Shouter Baptist Faith had the courage to defy the unjust law. They, of course, paid a high price for this, as members were arrested, harassed and jailed for standing up for their right to freedom of worship.

Eventually, Mr. President, their persistence and belief in their God won the day and the law was repealed in 1951, through the instrumentality of the then Chief Minister, one, Albert Gomes. Today, we have a public holiday to

commemorate the liberation of Shouter Baptists is due to foresight of the UNC Government in 1996. The Shouter Baptists have contributed immensely to our nation and its development. Members of the faith are to be found in all spheres of life. They have a strong sense of values and commitment to family, church and community. One outstanding Baptist was none other than the founding father of our labour movement Tubal Uriah “Buzz” Butler. [*Desk thumping*]

Today the Government salutes the Spiritual Shouter Baptist community on the well-deserved recognition of their liberation. Our nation is better off because of their contribution. This holiday is testimony to our recognition of our multicultural, multi-religious society, testimony of our enshrinement of the right to freedom of worship and of conscience in our constitution.

On behalf of the Government, we wish all members of the Baptist Faith a very holy and happy Spiritual Baptist Liberation Day. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

Sen. Fitzgerald Hinds: May I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity on behalf of my colleagues on this Bench and certainly on behalf of all the Members of this Senate and all of the people of Trinidad and Tobago as we commemorate and celebrate Shouter Baptist Liberation Day in a few days’ time in Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. President, this is indeed a significant occasion in the lives of the Shouter Baptists in this country and by extension all of the people of Trinidad and Tobago, being multi-racial, multicultural and multi-religious as indeed we are. As a consequence of the auspicious nature of this celebration, it would, to my mind, be more than marginally uncouth to attempt to raise any direct political concerns as some people are wont to do. Let me confine my remarks to the celebration without more.

The name Leader Griffith stands tall in this celebration since he was the one, the spokesperson leading the charge for the Baptist community, to have the right to practise at least formally enshrined after its abolition sometime before. Leader Griffith stands tall in that Baptist fraternity as the man who led that charge. He was the spokesperson for those worshippers as they moved towards having the prohibition, to which Sen. George referred, repealed.

The history of the Baptists in Trinidad and Tobago and the Shouter Baptists in particular, cannot be altogether understood outside of the context of the struggle of the African people of Trinidad and Tobago who were imported, and that is to use a very gentle word, who were brought into Trinidad and Tobago against their wish and will from that beautiful continent, the history and birth of mankind, Africa; the place of the birth of mankind.

Greetings
[SEN. HINDS]

Tuesday March 27, 2012

The slaves worked in this part of the world and in Trinidad for over 450 years, and, as Bob Marley put it, they survived. The “black survivors” he called us when he was alive up to a few years ago. They survived whippings, they survived mutilations and they survived lynching sometimes by the wrists, sometimes by the ribs. They survived rape—all manners of brutality, sometimes buried in holes and molasses or honey put on their heads and left to the insects and the elements. But in the hearts and in the spirits of those people, our people, they carried that dream of Mother Africa and that vision for the future, and among the pearls that they carried in their souls were the elements of their religious pursuit.

So they developed their ability to deceive “Massa” who was very hostile to their religious practices and they found ways in order to practise their religion under the view of Massa, without Massa understanding what they were up to.

I commend the Spiritual Baptists because they were at the forefront of the preservation of their faith and have kept it alive today. Very briefly, it has happened with other religions. There is a place in New York by the name of Borough Park (Boro Park) which is famous for the prevalence of the Jewish people and they maintain Jewish Orthodoxy out of Germany where their people were killed in the 1940s. But before the actual holocaust, the warnings were there.

So in order to preserve their religion they were able to work a thing out where some of them went into the United States, settled in Borough Park and brought some of their Rabbis in and then the Rabbis just mysteriously disappeared. They told the immigration authorities that they needed another two or so Rabbis and that way they were able, before the holocaust, to bring a number of their leaders into New York, and today we have seen the growth of that religion and the spread across the United States. In similar fashion the Spiritual Baptists found a way to preserve it in Trinidad and Tobago and in other islands of the Caribbean and in fact around the Western World.

So, Mr. President, this is not an occasion for any political grandstanding, but I want to proudly say for the benefit of the Spiritual Baptists and the national and international communities—as I said earlier, the People’s National Movement recognizing the struggle, recognizing the need to preserve the right of people to practise, their religion and the worship of their own choice, did two things: one, in 1962, when we implemented a written Constitution enshrined therein among other rights and freedoms, the right to worship specifically in express terms as a constitutionally guaranteed and protected right. But prior to that, as I expressed earlier, it demonstrated its commitment from 1956 as we went to governance in this country, internal self-government and as it evolved to a holy Republican State by its conduct, that is to say, it never showed hostility to the Baptist community.

Greetings

Tuesday March 27, 2012

Sadly, in Trinidad and Tobago, within fairly recent times, there were elements of the Spiritual Baptist Faith who complained that one of their churches in Central Trinidad was destroyed. That is a blemish on our record. And I want to take the opportunity to apologize on behalf of the PNM and all the people of Trinidad and Tobago for that very awkward and untoward incident.

Mr. President, as we move towards the celebration come Friday, March 30, 2012, again on behalf of my colleagues, all the Members of this Senate, all Trinidad and Tobago and the World, we are focusing now on Archbishop Barbara Burke who shares presence with us here today. We commemorate your holiday, we send our love, our blessings [*Desk thumping*] and our greetings to you, and to the entire Spiritual Baptist Fraternity on this very worthy of celebration day.

Mr. President, with those few words, I wish to thank you.

7.40 p.m.

Sen. Elton Prescott SC: Thank you very much, Mr. President. I have been invited by my colleagues here on the Independent Bench—as you know we do not caucus—to bring greetings on this auspicious occasion, the Spiritual Shouter Baptist Liberation Day. I think we ought to start by acknowledging that after 50 years of independence, and being a constitutional democracy, we do cherish in this country the right enshrined in the Constitution to practise one's faith and to pursue one's belief without hindrance. That protection is guaranteed and we in Trinidad and Tobago are proud each day that we are able to follow faith. [*Desk thumping*]

The Spiritual Shouter Baptists have had a long, arduous history in this country. Their people have suffered. The story has been written and it has been repeated time and again for all of us who read of their history. People of a certain age would know of their congregations in the public spaces when they endeavoured to deliver their messages to those who cared to listen. It is an indomitable spirit that keeps them going, and it is a pity—if I may go down that road—that as we grow older and more mature we tend not to find that the Spiritual Shouter Baptists use the modern media techniques to deliver their message to the young who are likely to grow up not being aware of their existence unless they were born into the faith.

So that I think that in the midst of this celebration it would not be inappropriate for me to say to those who practise the faith, look to the future among the young people, if you are not already doing so, and try to get your messages out to them in a way that they can understand and embrace what you preach.

Greetings
[SEN. PRESCOTT SC]

Tuesday March 27, 2012

Just recently I read in the newspaper of the famed Reverend Elton Griffith who, as we all know, has been accredited as being the leader—

Sen. Al-Rawi: Elton is a good name.

Sen. E. Prescott SC: He probably had been named after me. [*Laughter*]

We understand that he came from another island to this country on his way elsewhere—I think to a battle zone somewhere in those days—and that he chose to put his bucket down in Trinidad and Tobago—[*Desk thumping*—]and has leapt into history and has remained there. He, no doubt, will continue to be revered as the leader.

Today’s leader—and I hope I am not stepping out of bounds when I say it—appears to be our colleague, Sen. Archbishop Barbara Burke, and for that reason I wish to congratulate her—[*Desk thumping*—]and those who share her beliefs and follow their creed in Trinidad and Tobago. There is no need—and I am quite sure, Sen. Archbishop Barbara Burke—to tell you and others of your faith that in Trinidad and Tobago we will always proudly protect the right of all of our citizens to follow their beliefs where they wish.

In this season of imminent celebrations—and I understand the Christians are having something soon; the moon is already up; the Muslims will pretty soon be celebrating—I offer our support and congratulations to your faith and members of your faith and wish you well in the years ahead.

Thank you very much. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. President: I would like to join Senators who preceded me in offering congratulations and best wishes to the Spiritual Shouter Baptists on their celebration of Liberation Day. I would also like to applaud them on their determination and courage in pursuing their religious convictions, and in saying so, I am aware that discrimination against one is discrimination against all. [*Desk thumping*] Therefore, the courage that you have showed stands out as a beacon for all of us in Trinidad and Tobago. We wish you God’s choicest blessings on your day and may your community continue to thrive and prosper.

Hon. Senator: Well said. [*Desk thumping*]

Question put and agreed to.

Senate adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 7.46 p.m.