

*Leave of Absence**Monday June 25, 2012***SENATE***Monday, June 25, 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 Senators Dr. Lester Henry and Subhas Ramkhelawan who are out of the country.

**REVOCAION OF APPOINTMENTS**

**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/ George Maxwell Richards  
President

TO: BRIGADIER JOHN CHRISOSTOM EDMUND SANDY

WHEREAS by the provisions of paragraph (e) of subsection (2) of section 43 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the President acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, is empowered to declare the seat of a Senator to be vacant:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS, President as aforesaid, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, in exercise of the power vested in me by the said paragraph (e) of subsection (2) of section 43 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, do hereby declare the seat of you, BRIGADIER JOHN CHRISOSTOM EDMUND SANDY, to be vacant, with immediate effect.

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 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2012.”

*Revocation of Appointments*  
[MR. PRESIDENT]

*Monday June 25, 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/ George Maxwell Richards  
President

TO: VERNA ST. ROSE GREAVES

WHEREAS by the provisions of paragraph (e) of subsection (2) of section 43 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the President acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, is empowered to declare the seat of a Senator to be vacant:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS, President as aforesaid, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, in exercise of the power vested in me by the said paragraph (e) of subsection (2) of section 43 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, do hereby declare the seat of you, VERNA ST. ROSE GREAVES, to be vacant, with immediate effect.

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 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 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/ George Maxwell Richards  
President

TO: MRS. NICOLE DYER-GRIFFITH

WHEREAS by the provisions of paragraph (e) of subsection (2) of section 43 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the President acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, is empowered to declare the seat of a Senator to be vacant:

*Revocation of Appointments**Monday June 25, 2012*

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS, President as aforesaid, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, in exercise of the power vested in me by the said paragraph (e) of subsection (2) of section 43 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, do hereby declare the seat of you, MRS. NICOLE DYER-GRIFFITH, to be vacant, with immediate effect.

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 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 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/ George Maxwell Richards  
President

TO: DANNY MAHARAJ

WHEREAS by the provisions of paragraph (e) of subsection (2) of section 43 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the President acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, is empowered to declare the seat of a Senator to be vacant:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS, President as aforesaid, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, in exercise of the power vested in me by the said paragraph (e) of subsection (2) of section 43 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, do hereby declare the seat of you, DANNY MAHARAJ, to be vacant, with immediate effect.

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 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2012."

**SENATORS' APPOINTMENT**

“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/ George Maxwell Richards  
President

TO: MR. GANGA SINGH

In exercise of the power vested in me by paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section 40 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, I, GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS, President as aforesaid, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, do hereby appoint you, GANGA SINGH, a Senator.

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 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 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/ George Maxwell Richards  
President

TO: MS. MARLENE COUDRAY

In exercise of the power vested in me by paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section 40 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, I, GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS, President as aforesaid, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, do hereby appoint you, MARLENE COUDRAY, a Senator.

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 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 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/ George Maxwell Richards  
President

TO: MR. JAMAL SHAMSHUDDIN MOHAMMED

In exercise of the power vested in me by paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section 40 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, I, GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS, President as aforesaid, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, do hereby appoint you, JAMAL SHAMSHUDDIN MOHAMMED, a Senator.

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 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 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/ George Maxwell Richards  
President

TO: MR. LARRY HOWAI

In exercise of the power vested in me by paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section 40 of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, I, GEORGE MAXWELL RICHARDS, President as aforesaid, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, do hereby appoint you, LARRY HOWAI, a Senator.

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 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2012.”

*Senators' Appointments*  
[MR. PRESIDENT]

*Monday June 25, 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/ George Maxwell Richards  
President

TO: MRS. SHERRIE HAMIDAN LORNA ALI

WHEREAS Senator Dr. Lester Henry 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 sections 44(1)(a) and 44(4)(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, do hereby appoint you, SHERRIE HAMIDAN LORNA ALI, to be temporarily a member of the Senate, with immediate effect and continuing during the period of absence from Trinidad and Tobago of the said Senator Dr. Lester Henry.

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 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 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/ George Maxwell Richards  
President

TO: MR. ALBERT WILLIAM BENEDICT SYDNEY

WHEREAS Senator Subhas Ramkhelawan 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)(c) of the Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago,

do hereby appoint you, ALBERT WILLIAM BENEDICT SYDNEY, to be temporarily a member of the Senate, with effect from 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2012 and continuing during the absence from Trinidad and Tobago of the said Senator Subhas Ramkhelawan.

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 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2012."

#### OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

*The following Senators took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance as required by law:*

Ganga Singh, Marlene Coudray, Jamal Shamshuddin Mohammed, Larry Howai, Sherrie Hamidan Lorna Ali, Albert William Benedict Sydney.

**1.45 p.m.**

#### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

**The Minister of the Environment and Water Resources (Sen. The Hon. Ganga Singh):** Mr. President, the Government is in a position to answer question No. 98, and ask for a deferral of the remainder questions 97, 99, 105 and those on the Order Paper for written answer also.

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** Before you proceed, if I could enquire. I know that the discretion is properly yours. Of the 25 questions that we have had deferred, I did not quite catch firstly, which one was being answered; secondly, what the date for deferral suggested by the Leader of Government Business, whom I now welcome, is supposed to be.

**Mr. President:** The question that is to be answered is No. 98, as I understand it, and I did not hear any other date. I take it, therefore, that we will proceed with the questions at this point.

#### **Roxborough Tobago Gas Station Construction (Details of)**

**98. Sen. Shamfa Cudjoe** asked the hon. Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs:

Could the Minister provide the Senate with details on whether there has been any progress made with the construction of the gas station in Roxborough Tobago?

**The Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Kevin Ramnarine):** Thank you very much, Mr. President. In May 2012, Government agreed to provide the sum of TT \$9.5 million under the PSIP to the National Petroleum Marketing Company for the construction of a new service station at Roxborough Tobago. The sod-turning ceremony for the commencement of work on this service station was conducted on June 02, 2012.

The Government recognizes the challenges faced by the people of Tobago—in particular, those who live and conduct business on the eastern side of the island as regards accessing fuel. The provision of this critical service to the people of Tobago was ignored by the previous Government, but will not be ignored by this Government. [*Desk thumping*]

Given the great social importance of ensuring uninterrupted supply of product to the motoring public in Tobago, Government has agreed to provide the required funding. The proposed service station will also support the tourism industry, as the town of Roxborough is traversed by tourists on their way to and from the rainforest and other popular tourist destinations.

Consequent on the approval of Government funding, NP has been mobilizing its resources to commence the construction of the Roxborough Service Station. The station will be located at the corner of the Windward Main Road and Roxborough Bloody Bay Road on 2,517.7 square metres of land. The site will have three 15,000-gallon underground tanks which will hold premium, super and diesel fuels.

NP is in possession of the requisite approvals from the Ministry of Planning and the Economy, the EMA, the Town and Country Planning Division and the Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs. The scheduled start date for the project is July 01, 2012. The estimated time frame for completion is eight months from the start of construction. This service station should, therefore, be completed by the end of February 2013. Mr. President, this concludes my response to the question. [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. Cudjoe:** Further supplemental please, Mr. President. Could the hon. Minister tell me, since the project was conceptualized by the previous administration and funding was provided, the contract was already awarded under the previous administration, and when this Government came into power— [*Interruption*]

**Mr. President:** Sorry, Sen. Cudjoe—



**Sen. Cudjoe:** It is part of my question.

**Mr. President:**—I cannot allow you to enter into debate. You may ask the question.

**Sen. Cudjoe:** It is part of my question, Mr. President. When this Government came into power, it said it would review the awarding of the contract for—it would be reviewed. [*Crosstalk*] The question is: what took the Government so long? Why did it take two years? What is the reason? What was the hold-up for taking two years after the contract had already been awarded and funding was already provided? What is the reason for the delay and you are just in time for an election?

**Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine:** Mr. President, I would be grateful to answer that if the Member would file a new question. [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** Thank you, Mr. President. Could the hon. Minister please assist us, insofar as he is here, to tell us about the construction and the progress? Within the realm of progress is he able to speak to the association of natural gas or CNG as a fuel source, as the Government has laid in two successive budgets without any measure of success?

**Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine:** Mr. President, I welcome answering that. CNG was contemplated for this particular site, but given the distance—CNG of course requires dedicated natural gas lines to bring that natural gas to the station—it does not look feasible at this point in time for the Roxborough site. Certainly, once natural gas begins to flow in Tobago—and they expect that to happen by the third quarter of this year—once the Couva Estate Facility is completed, natural gas and CNG as an option in Tobago will be feasible for stations close to the Cove Industrial Estate.

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** Further supplemental, Mr. President. I am very grateful for the hon. Minister again relying on the back of a strong PNM project in Cove. The further supplemental is, Mr. President, with respect to the sum 2,500 square feet—is that correct? With respect to the 2,500 square metres—[*Crosstalk*]

**Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine:** Square metres!

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** Square metres. I see! I was not sure if it was square feet or square metres. So it is square metres; much obliged, thank you.

**Sen. Ramlogan SC:** The PNM project was on the square feet!

**Sen. S. Cudjoe:** Further supplemental. Since the Minister had mentioned Cove and the work that the Government plans to do on the Cove estate, does that mean that the Government has agreed to the Tobago House of Assembly's request to have Cove identified as a special development area?

**Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine:** Mr. President, I do not think that is under my remit as Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs. [*Desk thumping*] I am sure if she files it, the appropriate Minister would answer.

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** Further supplemental, Mr. President, as the habit of “ducking” continues. With respect to the hon. Minister’s—[*Interruption*]

**Mr. President:** That was an unfortunate remark, you will have to withdraw it!

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** I withdraw the remark about “ducking”, Mr. President. It may be obvious but I should not say it. Thank you. If I could enquire, insofar as the hon. Minister is able to assist us with the last answer relative to CNG and pipelines being transmitted, in transmitting that pipeline to Tobago for the Roxborough station which the hon. Minister has told us they have contemplated, is there going to be any feed-off to any other gas stations in Trinidad whilst that Tobago route is being made? None have happened yet, so I am interested.

**Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine:** Mr. President, there are currently two gas stations which are nearing completion: one at Brentwood in Chaguanas and the other one in Tacarigua on the Eastern Main Road. Both stations will be carrying compressed natural gas and there are five other stations—I think I have answered this on a number of occasions—which are in various stages of development and have issues related to the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure and approvals and so on. But I think this is veering very far away from—[*Crosstalk*]

**Sen. George:** Very far!

**Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine:** —the substantive question, so I will leave it there.

**Sen. George:** Last two questions coming from the other side.

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** Mr. President, just for your guidance before the clerk rises, I was wondering, insofar as there was a deferral for questions—is that to be split between written questions which are due for today? There are 11 of them on, by my count, for answer today. Are we supposed to have any circulation of those? I am sure that they are ready, Mr. President.

**Mr. President:** I understood the Leader of Government Business to say that all questions other than 98 would be deferred.

#### PROCEDURAL MOTION

**The Minister of the Environment and Water Resources (Sen. The Hon. Ganga Singh):** Mr. President, I beg to move, under item 14, that the Senate debate today, to conclusion, Motion No. 1 under private business.

*Question proposed.*

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** Sorry, Mr. President, just for your clarification, is it that the hon. Leader of Government Business is suggesting that that be debated after Sen. Armstrong has dealt with his issues?—just for clarification.

**Mr. President:** That is what I understand it to mean.

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** Yes? Thank you, Mr. President.

*Question put and agreed to.*

#### JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE SECOND REPORT

#### Parliamentary Accommodation (Adoption)

**Sen. Dr. James Armstrong:** Mr. President, if you just briefly permit me to welcome our new colleagues here today and also to say condolences to Sen. Coudray. I beg to move the following Motion standing in my name:

*Be it Resolved* that the Senate adopt the Second Report of the Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary Accommodation 10th Parliament—2011/2012 Session.

Mr. President, on October 08, 2010, and October 12, 2010, the House of Representatives and Senate respectively agreed to the following resolution which established a Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary Accommodation.

*Be it Resolved* that the Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary Accommodation be established.

*Be it Further Resolved* that this committee be mandated to consider essential guiding policies related to members and staff accommodation during the restoration of the Red House, and report to both Houses from time to time.

Following the establishment of the committee, the House of Representatives and the Senate by resolution October 29, 2010 and November 02, 2010, respectively, made appointments to the committee. Subsequently, on September 09, 2011, the Senate replaced Sen. Mary King and Sen. Nan Gosine-Ramgoolam with Sen. Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie and Sen. Devant Maharaj.

Mr. President, the current members of the committee are: Mr. Stephen Cadiz, Chairman; Dr. Keith Rowley; Dr. Delmon Baker; Mr. Colm Imbert; Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh; Mrs. Ramona Ramdial; Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie; Mr. Faris Al-Rawi; Mr. Devant Maharaj; Mr. Elton Prescott SC; Mr. Embau Moheni and Dr. James Armstrong.

**2.00 p.m.**

Mr. President, on February 23, 2011 and on March 01, 2011, the First Report of the committee was laid in the House of Representatives and the Senate respectively. I would briefly give a recap of what went into that First Report.

When the committee first met, we started off by looking at all the requirements for a new Parliament, which could be accommodated either at the Red House or elsewhere, and what we discovered from several tours of the Red House was that it was in a dilapidated state. We found that on the southern part of the building there was no floor—it was actually in that state for quite some time—and the roof needed significant repairs.

So, in fact, at that time, the Parliament was really occupying only half of the building and, therefore, what we had to take into consideration was whether we would have been able to continue functioning in that location while the renovations were taking place. The committee, after careful deliberations, decided that it was not appropriate for the Parliament to continue functioning in that location, and it was therefore decided that a recommendation be made that the Parliament be moved to new premises.

As we are aware, the Red House was constructed somewhere in the 1840s. It is a listed building by the Organization of American States and the Caribbean Council of Monuments and, therefore, we had to be very careful that any renovations that were to be made would not deface the building in any way, that the facade of the building would be maintained, and that we would be able to at least get significant service out of the building for several years to come. It is my understanding that once renovated we should be able to get about 80 to 100 years' service out of the building.

We also then took into consideration how modern Parliaments operate, so that that would actually inform the space requirements and configuration of the building. We wanted to have, as I said, minimal disruption and also to be sure that the parliamentarians and staff would be comfortable. It was, therefore, recommended that we move the staff of the Parliament completely, hence the reason we are now housed in this facility.

In this facility, we operate from the ground floor to the seventh floor for the parliamentarians and staff. More recently, there was a request that we also include the eighth floor for research staff associated with the parliamentarians and the work that they are required to carry out.

Mr. President, I would also like at this point to commend the parliamentary staff [*Desk thumping*] for their significant work in the way in which they assisted the committee. There is a saying in architecture, “form follows function”, and I was pleasantly surprised that the Clerk of the House and the staff had very detailed knowledge of the requirements of a modern Parliament and they had done significant research on how Parliaments in other jurisdictions operate. They were of considerable assistance to your committee in determining the way forward and the requirements.

The Second Report which we are considering today included a detailed brief on user needs. That took into consideration the historicity of the Red House and whether it would be adequate to house all the functions that we identified in the user brief. It was felt that the Red House in itself—even when fully restored and that when we have the use of the entire building—that it is totally inadequate. Therefore, what was agreed was that serious consideration had to be given to additional space requirements.

While we would have separate Chambers for the Lower House and the Upper House would be able to accommodate a number of functions in the main building, there would be a significant spillover. In the main building—to give you some idea of what it would be able to accommodate in the Red House itself—would be the Chamber for the Senate, Chamber for the House of Representatives, a media lounge, media briefing room, committee rooms, dining, offices for the principal officers, broadcasting, security services, Hansard and, quite importantly—I would like to make sure that we have sufficient space for this—a museum and education centre, as well as the parliamentary archives. Therefore, we require a companion building.

It was agreed that the companion building should be located across the street on the northern side of the Red House. That companion building will include the Clerk of the House, Clerk of the Senate, office of the marshal, secretariat, legal services, projects, parliamentary library, Hansard, expanded records and storage as well as parking facilities in that location. That is going to be a significant undertaking. It has been recommended by members of the committee that as we proceed, it would be necessary to hold consultations with the Judiciary and the principals of the other government facilities on that particular location, the northern side.

The Knox Street area between the two facilities—the existing Red House and the companion building—will be closed off and pedestrianized. Consideration is being given to either—well I think the committee agreed more or less with an overhead pass—some connectivity between the two buildings, so that there is ease of movement between the northern side and the southern side.

The main building—within the Red House, we should be able to get about 54,340 square feet in that location. The companion building will be about 90,000 square feet. We felt that this would also generate a significant amount of traffic, and the fact that we are closing off one of the streets, we have recommended that technical expertise be engaged to look at any urban design requirements and traffic and transportation requirements before we actually come to a definitive conclusion on designs and how we actually proceed.

So those services will be engaged by having technical expertise to advise the committee and the Clerk of the House and also to ensure that the consultants, project managers and UDeCott are adequately informed of the concerns that we have because in that area, as we are aware, there is already a significant amount of congestion. There is the lack of parking facilities in the area, and we want to be assured that we do not create any additional problems.

We also looked at the estimated cost. It is estimated that the renovations to the primary building, the Red House itself, would be in the vicinity of \$241 million. Now, we considered several figures provided by the consultants, and the members of the committee felt that some of these figures could not be accurate and that there were several unknowns. So, there are several requirements that we have asked the consultants to go back and look at and come up with some more precise figures. The understanding at the time, going into this report, was that the main building would cost \$241 million.

The accompanying building is estimated to cost \$205 million. We had to take into consideration the fact that the Red House—given its age and given the retrofitting that is required—that special care and attention would have to be provided, and it was indicated by the consultants that there is a significant cost compared to if you were dealing with a building of a more recent age.

The committee also suggested that all fees in respect of the work to be provided by the consultants should be capped at no more than 15 per cent. We were also advised by some of the specialists who advised the committee that we could look at, for instance, the work that was done on QRC and gain some experience from that. It was indicated that we should take note of the fact that a lot of the expertise that is required in this type of renovation resides in the country.

It was also noted that a number of persons who worked on the QRC building and received training, that efforts should be made to identify those persons so that they can be engaged again in this process. Not only that, but given the special

nature of this renovation, of this retrofitting, that efforts be made to also take into consideration training requirements that would lend itself readily to the engagement or development of special skills related to the renovation of buildings.

In that connection, I would also like to add that if that were done, in my view, I think we could have sufficient work for such artisans for maybe generation to come because there are several buildings around that we really need to do similar renovation work on, and given that special cadre of experts or artisans that we would have, I am sure—and with the commitment of the Government—that we would be able to take some of the youngsters that are now unemployed or underemployed and those who have some skills in that area and really put them to work.

I think these skills can very easily be exported. In the same way that we very often bring in expertise to do construction work in this country, it is very clear that construction skills, once established or once competent, can be quite footloose or can, in fact, be exported and moved around to other areas within the Caribbean and, perhaps, even beyond that. So there is an opportunity here as well, Mr. President, to look at some of the economic developments and job creation activities from this endeavour.

### **2.15 p.m.**

Consideration was also given to the special nature of what we call the parliamentary precinct, which is really to take into consideration the area. We have a number of adjacent buildings in the area that are of some historic significance that we should also take into consideration when we are looking at the state of Port of Spain and the need to actually enhance the area in general. So that is another matter that we took into consideration.

In concluding, let me say that the work of the committee was generally very informative. It is one of the committees that I really worked on where I found that there was harmony; most people made significant, really meaningful, contributions. There were seldom any points of contention, and that I think facilitated the work of the committee.

Mr. President, there is still a significant amount of work to be done. It is hoped that the Red House complex would be completed in the shortest possible time. No specific duration or time horizon was given, but it is expected that this would be completed in the shortest possible time. Therefore, as the work of that committee continues, I expect and hope that it would be done in a similar manner as we did before.

*JSC Parliamentary Accommodation*  
[SEN. DR. J. ARMSTRONG]

*Monday June 25, 2012*

Thank you, Mr. President, I beg to move.

*Question proposed.*

**Sen. Lyndira Oudit:** Good afternoon and thank you very much, Mr. President. Let me first of all welcome our new Senators and Ministers. Senators of this honourable Chamber, welcome. [*Desk thumping*] Also to my sister, Marlene Coudray, let me offer my deepest condolences to you on the loss of your child.

The original government buildings, according to history, started construction in 1848, some 164 years ago. There were several changes, additions and modifications, some planned and some as a result of unplanned activities. To commemorate Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee, in fact, in 1897, the government offices at that time were painted in what we know as our historic red. It was from that date that we have what is now considered the Red House.

We had the fire of 1903 as a result of the water riots. As a result of that, changes were made, and in 1907, coming out of the fire, emerged this new building.

What is interesting is that in 1990 we had a coup, and in 1991 the traditional Chamber was restored, but according to Trinidad and Tobago Info Index, it says, and allow me to quote:

With the re-election of the People's National Movement in 1992, the Red House once again became the centre of a controversy when a decision was made to remove a sea serpent atop the weather vane.

It seems that the Red House, for some time, has been used. I say that in all sense in a very sad moment, simply because I do not believe that the Red House has ever gotten the type of recognition and tribute or respect that this country could have afforded it historically and otherwise.

Mr. President, on Saturday, October 09, 2010, in an article by Clint Chan Tack, it says that on June 18, the Prime Minister, Kamla Persad-Bissessar, on convening the Tenth Parliament, identified very clearly that the Red House will be the permanent seat of Parliament. That put to rest any debate in this country. We have to ask the question at this point: why was that statement so significant? The leader of the former administration in a very unprecedented, and I would imagine probably not out of consultation, but certainly an unfortunate statement, made a decision and publicly issued a statement that the Parliament would be removed from the Red House, and instead would house the Office of the Prime Minister then.



What is very interesting in the history of this report, and this is what led up to these things here, is the fact that with the new manifestation of the People's National Movement, and I believe to the credit of the Leader of the Opposition, came full—I should say, 360 degrees—[*Interruption*] No, I would say 360, Sen. Al-Rawi. [*Laughter*]—simply because he came and stood next to the Prime Minister to make a statement in support of her when she said that the Parliament will remain at the Red House. [*Desk thumping*] So it is 360 degrees “come straight back”. They stood side by side. They made a full circle together, and that was very interesting. In fact, the statement simply was, and I am quoting from the article:

“Rowley expressed the hope that the Red House’s restoration which had been going on ‘forever’ would be completed and the building will be treated with the dignity that it deserves.”

A landmark decision and an announcement was made on June 18 by the hon. Prime Minister, fully supported by, now, the Leader of the Opposition and I would imagine, after consultation, this time with the Members of the Opposition. [*Desk thumping and laughter*]

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** “Dat is leader!” [*Laughter*]

**Sen. L. Oudit:** “Dat is leader.” So, Mr. President, on February 23, 2011, the Chairman laid in the Lower House the report by the hon. Minister, then Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr. Stephen Cadiz. In his report, identifying what was coming out of the committee, the interministerial and select committee that was chosen to look at this, the recommendations were simple.

First of all, let me say that I believe Dr. Armstrong is well-poised, knowing the history and well recognizing the significance of the Parliament building as a historical centre. Your work overseas, as well as in Trinidad and Tobago, would bring with that the appreciation that was suitably required for this post. I think it is an honour to have you lay this committee’s report today. [*Desk thumping*]

We had three recommendations basically: that the unhindered restoration of this important building be ensured. For the first time we see the Red House restoration project, which is good. The second recommendation was that there was an acknowledgment, and this was important. I found this was very, very humbling. It was a humbling statement that the committee acknowledged that the restoration efforts thus far were fraught with uncertainties. The third recommendation, having identified the various options, they looked at option 2, which was relocating us in this present Chamber to undertake then the work that was required for the Parliament.

Mr. President, at that time in 2010 when the statements were made by the hon. Prime Minister, we have here someone who is well-known in the industry and who speaks his mind very clearly. I refer to Mr. Afra Raymond who wrote an article after, and it said:

“Healing our capital’s Heritage buildings”

I found it was such a very good piece of writing. He said that:

“The failure to repair or maintain so many essential buildings is a tragic symbol of our disdain for history and the simple sense of proper maintenance.”

What Mr. Raymond did in that report was to identify some of the monuments that we consider, some of the cultural and physical monuments and buildings that we have, and some of the neglect. He went into a number of them. We have QRC, Knowsley, a number of them, but he went on to the end and said:

“These are the Heritage Buildings”—as well, which require—“urgent and high-quality attention...”

In it, he clearly identified the Red House. This is Mr. Afra Raymond. This is what he had to say:

“This is the seat of our Parliament and it is a true failure of repairs and maintenance. There has been an ongoing repair/replacement of the Red House roof for at least”—for over 10 years—“Our Parliament deserves no less than a solid restoration job and a proper maintenance programme...is in a sad state of disrepair. It is in need of a serious programme of repairs and renovation.”

That statement was made on June 02, 2010, and so it was very fitting that flat on the heels of that article you find that a statement was made to have that building undertaken as a heritage building.

Mr. President, this particular committee’s report not only satisfies the local appetite for some acknowledgement of where our Parliament and Red House ought to be, but we are, as some would know, a State Party to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. What does that mean? It means that in the Caribbean and the region, we have Trinidad and Tobago on February 16, 2005—Trinidad and Tobago ratified and became a State Party to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. So the entire convention came into effect in 1975, and many countries throughout the world are at various points of ratification or acceptance as the case may be. So we are party, and we have been provided with guidelines since 2005 for the way in which we treat with heritage buildings and architectural structures under our remit.

I am sure we have a conservation group, and we have Senators who are already actively involved in the conservation of buildings and heritage sites, and I am certain that they are very well aware—and it might have even hurt them further to know that despite having all the information and all the resources available to ensure that our heritage buildings did not go down to the state of disrepair that they came to, despite all of that, the wanton neglect that took place with our heritage buildings.

**2.30 p.m.**

For the record, Mr. President, a heritage building is identified as a structure with a combination of features—building or buildings separate or connected because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape are of value from the point of view of history, art or science. I say to you, the Red House today is a heritage structure in Trinidad and Tobago and must be treated with the respect that it deserves. *[Desk thumping]*

So, what are some of the implications for what we ratified in 2005? What are some of the implications regionally, internationally and nationally for ratifying the UNESCO World Heritage Convention? What have we pledged that we would do? We have pledged in that, that we will respect the tradition of our forefathers; we will respect the tradition of our parliamentary history that as we come forward—and our history did not start in 1956. There were colonial powers in the past—and while we have come recently, we have had significant changes. We have a history of democracy in this country.

Mr. President, this convention provides guidelines and the guidelines are very clear. One of the things that the guidelines provided to all and sundry since 2005 was to alert agencies under the Government—regional agencies, national agencies and agencies of State—since 2005 it provided detailed guidelines for what would have been considered dangers or threats to historic or monumental or heritage buildings.

Articles 177 and 179, in particular, identify what were some of the dangers to buildings. We have what is called “ascertained danger” and “potential danger”. Some of the ascertained danger or dangers to buildings—and in particular I would like to remember that this is the Red House that we are talking about—and if these are the guidelines that tell us these things are threats to our national buildings, it seems no one was listening. It seems no one was listening.

Some of the dangers: serious deterioration of materials; serious deterioration of structure and ornamental features; serious deterioration of architectural or town planning adherence; serious deterioration of urban or rural space or its natural environment; a significant loss of historical authenticity; important loss of or threat of loss of cultural significance. It went on and spoke about potential

dangers; the degree of protection that was allowed for the buildings; lack of a conservation policy towards the building; lack of regional planning projects towards these buildings; threats or effects, even armed conflict. It says outbreak or threat of armed conflict. In 1990, we did have the Red House—literally some parts of it—devastated as a result of the 1990 coup.

Mr. President, it went on and there are several areas, and I do not wish to go into a detailed lengthy explanation of all the threats. But these threats were identified. It was very clear. I just want to read one article. Article 181 of this convention, and I remind, this is from 2005 that we have had these documents here. Article 181 says:

“In addition, the factor or factors which are threatening the integrity of the property must be those which are amenable to correction by human action...the factors threatening the integrity of a property may be corrected by administrative or legal action”—especially—“major public works...or the improvement of legal status.”

Mr. President, we ratified this convention in 2005, and yet we have, year after year, an absolute neglect of that public building of which we should have been proud; for which we should have been rushing to restore.

I hear Dr. Armstrong talking about our children—how many of our children, how many of our grandchildren who sit with us, would have walked through the steps of the Parliament and understood and would have seen the stages of our democratic development as we came up? How many of them would have known—unless they go to the airport and see some of the former Presidents—how many of them would have actually known our former leaders? That is where we should have been teaching our children. We come now after decades and try to teach our children the rights and the freedoms enjoyed under democracy when we, too, as a nation and as a system of Government, we failed to protect that particular building which was a symbol of all that we held dear.

Mr. President, so I come now to this particular committee report. On a personal level, I am extremely heartened that this Government took the initiative to put this committee together made up of Independents, Opposition and Members of the Government. I thank the Prime Minister for making a very bold statement on June 18, when she indicated to the national community that the Red House would remain as the seat of Parliament. It is a due home. We are here temporarily, and I look forward—if not me, certainly any Member of Parliament when it is reopened—to that restored historic building.

Mr. President, just four areas that I would like to really say that this committee’s work, if for no other reason, but for these areas, in my own humble estimation—one of the things that was clear was when I saw the words “distinct parliamentary precinct”.

So, I am looking at page 8—I am sure it came up earlier—and it identifies a parliamentary precinct, and what I found was so good, is that too often we build one building or one structure and we have so many high expectations from the work taking place within there, that since 1956, 1962, 1976; all those significant turning points in the history of our country and very few additions were made to house—we keep thanking the members of the parliamentary staff, and yet, under the existing Red House, the parliamentary staff operated in cramped and unhygienic and unsafe conditions.

So, we always thank them, but how were these people shown the level of appreciation that was required. Where was the library? Where was the administration of the Hansard? I recall going through, I always like to take my visitors, school trips, the few that I organized last year and over the last two years, I would take them especially to meet with the Hansard reporters because I felt that was the engine room of the Parliament. It was the engine room. It records for posterity what we do, but how were they acknowledged? How were they thanked?

Mr. President, on page 19, very clear and to the credit of this committee, are some of the restoration guidelines, and what I found is that if you look at the operational guidelines given in the World Heritage Convention, and you look at the restoration guidelines here, it goes hand in hand with what is required. And it is not that we have to have an international convention to tell us because we certainly do have a very good cadre of persons, building contractors, construction, who are very capable, but in terms of the World Heritage Convention guidelines, it is very clear that a tremendous amount of work went into the restoration guidelines as identified in this particular article.

We have here on page 23 the idea of two Chambers, and it is very clear that our Parliament sits, possibly twice, maybe three times for the week, but we share one Chamber, and so one of the understandings is that when you have two Chambers you can actually have concurrent sittings with a requisite increase in staff, dedicated staff for either the Senate or for the Lower House. So, this is required and this was very, very important and I commend the committee for making this recommendation.

Finally, the idea of what I heard Dr. Armstrong say as what he was so very proud about, was the fact that we have under “Enhanced Visitor Services” on page 28, the whole idea of a parliamentary museum. The article says, and this is Article No. 93:

“The museum should provide space for the display of historical information, documents and artifacts and exhibition on topics that have shaped our democracy. It must be a space where groups and visitors can share ideas in a heritage building and reflect on a balanced range of experiences reflected. There will be an education centre among other things.”

Mr. President, we cannot keep inventing without keeping the old, and much of our history, political history, our democratic history, much of it, if you ask many of our students today—even many of our adults—do not know some of the intricate details involved in the history. And I believe and I fully support, especially, the work to have the museum. We have to identify some of the things that that museum could achieve, and I know you, Sir, along with Speaker Mark, would have visited the Parliament Museum of India. So, I make reference to that, having seen it, I believe, I do not know what the scope of this particular museum is, but certainly many people here would have visited, and there are other countries that would have parliamentary museums, but I make reference to that one.

Mr. President, it is my hope that the parliamentary museum identified in this committee's report would achieve some of the things that India's Parliament Museum did achieve—the democratic heritage through their heritage walk. They have their freedom movement; they call it the “diorama”. The British reforms and some of the autonomy, some of the ideas of the evolution of their multiparty democracy is carved out in multimedia. They have a transferring of power; a multimedia screen, a computerized panoramic projection of the Constitution of India, and in this case I would hope constitutional development and even drafts.

We also have in our own parliamentary library our *Trinidad Gazette*, and I believe, if I am not mistaken, as far back as 1897; some of the records from 1897 are housed in or through the *Gazette*. We have that. We have burgesses; we can track deeds, titles and so many of our historical things. In fact, there are records of immigration and slave routes that were used. So, we have all of that currently under our parliamentary library which is one of those proposed areas, but that is for a next debate. But certainly the idea of the state of some of those documents require us to really look and see how as a nation we have been protecting the interest of our history.

So, Mr. President, I am very heartened. I did not intend to speak very long, and I really would like to say that the work of this committee at all costs must be protected, must be encouraged; we must see and try to encourage the fulfilment of what is identified in the report. It is a very good report, the proposals and the plans are very good, and I support wholeheartedly this committee's report.

Mr. President, I do thank you.

**2.45 p.m.**

**Sen. Faris Al-Rawi:** Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, it is an honour to rise to make a contribution on this Motion before the honourable Senate, particularly on a day such as today. Mr. President, as I am sure you would appreciate, this report speaks to the adequacy of not only accommodation, but the functionality of our Parliament. In fact, it speaks to that function specifically with reference to its Members.

On the note of Members, and therefore, to demonstrate my relevance, having laid that foundation, I note that we have many new Senators before us today, whose adequacy and functionality we must also surely contemplate in the context of this Motion. We have spoken about the efficiency of our Parliament—whilst my learned colleague was speaking—and in preparation for this debate, I took a quick glance at our Parliament website because, of course, we will be housing our information technology platforms into the new precinct of Parliament which we are seeking to recommend by way of adoption of this Motion. To demonstrate the level of efficiency of our staff here, Mr. President, under current Members of the Senate, all new Senators sitting before us today have been added. In fact, Mr. President, so successfully were they added, that one dare say if you look to the details of what was added, that they were added with a little bit of a compliment.

The first I will start with is, of course, to the lady amongst us and that is, Sen. The Hon. Marlene Coudray, whom I welcome warmly to this Chamber. She is no stranger to my life. She has been a strong “San Fernandian” of the best type possible, and I wish to extend my personal compliments to her and of course, as I have done already, my sincere condolences to her on her tragedy.

Mr. President, taking it on to a much lighter note, on to the compliment, I noticed, I am sure with your leave—because we are referring to the Parliament, a very beautiful picture of one Ganga Singh—[*Laughter*]*—*with black hair and all, as he sits now with his smoking top, very dapper look upon him, but, I welcome him as the Leader of Government Business. He is no stranger to this Senate. He has sat in the political benches for some 12 years, both as a Government Minister and as an Opposition Member, and indeed I have read his contributions with delight, sometimes with your leave, Mr. President, in quoting him on this very Senate floor. So I look forward to his contribution across the floor.

I also wish to extend a warm congratulation to Sen. Jamal Mohammed. I welcome him as my brother to this Senate, and congratulations to those Ministers who have been elevated. My one complaint relative to accommodation is that

some of our sterling Senators have now moved so far to my left that I may need some assistance in hearing their voices from time to time. Sen. Bharath is no longer close to me, and there has been somewhat of a lateral inversion between past Leader of Government Business and present Leader of Government Business. I am warmed in the accommodation that he has survived the chopping block—[*Laughter and desk thumping*]—because the last Leader of Government Business was not as fortunate one year ago. He, too, is sorely missed.

Mr. President, I wanted to start off on a bit of a lighter note, but to drill down now to the meaning of this report. This is the second report of our committee. The committee has had the benefit, able assistance of some 14 Members—Members of the Opposition, Members of the Government and Independent Senators—and in looking at this, we have noticed that the work of Parliament, as is set out in the context of the report, is a very broad one.

Page 1, page 6, page 13, page 15 of the report itself set out, in particular, the future direction of Parliament—at page 1. We looked at page 8 to the temporary accommodation aspect at paragraph 8; we looked to the availability of this particular space at floor 8 on page 9, paragraph 9; we looked to the needs of Parliament, to identify needs of Members at paragraph 12. At paragraph 14, we looked to the adequacy of space for Members, for office work, meetings and the interconnection and functions of service. We looked to contemplating future needs for 20 years to be seen at the bottom of page 7. We also note at the addendum, and this is in the user brief which speaks to the aspect of where we see the development of Parliament, a very interesting paragraph at paragraph 72 of the user brief at page 17 that:

“It is envisaged that there could be a Ministers floor of offices staffed by a small group of shared staff. This floor should have appropriate meeting rooms for Ministers...”

I say that because this current parliamentary building that we are all privileged to enjoy, Mr. President, was one—of course it was built by the current project manager as we contemplate here, that is UDeCott. It was a project of the People’s National Movement—yes, Mr. President, but it provided much needed and immediate accommodation for the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago so that this committee’s work could be performed.

In looking at the future growth, and in particular the interconnection of uses and Members’ uses and Ministers’ uses—this current building in our report, we have a request for usage of floor 8. That is because this building is properly used,



sometimes for Cabinet meetings, meetings with Ministers, meetings with constituents, for Members of the Opposition, for Independent persons, like Senators who sit amongst us. So there is a multiuse—joint select committees—there is a varied and wide usage that we have in this Parliament. When we look to the climate in which we are discussing this particular report, it is very important to note that if you were to extrapolate the expansions that we see afoot by the current Government with respect to Ministers, Cabinet Members, persons sitting in Parliament, it is axiomatic that you are going to need more space.

I say that, Mr. President, as a caution for us all to contemplate in adopting this report, that it is a serious thing to bear in mind, that Trinidad and Tobago now has one of the largest Cabinets in the world. I am sure, Mr. President, you, having had the recent benefit as the honourable Speaker has—I am not drawing you into the debate by any way of running afoul of the rules, our Standing Orders—that in anticipating the extrapolation of our Parliament, if one were to, for some difficult reason assume that the UNC coalition would proceed further, that the expansion of Cabinet, and therefore the accommodation for Members of the Government has to be accommodated and borne carefully in mind.

Look at it, Mr. President, in the context of comparison with the Indian Parliament. We heard Sen. Lyndira Oudit speak of the visits to the museum in India by Members of our own Chamber, the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, being the Lower House and the Senate, respectfully, in India.

In India, Mr. President, it is interesting, that in the House of Representatives there are 552 seats, and in the Senate an accommodation for up to 250 persons, but yet we see in India that the Cabinet there, for instance, where Members are accommodated in the building, has only 34 persons in it. We noticed in the United States of America, with a population of 313 million people that their accommodation allows only for 23 persons in their Cabinet. India of course, as you are well aware, has 1.2 billion people in it. China, with a population of 1.3 billion people, has 27 Ministries. Right here in the Caribbean, we notice that accommodation provided for Members of the Cabinet—in Jamaica the Cabinet is 16 persons; in Barbados, the Cabinet is 18 persons, Guyana 22, and then we see where we are going to, in contemplating this report—Trinidad and Tobago now has 33 Ministers.

So, we have to be very careful in understanding how we are going to accommodate our Ministers as contemplated by this report, and more particularly, how much it is going to cost us because we have not been regaled with an explanation as to how Trinidad and Tobago is going to be able to afford the

expansion of Ministries as we see now, and therefore, by way of extrapolation and relevance to this report the accommodation of Ministers in our companion building and in our Red House. That is a very important concern, and it answers an issue raised by my learned colleague Sen. Lyndira Oudit because she complained, quite rightly, that the Red House did not receive the attention that it should have as an historical monument; as Sen. Dr. Armstrong recognized, one being listed as it is, as an historical building in Trinidad and Tobago.

It is noteworthy that through the NAR, through the UNC, through the PNM, and now back to the UNC principally, that this work of reflecting upon our restoration of the Parliament and suitable accommodation for the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago with its associated needs, Mr. President, is a critical one. But it is important—lest one were to perceive the tone in which my learned colleague Sen. Oudit’s delivery was made—to understand that this is an issue that has been ongoing for a long while and Trinidad and Tobago has to now embrace the issue of how do we afford it.

Is it apposite that we do this now? Because this is what the report speaks to. The report says Parliament has a need for roughly 150,000 square feet of space, that the Red House can only in fact accommodate—I believe it is 43,000 square feet. Therefore, Mr. President, we must engage in the construction of a companion building that we know is to be seated to the north in terms of a recommendation of the current Parliament, that is, you have got to demolish the Ministry of National Security, et cetera.

But what is the cost, Mr. President? The cost to the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago is an important item. We are talking—before the inclusion of 15 per cent fees which we have recommended to be capped for professional services of half a billion dollars of expenditure. That is without project delays, without escalation, Mr. President, but we are talking about a serious amount of money. And we are also talking about inter-articulation with a very important district, and that district I refer to, of course, if you are at the Red House to the north and east, you have got the High Court of Justice, the Supreme Court, and then to the immediate north you have got the Magistracy, the Port of Spain Magistrate’s Court.

So, we the Members in the committee recommended that discussions be had with the Judiciary in the separation of powers distance that we enjoy, as to what the future needs and development of the Judiciary will look like, what security concerns of the Judiciary may look like, because it is conceivable, with the vast expansion of Ministries as we see this Government enjoying without a statement as to how it is going to afford it—let alone what it is they are supposed to be

doing—without that kind of explanation, it is clearly contemplated in this report at paragraph 74 of the user brief, in particular, that members of the public are going to have to come and access the Ministers who perform functions for the Government. But the very critical issue for us is how do we afford it.

Now, Mr. President, I am confident, as he is well capable, that the Leader of Government Business could well stand today—as I see him taking notes, hopefully to join in the debate—and say look, there are allegations of profligacy against you, the People’s National Movement, in your previous incarnation, why did you not deal with it yourself and do some prioritization. The point is, lest that feeble position be recommended for consideration without the context, that the context be appreciated.

### **3.00 p.m.**

And that is, that when you have a statement, as we have had by this Government when in opposition, that the PNM enjoyed \$300 billion of budget combined—if you add up each year annually in the budget they come to a figure of \$300 billion—they say, “What did you do with it? Why did you not prioritize? Why did you build the Tarouba stadium?” I have the same question. There are some genuine points you can look at.

The truth is, when you strip away the hype, the vast amount of money spent was—and is—by this current Government on the delivery of social services, subsidies to the tune of about 70 per cent of your budget item, therefore calling into question how much money you have to spend in terms of building of a new Parliament, that is a restoration for \$250 million and then a new Parliament block in the new precinct for another estimated \$250 million. The point is, you have got to appreciate the context that the vast amount of your revenue is spent—or rather the vast amount of your expenditure is directed towards recurrent issues.

But the difference between the PNM and the UNC—and, therefore, the confidence in a project like this—lies in the fact that the PNM has always been careful to state where its revenue is coming from, sometimes as a sword upon which it has fallen. The PNM has sometimes been viewed to fall on its sword insofar as it states bold policies like property taxes, like revenue authority, like expenditure on OPVs and national security, like expenditure on SAUTT, so that you can have revenue generation through projects like Alutrint, et cetera, so that you can now spend on projects such as this, Mr. President.

But where a huge question mark hangs in relation to where this report is going to go is: how does this Government in its passion for raising debt ceiling limits, in its passion for having the largest budgetary expenditures of \$115 billion in expenditure in two budgets back to back—one-third of what the PNM enjoyed—how do they pay for it, Mr. President? Because when we spend half a billion dollars on a project like this—which I agree with Sen. Oudit is important from a restoration point—the question is: how do we pay it back? Who is picking up the tab and when? Where is the source of financing? Where does the cheque book on the overdraft that we are writing come to be balanced by revenue?

You may have noticed I did not welcome Sen. Howai as yet because I was waiting for this point. I am welcoming him as a man of extreme integrity, well-respected in the private sector. As our new Minister of Finance I welcome him to this Senate. I look forward to interaction with him. I hope that he can make the jump from private sector to public sector successfully. I do not only hope so out of pure altruism, but I also hope so because he is my new Minister of Finance and, therefore, this particular question falls squarely in his lap. Please, hon. Senator, encourage your colleagues, through you, Mr. President, to state where the revenue is coming from.

It is all well and good to write the cheque book on an approved overdraft of debt ceiling limits, but how do we pay back the moneys? Where do future generations for these projects look to find money is a critical issue that we must contemplate in the broader aspect and appreciation and understanding of this Motion. So whilst on Friday I was careful in being respectful to colleagues who would soon be fallen—not a sound having been played for them on their political demise today—today I cannot engage in that sort of behaviour. We have got new people forward, bright faces, very experienced persons sitting and, therefore, the hard questions have to be asked because in the expansion of Government that we are seeing to be housed in this Red House and in the companion building, the question is: how many more changes are we going to see?

I was taking note of Sen. Oudit's contribution, and I make notes in my little pad here, Mr. President, and I usually box off in a square the words that jump out at me that I may or may not wish to respond to. And as I look down the line through Sen. Oudit's contribution by my own hand, the words that I blocked off actually formed a very curious pattern: "changes"; "fire"; "emerged"; "controversy"; "remove"; "sea serpent"—of course lifted, quite properly, out of the context in which it was said. But when you pull the strings together, quite an interesting statement, because we have had the firing of persons, unceremoniously, for those opposite who do not know what is about to happen, perhaps even for those opposite—to me—who did not see it coming either.

But when you have got frequent changes, Mr. President, it is a revenue item to consider in this Motion and, therefore, you have got to ask the question: how do we, with frequency of change as this Government is prone to demonstrating—eight Ministers gone in two years; two Cabinet reshuffles back to back—

**Mr. President:** Senator, you are extending yourself outside the question for debate, at this point anyhow.

**Sen. F. Al-Rawi:** I am glad to see that you are still spritely on your toes, Mr. President, and sharp of mind in guiding me on my relevance, so I will peg closer to demonstrating my relevance, and I take your guidance, Mr. President, of course. But, Mr. President, the relevance of what I am saying is contemplated by paragraph 74 of the user brief recommended for adoption by the Motion before us as to the expansion of Parliament and Members and Ministers having use of the Parliament precincts and, therefore, the adequacy of space and how we pay for it.

So in expanding the Parliament the way we are doing with the frequency of changes of persons before us, I must extrapolate from the data provided, and the data apparent, if one were to use the term of taking judicial notice, is eight Ministers fired in two years. What is going to happen in the future that will affect the user brief here? Is it that we are going to have eight more fired one year from now? Are we going to have another Leader of Government Business one year from now? All questions which drive to a simple point: what is the cost in escalation of this fashion without a revenue statement? Is it going to be financed? What is the overall cost going to be?

This is so, Mr. President, even more important when you take notice of a very interesting article in the papers which spoke to an apparent confusion between the client for this particular project, that is the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago, and various Ministries that are in operation. There was reported in the newspapers—and forgive me, I cannot identify the source because it has just come to mind. It was discussed in the Lower House debate on the adoption of this Motion.

But the point is, as the population has currently—and I hope that Sen. Dr. Armstrong, perhaps in his wrap-up, could assist us in identifying what the confusion was in relation to the user—the client, the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago's ownership of this project versus the Ministries which undertake it because the structure which this report recommends is: the client is the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago. The report says the intention is to have an autonomous Parliament; the person providing the services is UDeCott, no stranger to Trinidad and Tobago—in fact, the entity which coordinated this very building, on target and on budget, Mr. President, I might add.

But there was an issue which I hope the mover of the Motion, or perhaps someone opposite, can clarify as to how the inter-ministerial committee which has been assisting the client, which is the Parliament, has come to have involvement in this project which may cause confusion. It is something which is important to identify and to have explanation for.

So, Mr. President, Trinidad and Tobago, seeing the largest Cabinet in the world—in the Commonwealth, certainly—comparable in size to that of India, China, with populations in the billions; expansion of that type causing, therefore, the need for us to contemplate where do we put these people.

Trinidad and Tobago must also contemplate, Mr. President, the question as to how we pay back. The fact that our deficit is growing; the fact that we are awash with liquidity, Mr. President; the fact that our debt ceiling in respect of development, corporate guarantees, et cetera, has been raised to the tune of \$33.1 billion, Mr. President; the fact that we have no revenue item on the landscape which tells us how we are going to pay for the back-to-back deficits that we have been running—we having no problem with deficit financing or deficit budgets, Mr. President, but the question is: where is the money? What is the length of the moratorium? When do you have to start paying it back? Who is going to finance this project? Is it going to be, for instance, Mr. President, done by IDB?

It is a listed building. It is a project which may well qualify for that type of financing. But we know, Mr. President, and we must be conscious of this Government's track record with respect to available financing from the IDB, and that is, basically, in the shortest way possible I can say, it is to throw it away. So the procurement of those loans to pay for these things is critical.

Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. President, also has no form of statistics available to it, and statistical information is critical if we are looking at the publication of the census, for instance, as to users coming down the street; the inter-articulation issues that are going to be faced in terms of the Port of Spain use when we close off one street between the north block and the Red House. Central statistical information is critical. Now I can no longer look very quickly to the Minister of Planning and ask him—he has moved considerably further down the bench. But the question is: where are the statistics? They are relevant to this Motion. They have not been published.

Mr. President, it is perhaps useful to recommend to the Government that this new Parliament building have certain offices dedicated to certain issues in the Parliament, and that would fall into the ambit of the user brief. One very useful office, Mr. President, could very well be an office for questions. That could be an

office, for instance, Mr. President, where your questions put on the Order Paper, or to the Parliament, could have a management staff for it, where we could have reliable delivery of questions because successive Governments have been blamed, and there has been issue taken with Governments not answering questions asked. This Government today, for instance, took great pride, from my perspective, in not answering questions on the Order Paper and not even volunteering answers as to when they would be provided and why they were not.

That is so not only in this honourable Senate, but also in the House of Representatives where burning questions which the national community wishes—

**Mr. President:** Senator, you are once more beyond this debate.

**Sen. F. Al-Rawi:** Thank you, Mr. President.

**Hon. Senator:** He is fighting San Fernando West.

**Sen. F. Al-Rawi:** I am not fighting anything, Mr. President. I could never fight your Motion.

But the question, Mr. President, would be an office for the procurement of answers to questions so that we do not hear sordid excuses by the People's National Movement, for instance, when it failed to answer questions, or the UNC when it fails to answer questions.

Mr. President, I think that it is important for us, in seeking to procure an autonomous Parliament—as this brief recognizes we must—that we look to one area that I would recommend the Government ought to consider for expansion, even though they have the heaviest and largest and biggest Cabinet as we have seen, Mr. President—a very interesting area which would assist the work of this committee would be to allow for the autonomy of Parliament in terms of its own budget, its own cycles, its ability to pay its staff appropriately, Mr. President. As we know, our Hansard reporters, described as the engines of this good Senate, have not had success with their wage negotiations or in getting overtime.

**3.15 p.m.**

So the autonomy of Parliament is critical for us. And that is one area that I would happily accept by way of an expansion. Maybe we could move from 33 Ministers to a non-Minister insofar as the Parliament ought to be autonomous but have equal rank with a Minister, that is the person in the form of the Speaker who would head the Parliament and the President in the case of the Senate.

**Sen. George:** In Opposition you produce good ideas.

**Sen. F. Al-Rawi:** Yes, it is true. I hear the once and now removed Leader of Government Business saying something which is very true. When you are in Opposition, you get to produce good ideas.

**Sen. Maharaj:** In Opposition you get bright, you know.

**Sen. F. Al-Rawi:** Yes, you get bright in Opposition. The question is and the reality of that is you have time to focus on policy. You have time to develop and articulate your ideas. I would recommend that this Government actually adopt some policy and articulate some ideas. That would be welcome. [*Desk thumping*] But, the point is that it is regrettably not looking that bright. I hope that some of the new faces opposite will demonstrate—

**Sen. George:** “You looking very bright.”

**Sen. F. Al-Rawi:**—luminosity and wisdom.

**Sen. George:** “You lookin’ very bright. Dey lookin’ very bright like you.”

**Sen. F. Al-Rawi:** They are seasoned persons.

**Sen. George:** Bright like you.

**Sen. F. Al-Rawi:** The point is that we have got to make sure that we are answering the hard questions. Where are we going and how do we afford it?

**Sen. George:** He is the brightest person in the Senate.

**Sen. F. Al-Rawi:** Mr. President, I am not as thin-skinned as having need to ask for your protection. [*Laughter*]

**Sen. George:** I really did not say anything.

**Sen. F. Al-Rawi:** But the voice—I do not say voices—the voice opposite is somewhat disturbing, Mr. President. So I would encourage my learned erstwhile colleague—erstwhile Leader of Government Business—to “cool it” a little bit. He is okay.

We are perhaps on the march to the prorogation of Parliament on the June 26, which is tomorrow. I surely must leave a little room for us to get there lest this debate continues too long. I wish to say and congratulate first, the chairman of this committee hon. Stephen Cadiz. [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. George:** That is the first good point you made.

**Sen. F. Al-Rawi:** I think that he made an excellent chairman. It was a pleasure to work on this committee. I dare say, that the Opposition and Government and Independent voices in the Senate worked well together, and all ideas were accepted readily. The report, in fact, is reflective of ideas from all parties. So that



it was a pleasure to work on this particular committee. The chairman handled himself well. All Members contributed well, including my learned colleague opposite, Sen. Emmanuel George.

So, Mr. President, encouraging the adoption of this report as I do, I wish to say that the Members opposite bring some hope for salvation of the various parties that they represent. I was a little confused as to who was in what party, but, I am grateful to see it. I hope that the work of the Parliament can continue in a speedy fashion so we can get value for our dollar as we hope to get.

Mr. President, I ask you to encourage, if you may, the independence and autonomy of the Parliament in a more vigorous fashion so that we can incentivize those persons who work with us and for us in a better and more meaningful way and I thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this particular Motion. [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. Basharat Ali:** Thank you, Mr. President, I intend to be very brief. Let me first of all join with my fellow Senators in welcoming the new Senators. I have done so already personally. And on behalf of the Members of my bench we congratulate you and welcome you and hope to meet you at regular intervals. [*Desk thumping*]

I said I am going to be very brief because I am not really well prepared. The reason is I had not seen a hard copy of this report. For me it is extremely difficult to take a report of some 40 pages on soft copy and make sense out of it. I only got a hard copy when I came in here. I have very few points to raise and they all relate to the guts of the matter, and that is cost and schedule.

Mr. President, I failed to see a schedule of this particular project which we have now—the ongoing project—except that it is given in an appendix here which I cannot read. I do not know who can read it with their naked eyes. If I had a magnifying glass, I would have been able to.

So I would like someone from the committee to say what the schedule of this is. All it says is that the schedule is in appendix 2. That is all it says. I cannot find it anywhere else. To me if you are looking at any cost, that is one of the items you will be looking at—what the schedule is for the project.

The other point I wanted to raise. I found it very difficult to find out who prepared the user brief. It is not said anywhere. It speaks of the project manager and the user brief which is a substantial document. I have since learnt that it is UDeCott. I have no problem with that because I know UDeCott is handling the phase now which is the present building, the restoration project.

But we are looking here at two projects really: the project of the restoration and what is being proposed now as the companion project for the benefit of the staff. I agree with all that is said there but I do not understand who is running the show. So, is UDeCott a nominated contractor? I pose that question to my colleague down there who presented because it is important that we find out what that is.

Two things are bothering me: the schedule and the cost of the project. Now, the cost of the project to me is a ballpark figure which is on page 11 of the report; section 27 speaks of a cost of \$241 million based on a formula taking into account the cost of the Queen's Royal College restoration.

Now, I have no idea what that is, what time frame that is but that is the number that is here. In terms of budgeting—and we will be going in for our big budgeting again probably in a couple of months—we need to have a very firm kind of figure for that.

The second thing, as I said, is the second project now has given a figure of \$205 million compared to the current project of \$241 million. The numbers are given in dollars per square foot. I crave your indulgence, Mr. President, but it is time we start putting metric units into our documents. By the time that building is up, I am hoping that we will have a Metrology Act. And here it is we are still dealing in square feet. All the numbers are in square feet. I take objection to it really because the former Minister of Trade and Industry, and the hon. Minister of Planning and the Economy, both promised me that metrology is being pushed, assiduously is the word used.

So, I am looking forward to metrology being there soon. It is important for us. Seeing it in this document right through, I get confused. I am a metric man and I get confused. So that is another problem.

Now, in terms of the schedule—is it one and a half to two years according to that bar chart at the end of the document? So the cost or any cost that we do will be related to that schedule. Further, the later cost of the other project, which is still in the nascent stage—it is just being born. I do not know how they arrived at the figure of \$123 per square foot and \$206 million. I cannot say; I do not know what category. In my business we work on category of estimates and you go from the lower down right up to the higher estimate. Is UDeCott then the nominated contractor for which I may call phase I, and if we are going to phase II, would they be the contractor? Because, I expect by then we might have a new procurement regime. Hopefully we will. And then we might be able to do a competitive bidding for that second phase as compared to what we have done here.

So those are the numbers which I had problems with. I am hoping that my colleague here will put me right and then I will be able to read the report completely. Thank you very much. [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. Terrence Deyalsingh:** Thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me the opportunity to speak on the Second Report of the Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary Accommodation.

Mr. President, before I begin, it will be remiss of me if I did not welcome the new Senators: Sen. The Hon. Jamal Mohammed; Sen. The Hon. Larry Howai; Sen. The Hon. Ganga Singh, my friend of long standing; and last but not least, Sen. The Hon. Marlene Coudray.

In welcoming Sen. Marlene Coudray, we both condole with her and congratulate her on her appointment. I assure her that as parliamentarians, regardless of political stripes, she would find nothing but support, love and understanding at this time of her life. [*Desk thumping*] I leave her with an old Hebrew proverb which simply says:

“Say not in grief he is no more but live in thankfulness that he was.”

You can just substitute the word “he” for “she.”

Mr. President, as we welcome the new Senators I also say thank you for a job well done to our former colleagues: former Sen. Nicole Dyer-Griffith; former Sen. Danny Maharaj with whom I share an extra-parliamentary relationship, sorry that he will not be here again; Sen. Brig. John Sandy; Sen. Verna St. Rose-Greaves; gentle people that they were.

Mr. President, as I make a very brief contribution on this issue of accommodation which talks about the Red House, I was hoping Sen. Lyndira Oudit, in her historical perspective, would have mentioned that the Red House was the site for the raising of our independence flag in 1962 when we attained independence. So the Red House has large historical significance.

I fondly remember the Red House in my days at St. Mary’s College in the 1970s. Walking down we would cut through Woodford Square and in those days the rotunda between Abercromby Street and St. Vincent Street was open. So we could have walked across the rotunda to take a short cut to pick up my ride to go home.

I would like to also say that I fully concur and I am sure the rest of my colleagues, we fully concur and support our political leader Dr. Keith Rowley in recommending and supporting the retainment of the Red House as the seat of Parliament.

There is one issue which I would like to pose to Sen. Dr. Armstrong, who moved this particular Motion. You might remember while we were at the Red House, around this time last year, Trinidad and Tobago was visited by a series of earthquakes at that time. The issue of the Red House and its ability to withstand an earthquake was raised. I know it is too late now to redo the foundation. I do not know much about buildings. But, we were talking at that time to ensure that the Red House could in fact withstand a certain magnitude of earthquakes sometime in the future. So, I do not know if that was taken into in this report—especially in the old Chambers when you look up at those nice murals, you would not want that historical part of the Red House to be lost. So I am just enquiring, if when Sen. Dr. Armstrong is wrapping up whether he can say if an earthquake or a seismic survey study was done.

**3.30 p.m.**

Mr. President, Sen. Oudit mentioned the fact that we will have an education centre, something which I fully support. She spoke specifically about our democratic and political history, and that should reflect the contribution of all our Prime Ministers from Dr. Eric Williams, Mr. George Chambers, Mr. ANR Robinson, Mr. Basdeo Panday, Mr. Patrick Manning and now the incumbent, the hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, but what were some of the non-parliamentary uses that the Red House was put to and that it may be put to in the future?

In 1981, the body of the late founder of the nation, Dr. Eric Williams, lay in state—I believe in the rotunda—and more recently that of Sir Ellis Clarke. The precincts of the Red House also accommodate the eternal flame in memory of those citizens who fell in the attempted coup of 1990. I again, if we are talking about the Red House—Mr. President, please forgive me. I crave your indulgence for raising a topic which I have raised twice before—*[Interruption]*

**Hon. Senator:** Three times.

**Sen. T. Deyalsingh:** Three times before—and I think everybody here who has heard me, I will revisit the issue of the photograph of Mr. Leo Des Vignes. *[Desk thumping]* It has not yet been put up on the western wall and I will just leave it at that.

**Sen. George:** “We cyah run the Parliament. The Parliament people decide that, not us.”

**Sen. T. Deyalsingh:** Sen. Emmanuel George, it is just a recommendation.

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** He missing the link.

**Sen. T. Deyalsingh:** You are missing the point of the issue, but I will leave you alone, Sir. I will leave you alone, Sir.

Mr. President, our parliamentary accommodation as envisaged in this report makes provision for Ministers' use, and now that we have 33 Ministers, it means that we now have to accommodate all these extra personnel. The question to be posed—and I take the issue that Sen. Faris Al-Rawi made and take it one step further—how is this to be funded because we are funding this in the context of three years of deficit budgets?

If we look at the increased need for Ministers' accommodation by way of example: in 2011 we would have had the Ministry of Works and Transport and the Ministry of Public Utilities; one year later, two Ministries have now been hived off into four. We have the Minister of Works, the Minister of Transport, a Minister of Public Utilities and a Minister of the Environment and Water Resources. What may happen in future which the accommodation speaks to, as we move to larger and larger Government for a population of 1.3 million, we may be actually moving from a position of economies of scale to diseconomies of scale where we have too many people trying to run a country of 1.3 million, and that is an issue which this country will have to grapple with.

On the issue of funding, Sen. Al-Rawi spoke at length about funding and how are we going to fund this increased expenditure for accommodation. If you would permit me very briefly, Mr. President, in September of 2011 we raised the debt ceiling by I think \$34.7 billion; we had the budget in October of \$54.6 billion, the largest budget in the history of Trinidad and Tobago; in February of 2012, we came back for an appropriation of, I think, \$1.7 billion or \$2.5 billion; and in June of this year we have just finished a debate for a further appropriation. When we add to this, the Red House project and the funding of all these new Ministries, where is the funding coming from, because this speaks on the—

**Mr. President:** Senator, you realize that you are travelling on territory that has already been traversed? You are therefore becoming repetitive and you could run into breaches of the Standing Orders. So I am just pointing that out to you.

**Sen. T. Deyalsingh:** Thank you, Mr. President. I will just make the point and I will leave it there, that we have a budget deficit of \$7.6 billion and how are we going to fund it?

Mr. President, as I said at the start I was going to be very brief, and with these few words, I thank you very much. [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. Dr. James Armstrong:** Thank you very much, Mr. President. I was caught off guard. I have never really heard Sen. Deyalsingh that brief, so I was really taken by surprise.

I would just like to respond to a few points. The point raised by Sen. Oudit, for instance, about the museum. I think that was a very good point and it is something that the committee actually took into consideration. As I pointed out, I think it is something that we have to really examine very closely to see whether the space allocated in the user brief would be adequate for the requirements.

Following this Motion, Mr. President, we are going to be also debating a Motion relating to recognition to be given to some of our past leaders and so on, and something that crossed my mind during that committee is that perhaps some of that space could also be used for past parliamentarians and so on. So it is something that I think—one, it is a very important space and it is something that we need to revisit and discuss further in the committee when we reconvene.

There are some other points raised by Sen. Al-Rawi having to do with the accommodation of Ministers, and indeed that is something that has been reflected in the user brief. It is something that I am not very clear on because I certainly would not want to encourage that we allocate space for every single Minister, and while indeed it has expanded—the amount of Ministries—my recommendation would be that we take into consideration the density requirements in that particular location.

What I mean by that, Mr. President, is that I certainly would not want us to be finding additional space dotted about the city, and if there is an increased requirement, we should go back to the consultants and look at the possibility of increasing the density in that particular location. However, at the time we were not aware of the amount of Ministries and there is some consideration being given. In the report, it was recommended that we do take into consideration our requirements over a 20-year period. So this is something that I am sure would be addressed.

He also raised the business of clarifying the client-owner relationship. My understanding is that the client really is the Parliament. That is my understanding. I do not know if there is anything—well, I heard some discussions to the contrary but I do not think that has changed.

My colleague, Sen. Basharat Ali, indeed—I also had some difficulties, Senator, reading the schedule because I think it was done in a Microsoft project and then reduced. I agree, that there is some difficulty in reading it and it is something that—I think that can actually be enlarged. I certainly would bring that to the attention of the committee and we would look at that in due course.

With respect to the cost, however, and the figures that you were looking at, I think we started off by using—and I agree also with the business of using square feet, but that is what we found in the report.

**3.40 p.m.**

We started off by using \$1,600 per square foot and that was what was said, but then, during technical discussions, we realized that you really could not use that figure, because, one, there is going to be a different requirement for a building that you are retrofitting, as well as a different requirement for a completely new building. Therefore, we were not really able to get a fix on the precise cost for the construction cost, which is why we asked the consultants to come back to the committee with more precise figures.

In fact, at each of the meetings that we actually had with the consultants, with UDeCott, there were various figures floating around, and Members said, “Look, we are not really satisfied with this, why do you not look at ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’, ‘D’”, and where we left it is that we are to get more precise figures in terms of the actual costing of the building. So that, what is really in the report are very preliminary figures, and, you know, that would have to be looked at in greater detail.

My understanding of UDeCott, whether a nominated contractor or not, they were actually involved in the earlier renovation, given the history, and therefore, my understanding—I may be corrected—is that once we reverted to the question of the actual renovation, they were actually part of the earlier process and that continued. Now, whether that is the most appropriate way to proceed is something that we would have to look at.

I mentioned earlier—I think one question was asked about the user brief and who it was prepared by. Well, as I said, form follows function, and I already commended the Parliament staff for the contribution in that regard which would have been discussed with the consultants, and through that collaboration, that user brief would have been prepared.

It is my understanding also, Mr. President, that, in fact, there has been a formal arrangement with UDeCott with respect to the construction requirements, and that further details on this could be provided, but I do not have the actual history of that either.

Some question was also raised by Sen. Deyalsingh about whether a seismic study was done. I cannot say off-hand whether an actual seismic study was done with respect to the Red House, but I am almost sure, from my knowledge of the field, that that is something that would be given due consideration. In retrofitting

*JSC Parliamentary Accommodation*  
[SEN. DR. J. ARMSTRONG]

*Monday June 25, 2012*

any historic building, there are experts that definitely would look at that because that is a requirement given the condition of the building. And certainly, with respect to the companion building, I am very sure that that is something that the engineers would look at because that is standard.

With respect to the actual retrofitting, the renovation of the Red House is something that we will have to get—certainly enquire into specialist services to address that requirement. I think those are the issues that were raised, Mr. President. I thank you very much. I beg to move. [*Desk thumping*]

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Report adopted.*

**PAST PRESIDENTS AND PRIME MINISTERS  
(STATE-FUNDED RECOGNITION FOR)**

[Third Day]

*Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question* [Tuesday, April 24, 2012]:

*Be it resolved* that there be established formal tangible memorials of the work and contributions of all the former Heads of State and Heads of Government of this country;

*And be it further resolved* that there be instituted a State-funded arrangement whereby the contributions of all who served in the offices of President and Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago will be recognized. [*Sen. C. Baptiste-Mc Knight*]

*Question again proposed.*

**Mr. President:** Those who spoke on April 24, 2012 were Sen. Corinne Baptiste-Mc Knight, the mover of the Motion, Sen. The Hon. Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie, Minister of Planning and the Economy, Sen. Terrence Deyalsingh, Sen. Helen Drayton and Sen. David Abdulah.

On Tuesday, May 22, 2012, the following Senators spoke: Sen. Fitzgerald Hinds, Sen. Basharat Ali, Sen. Jamal Mohammed and Sen. Faris Al-Rawi. Senators wishing to contribute to the debate at this stage may do so now.

**Sen. Pennelope Beckles:** Mr. President, regrettably, I really am standing to say that I had all intentions to speak on this Motion. As a matter of fact, when the Senate was adjourned on the last occasion, I sort of enquired whether this Motion would have been debated today, and we were advised that only the accommodation Motion would be dealt with. So that when I received a request for the debate on this Motion, I indicated that none of us would have been prepared based on what we were told on the last occasion.



Therefore, for me, I want to apologize to Sen. Baptiste-Mc Knight because I did tell her that—as a matter of fact, I have done quite a bit of research on the Motion. I think it is one of the more important Motions that we have debated in the Senate, but because of the fact that when I did get the message, around lunchtime, I had already left this morning for court, and had not brought any of my documents. Sen. Cudjoe was also due to speak, but unfortunately, we are not in a position to contribute and that is the position.

Having said that, I just want to say—just in brief basically—that I support the Motion, but really had we been given notice, even Friday or maybe a lot earlier, even yesterday, we would have come prepared to debate the Motion.

As I am on my legs, and the fact that I was not here earlier for the swearing in, I want to take the opportunity, if you would allow me, to congratulate the newly appointed Senators, most of whom I am familiar with. The new Leader of Government Business, Sen. The Hon. Ganga Singh, and I served together on the Law Association—I was the President and he was the Secretary.

**Sen. Singh:** Student Council.

**Sen. P. Beckles:** Student Council. Well, Law Association of the law school at the time because we did law together. So, I want to welcome him to the Senate. I know he has served in the House so he brings quite a number of years' experience in the Parliament, and I would like to genuinely congratulate him.

We would have to clearly be speaking on a regular basis, and I do hope that, notwithstanding the fact that we are on opposite ends, does not mean that we cannot make a commitment to ensure that we assist in terms of the smooth running of the Senate. We have worked together before, so I feel fairly confident that that ought not to be an issue. It is not always easy when you have to take directives from your respective parties, but, I mean, once we are communicating I am pretty certain that we should be in a position to be able to avoid even something like today. If there is an agreement, I think that we should make all efforts to stick by that agreement.

To his immediate right, Sen. The Hon. Marlene Coudray, who is someone that I had the pleasure of knowing for quite some time myself. I would like to also warmly welcome her. I know that she has gotten a lot of condolences, but certainly on behalf of those of us here—the Opposition in the Senate—we would like to extend our condolences to her on the loss of her daughter, and certainly, I hope God will give her the strength to be able to deal with what was a very unfortunate situation. I wish her the best as she joins the Senate. I hope that she will enjoy her time here as a Senator, and in the post to which she has been appointed, she would do her best for the young people of Trinidad and Tobago.

To the new Minister of Finance, who is making a change of profession from banking to politics, I hope you do not—well, I do not know, some people may consider that a sort of a drastic change, but I think that you have some interesting shoes to fill because, whatever we say, Mr. Dookeran has always been a man that a lot of people have admired for his integrity and commitment to doing the best for his country. I am not going to comment on anybody's movement, but I wish you the best at a time when the price of oil does not seem to be very kind to you, so that means that you would have to work some magic.

Sen. Jamal Mohammed has been here in the Senate before as a temporary Senator. I have congratulated him before on his appointment, but I know that he is now a Minister. I just want to also wish him the best on his elevation from a temporary Senator to a permanent to a Minister. I know that Sen. Moheni is now in a new Ministry, and he is looking really very dashing today in his dashiki. *[Laughter]* I just want to wish him very well. So, with those few words—well, Sen. Maharaj, you have been here before; you have just changed Ministries.

**Sen. Al-Rawi:** He has taken another Maharaj's chair—Danny Maharaj.

**Sen. Maharaj:** See you better in your contribution. *[Laughter]*

**Sen. P. Beckles:** You are closer to me now. *[Laughter]* So, Mr. President, I thank you kindly for the opportunity to have explained our position, and to certainly welcome all the Ministers and Senators. I look forward to working with all of them as we have all made our commitment to a better Trinidad and Tobago. Thank you very much. *[Desk thumping]*

**Sen. Elton Prescott SC:** I am grateful to you, Mr. President, and my colleagues. I rise to give my usual critical support to this Motion *[Laughter]* as I tend to do with most others. I feel that I ought to lament publicly that until two hours ago, I was unaware, blissfully, that it was going to be my turn today to speak on this Motion. But, I am glad that it is on this side of the parliamentary term, otherwise the opportunity might have been completely lost to me.

I shall not join in the tributes that have been given, but I would anticipate that anybody would think that I am pleased to see the new faces and I take that as a given.

**3.55 p.m.**

My colleague Sen. Baptiste-Mc Knight has chosen to bring before this Senate an issue of much interest to all of us, in that we in Trinidad and Tobago have not been known to establish memorials to people of substance, and I am not talking

about statues in the public places or names on walls, I am talking about documentation and material that will lend in our years ahead—because posterity would depend on it—will lend to the training and education of all our citizens, those who are here today, and those who would come in the future.

Our future leaders will turn to the works and the memorabilia for inspiration or depending on which side of the political side they are on, in order to make the most trenchant of criticisms, but all of these contribute to our history, and we should not deny those who take different views of how we have arrived where we are today. How we have arrived where we are today is probably well known to everybody who sits here because we all would have been—save probably for one or two—mature enough in 1962 to understand what was happening in our country. Some of us might have been even so mature as early as 1956, and 1956 was indeed one of the years which we must record in our history as a turning point, a sea change in how we do things.

So speaking, therefore, from that generational point of view, I turn to the Motion itself, and it says:

*“Be it resolved that there be established formal tangible memorials of the work and contributions of all the former Heads of State and Heads of Government of this country;”*

I am quite certain that the Standing Orders of this Senate do not permit me to seek to amend any part of the Motion. So I will take the tactful approach of asking my colleague, Sen. Baptiste-Mc Knight to look again at it and see if the questions I may raise, the points I may identify, could cause her to clarify in the wrap-up and/or to take such steps that she sees may be necessary to meet with my criticisms and, of course, she may dispense with them if she wishes, but nonetheless I place them on the record.

I think it ought to be made known that the resolution does not seem directly to say to us “contributions over any fixed period”. Now, it does say the contributions of all the former Heads of State and, therefore, it does not take a great stretch of the imagination to conclude that—and I am only speaking from my time—that even Queen Elizabeth of England may well fall within this consideration, she having been once the Head of State of this country. If it is that she was meant to be included, then perhaps Sen. Baptiste-Mc Knight might wish to say how we should differentiate between her tenure, and that of those who are indigenous to Trinidad and Tobago. I suspect that she did not mean to include that venerable monarch amongst this pantheon of Heads of State. So we would look forward to hearing a distinction being made and/or a date being established. I suspect the date might be 1962 because in the recital it says:

“*And whereas* since 1962, several Heads of State and Heads of Government have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of this republic;”

So I imagine 1962 might be the date.

Nineteen-sixty two, for those of us here who were not there then, was the year of our independence—bearing in mind there is at least one Senator who I suspect was not present, but I could be wrong—we had gained independence and had become an independent democratic republic from—[*Interruption*]

**Hon. Senator:** I was not around.

**Hon. Senator:** Neither was Sydney.

**Sen. E. Prescott SC:** Okay, maybe I should pause to allow those who wish to tell us their ages—[*Laughter*] and those who lament not being here in 1962, to identify themselves; it cannot be too many.

So let me repeat. I suspect that the recitals mean to limit us to 1962, and that is why I have embarked on this first announcement, that 1962 was the year of independence and so we moved to a certain stage. But would it not be true to say that in 1962, the Head of State was the Queen of England?

**Hon. Senator:** Yes.

**Hon. Senator:** Hochoy was still representing the Queen.

**Sen. E. Prescott SC:** And would it not be true to say that Sir Solomon Hochoy was merely the representative of the Head of State at the time? Does the Motion intend in any event—whatever we may say about the Queen of England—does this Motion intend to embrace Sir Solomon Hochoy in it? I would be very saddened if it did not.

I have one condition that I would want to place on the record—it is not clear from the language of the Motion what constitutes a “contribution;” indeed a reading of the Motion would give us varying views. We speak firstly of contributions to the advancement of the republic—and I will come back to the use of the word “republic”—and in the very next line, we say:

“*And whereas* there exists a Memorial Collection of the contributions of the late Dr. Eric Eustace Williams...”

Those to the best of my knowledge are indeed paper and material, things that we can read, writings of his, no doubt speeches made in the Parliament, the *Hansard* records. I do not know that he did any works of art, but maybe that might be included. His off-the-cuff speeches may well turn up amongst the memorabilia, and by now you

know I have never even been to see it, or to look at what it contains. But we know what he was capable of and had, in fact, put into writing much of his academic work and his versions of how Trinidad and Tobago came to where it was during his time. So that is one kind of contribution that the Motion seems to bear in mind.

Arthur Napoleon Raymond Robinson himself did some writing. No doubt the *Hansard* contributions of Mr. Robinson would have found their way into our understanding of what contributions were made.

When we look at what follows, it speaks also to contributions to the development of the nation, and that I say boldly could not be limited to writings only, or speeches, it must have meant to some spadework done by people. I know because I have been here long enough that—I think his name was Alphonso—A.P.T. James, a man from Tobago who would be remembered by a number of people—and he was still around in 1962—as somebody who contributed to the development of the society. He never became Head of State and he probably never would have, but I start with him to embark on a certain line.

Would my colleague consider that contributions have been made by a great many people to the development of the society, who, luck of the draw or poor marketing would have failed them, so they did not achieve the rank of Head of Government? Some came very close, but we all know what our political system throws up. It throws up Heads of Government who we do not all feel are deserving of the position, but we are civilized people, and we treat them as Heads of Government until they demit office.

The contributions of Heads of Government, therefore, I think, are too much of a limiting factor and either we change—we look again at the use of the word “contribution” and expand it so it says:

The contributions, be they of literature or of history or of buildings or of social work, whatever it may be.

So that we are more certain in progressing this idea, that we put into the museum if that is what it is going to be—I do not know what the language would be—we put among those works things that have been done by people who really contributed to the development of the society.

As I said, I am not permitted, I am quite certain, to amend any aspect of this Motion, but I should like to know when we get to the wrap-up, did we really mean only those four or five persons who have served as Heads of State, and the four or five who have served as Heads of Government will find their way into this in the year 2012? And what would the future look like if our political system continues?

*Past Presidents and Prime Ministers*  
[SEN. PRESCOTT SC]

*Monday June 25, 2012*

Anybody—and this is something that is going to come back to haunt me—anybody could become a Head of Government in this country, whether he or she makes a contribution or not, or whether the contribution remains at the end of his or her tenure being the Head of the Government. So we must be very expansive in our thinking, I would like to suggest, to incorporate in the body of this Motion some thought to some other persons. So I will mention a list of names, I run the risk of being regarded as irrelevant, but by the time they catch up with me I will be finished. [*Laughter*]

Winston Murray—there are many here who might share my view—contributed to the development of this country, we may all remember him, we may all have had a view of where he was going with his thrust, I say no more.

Winston Dookeran, who never became a Head of State or Head of Government, I understand he may yet become one—he too has made contributions in this society. [*Laughter*] He has made contributions to the development of the society that were it not for the luck of the draw, were it not for the straws that are drawn at the end of the elections, he may well have found himself among this list.

Dr. Patrick Solomon; Capt. Arthur Cipriani—is it Arthur? Butler, well, the names are well known. Lionel Seukeran; Albert Gomes; Sir Hugh Oliver Beresford Wooding—[*Interruption*]

**Sen. Deyalsingh:** David Abdulah.

**Sen. E. Prescott SC:** I imagine the list can go on and on Senator, and I am embarking on a road that can be reduced to absurdity because eventually we may say well, Sen. Elton Prescott SC made a contribution too, and I do not think he ought to be considered. [*Laughter*] But I am saying Sen. Baptiste-Mc Knight may well seize the opportunity to clarify for us how it is she intended to limit the characters to those who might have sat as Heads of State and Heads of Government, and not take into account that there are many; Vernon Jamadar is also on my list.

One of the criticisms, if you like, would be it cannot be that we simply establish a pantheon of heroes, victors ludorum, and the second place gets no mention at all, you know. Winner takes all is something we probably want to walk away from. I am not saying this to reduce the value of the Motion, but it does lean towards winner takes all especially when you talk about Heads of Government.

So, Senator, if you please, when you seek to wrap up, address this question for me, be as trenchant as you like in relation to my contribution, but I would like to hear what it is guided you to make such a limited excursion into what the future should look like.

**4.10 p.m.**

Mr. President, the next use of the term “contribution” is in the body of the resolution. It says:

“*Be it resolved* that there be established formal tangible memorials of the work and contributions of all the former Heads of States...”

And so, “work and contributions” have not been defined sufficiently for me to understand how the world would look like in 2040/50 whatsoever, when we finally get this thing going. I would like to see that it contains references to the work of people who went out there with a shovel and a spade and did things; things that, were they not done, we would not have a Trinidad and Tobago fashioned in the way that we have it today.

I do not think it could be overlooked that Makandal Daaga contributed to the development of this society, whatever may have been his motivations in 1970. There is a point where he placed a stake in the ground and the society can always turn to it to determine whether it should have gone left or right or continued along the path that we did at the time.

It is that kind of thing that this Motion arouses inside of me. Where did it end? Where did it begin? Where do we begin when we start putting our tangible memorials in place? Could it be that all who served in the office of Prime Minister would find their way into this memorial? Does it take into account an acting Head of State? I once heard somebody take the Constitution up and—you do not act as—not Head of State, Head of Government. Forgive me. Why did I not say Head of State? We have had people here who served as acting Head of State. Are their works to find their way into this tangible memorial? Maybe not.

Mr. President, you do not have an opportunity to contribute on this debate, so that I am happy you would not be able to respond on it. Many people have served as Head of State in this country and several have served as Head of Government—some for five days and some for less. The opportunity will come, I am sure, for Sen. Baptiste-Mc Knight to refine the resolution so that we are certain in the future—if I may use Sen. Faris Al-Rawi’s approach—when we use the *Pepper v Hart* approach to the thing, people go back to the *Hansard* to see what was intended. They will know for sure that it was not meant to include the works of certain people because they did not quite get into the hot seat.

I want to close with a clear statement that I am supportive of the Motion. I have offered my criticisms because it is the way that I think; the way that I celebrate. I look at it and say: does it really speak in precise language to what is intended for the future? Will those who come after us and seek to make it work know precisely what was intended by it? Will it become a carnival because X, who happened to negotiate his way to become Head of Government finds himself—his bust or her bust—set up in whatever we call the thing when we put it up in NAPA, in a room there, as Head of State and never contributed anything except to have negotiated to become the Head of State?

There was a Prime Minister in a neighbouring country I know of, who became Head of State and he proved to be very successful; but it was because he was in the right place at the right time. [*Interruption*] Of course, I would not name the country.

**Sen. George:** But we know.

**Sen. E. Prescott:** And he did well.

**Sen. George:** Very well.

**Sen. E. Prescott:** He probably was the best man for the job, but who could have known, in the way that it was arrived at, that he would be Head of Government someday, coming from where he had come from? We are going to find such a situation here in Trinidad and Tobago someday. We will have something similar to—analogue to, because I do not know the mathematics good.

Some other 18:18 is going to arrive; or 20:20 and one other person, who is going to say: “If you want power in this country, talk to me. I want only one thing: to be Head of Government because I want my name to appear in the Memorials and Contributions room in NAPA.”

**Sen. George:** “I like dah one. I like dah one. Dah is a bison.”

**Sen. E. Prescott SC:** And that person might well be sitting here today. [*Laughter*]

**Sen. George:** “Oh God, doh say that nah man.”

**Sen. E. Prescott SC:** Or worse. If you let your mind wonder—I heard a Member of Government speaking recently about “there can yet be an Independent in this modern world of ours.” So, in a 20:20 situation, an Independent might say: “Talk to me. Talk to me if you want to get on with this business. I want to be the



Head of Government. I doh need any other office. I just want to be primus inter pares and put my name up on the wall of honour.” Some have been known to negotiate for Head of State, but today is not the day for that.

Thank you very much. [*Desk thumping*]

**Sen. Corinne Baptiste-Mc Knight:** I thank you, Mr. President, and I wish to thank all of the hon. colleagues who have participated in this debate.

I would like, first of all, as it is fresh in my consciousness, to explain to my colleague Sen. Prescott, exactly what was and is part of my cerebation for this. I think I mentioned that the purpose of this Motion is to try to change the mindset of a population that is not given, as a matter of instinct, to recognizing and celebrating those who labour on behalf of the nation.

Now, that means that I would wish to see all significant contributions and achievements recognized, but we have got to start someplace. I am suggesting that, as a young nation, 50 years old, we start with those people who have had the burden of bringing us from colonialism to where we are now.

Because I am asking that Government show the way and accept the responsibility for starting these collections, we start with those who had the onerous tasks of Head of Government and Head of State. I take it that Queen Elizabeth was the Queen, the Head of State from 1962 to our republican status; but she was actually represented on the ground by Sir Solomon Hochoy, and it is Sir Solomon Hochoy whom I would expect to be memorialized—it is his work, which started well before independence. That is the actual history that we would want to have access to, to be able to trace the things that he did as a public servant—as a Colonial Secretary and later as Governor and Governor General—that marked significant milestones along the road to our current state of development.

The fact that there are very many people who would have contributed as significantly as, or more significantly than, some of those who attained the status of Head of State or Head of Government is not lost on me. It is my hope that, as a result of doing something like this, other organizations will be moved to identify these people and have their collections available to the public.

Just recently, a collection of Lord Learie Constantine was opened at NALIS and this collection is already part of the UNESCO Memory of the World. This was not done by Government. It was not done by any organization. It was done privately by his daughter. It had nothing to do with this; but how many such others have we had?

We had people like Willie Demas. We cannot say that his contribution was not extremely significant and all we have is a lecture series; but there is nothing to prevent—as a matter of fact, I would hope that as a result of a Motion like this, people would now find it, not important, but necessary, to identify all of these people—Dodd Alleyne, Scotty Lewis, many others that we can mention—and get their documentation and probably lodge it with the library. Some of them will definitely find a place in the UNESCO Memory of the World because that is the sort of thing that could help us to be a really developed country: a people who recognize who we are, where we are going and where we have come from.

There is nothing to prevent every constituency from identifying their representatives from over the years, from pre-independence, and having their own collections—could be in their party offices; could be in their constituency offices; and, in this way, we really collect our authentic history. This is what is behind this—getting us to recognize who have been critical, who have been important, who have been significant in getting us to where we are.

I really do not think that we need to ask Government to do all of this. If Government undertakes to assist—the Eric Williams collection already exists—what I am asking is that Government assists to have the complete collection and have it accessible to the public. The current collection is about half of the complete record available.

There is the Castara Project that—I do not know that His Excellency President Robinson would even accept Government's assistance, but I think it is something that we should hope would be done because that Castara Project could be very important—a development tool for Tobago, bringing in academic tourism, et cetera.

**4.25 p.m.**

Now, Winston Murray, there is nothing to prevent the people of Tobago from having a collection for him. I would hope that somebody would talk to him about donating his collection—

**Hon. Senator:** “He still alive?”

**Sen. C. Baptiste-Mc Knight:** Yes, he is still alive, very much so—perhaps to the library or some place in Tobago where people could have access. Winston Murray stopped being a political figure in Trinidad and Tobago and I met him in Washington still working towards bringing development ideas to Tobago.

He was responsible for bringing a group, an NGO, down from Washington to Trinidad called Young Technologists, who came in here on the weekend that a hurricane passed through Tobago. This was a group with children between the ages of 11 and 15. They arrived the Friday night that the storm hit. You know what was remarkable about that—the people with whom they stayed and who dealt with them were amazed—these children set up a system to collect the rain water from the storm, used the stuff they had brought to teach their counterparts to do hydroponics and the people where they were staying had water when the neighbouring village had none. Winston Murray was the person who had arranged for them to come, where to stay, et cetera.

By the time they were leaving they had taught a whole group of Tobagonian children how to set up computers, literally build the computers from the components which they had brought and even how to make their own rockets. So that in the final ceremony they set off a rocket, much to the amazement of the House of Assembly people at the time.

Now, I think that this was something significant for the children of Tobago. If I am not mistaken, he is still involved with that group and would wish to bring them back again, and I hope he can do it. Now if the people of Tobago can be influenced, motivated, by this Motion, to recognize his work on their behalf, then my Motion will not be in vain.

If the people of Cedros, Mayaro, Nariva can think of identifying people who were significant in their communities and finding means other than putting a bust of the person, which you have to dust and polish, someplace to recognize their achievements, that is what I am talking about here.

I purposely did not want and still do not want to request that Government be the repository—to let Government be responsible for this. What I would like is that they be the catalyst by starting with one group of people and, therefore, demonstrating to NGOs, to the trade union movement, to the calypsonians, to Pan Trinbago that they can, with little effort, pay tribute to their own.

I do not know that anywhere in the realm of calypsos, for example, there exists even a roll call; not to talk about a library of the calypsos that we have had through the ages, bards who have produced works of substance. My hope is that this would motivate TUCO to start something like this. It is not necessarily something that is going to cost money. It is going to cost effort, it is going to give a lift to those who are currently toiling in the field to recognize that my peers recognize what I am doing, and therefore, it has value outside of what I have put on it.

*Past Presidents and Prime Ministers*  
[SEN. BAPTISTE-MC KNIGHT]

*Monday June 25, 2012*

The purpose of this Motion is to attempt to change our mindset; to get us thinking that we are a people who can honour each other outside of putting a statue to give rest to the pigeons. [*Desk thumping*] We need to encourage learning, to encourage the value of history. If we do not start accumulating our history, Madam Vice-President, we will have missed a very important and critical opportunity to set our country on the road to true greatness and independence.

Trinidad and Tobago, with 1.3 million people, is too blessed with human resources of great value and potential for us not to start to show the way to see how we will always be able to memorialize each other, and to have our authentic history written. Madam Vice-President, I beg to move. [*Desk thumping*]

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved:*

That there be established formal tangible memorials of the work and contributions of all the former Heads of State and Heads of Government of this country;

*Further resolved:*

That there be instituted a State-funded arrangement whereby the contributions of all who served in the offices of President and Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago will be recognized.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of the Environment and Water Resources (Sen. The Hon. Ganga Singh):** Madam Vice-President, I beg to move that this Senate do now adjourn to a date to be fixed. Before I do so, I want to indicate to this honourable Senate that the President has issued a proclamation that the Parliament will be prorogued at midnight on Tuesday, June 26, 2012.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Senate adjourned accordingly*

*Adjourned at 4.35 p.m.*