

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES*Friday, October 02, 2026*

The House met at 1.30 p.m.

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

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I have received communication from Mr. Stuart Young SC, Member for Port of Spain North/St Ann's West; Mr. Symon de Nobriga, Member for Diego Martin Central; and Mr. Joel Sampson, Member for Tobago West, who have all requested leave of absence from today's Sitting of the House. The leave which the Members seek is hereby granted.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER**Trinidad and Tobago at UNGA****(81st Session)**

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

The Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs (Hon. Sean Sobers): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I have been authorized by the Cabinet to make the following statement on Trinidad and Tobago's participation in the 81st Regular Session of the United Nations General Assembly held in New York during the period 22nd to 28th September, 2026.

The 81st Regular Session of the United Nations General Assembly opened on September 08, 2026, under the theme: "Restoring Trust, Managing Transformation: A United Nations That Delivers for All", and included the General Debate from 22nd to 28th September, 2026.

During the United Nations General Assembly, 2026, the hon. Prime Minister

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Kamla Persad-Bissessar SC, MP, strategically positioned Trinidad and Tobago's participation to advance the country's national interests, while reaffirming its commitment to multilateralism, international peace and security, sustainable development, and the interests of small island developing states and developing countries.

Mr. Speaker, a central focus of the hon. Prime Minister's engagement was Trinidad and Tobago's forthcoming tenure as an elected member of the United Nations Security Council for the period 2027 to 2028. Trinidad and Tobago was elected on 03 June, 2026, receiving 181 votes from the 190 Member States voting, a significant result which reflected the confidence of the international community in Trinidad and Tobago, and in the foreign policy approach being pursued by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

The country's Security Council campaign was centred on the theme: "Building Consensus for the Realization of Sustainable Peace and Security", with particular emphasis on curbing the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, women and children, peace and security, and artificial intelligence and global security.

In her address to the General Assembly on 22nd September, the hon. Prime Minister highlighted the particular vulnerabilities faced by small states and the urgent need for strengthened international cooperation to address transnational organized crime, illicit trafficking in firearms and narcotics, and other threats to regional and international security. She underscored Trinidad and Tobago's intention to use its forthcoming Security Council membership to advocate for practical, coordinated international responses to these challenges, ensuring that the concerns of small states remain firmly represented at the highest level of

international decision-making.

Mr Speaker, beyond the general debate, the hon. Prime Minister undertook an intensive programme of bilateral and multilateral engagements with heads of state and government, senior officials and representatives of international organizations. This programme reflected the Government's determination to ensure that Trinidad and Tobago's presence at the UNGA was not merely one of participation, but one focused on advancing our national interests and securing practical opportunities for our people.

These engagements included the Shield of the Americas event, chaired by His Excellency Donald J. Trump, President of the United States of America; bilateral meetings with Her Excellency Delcy Rodríguez Gomez, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; bilateral meetings with His Excellency John Mahama, President of Ghana; bilateral meetings with His Excellency the President of Kyrgyz Republic; bilateral meetings with His Excellency Alexander Van der Bellen, Federal President of Austria; bilateral meetings with the hon. Dr. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister of India; meetings with the hon. Andy Burnham, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom; and meetings with Her Excellency the Prime Minister of Japan.

As Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, I, together with other members of the delegation, also attended special meetings of the COFCOR, Caribbean Community of Foreign Relations; ministerial meetings of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti; working lunch and dinner for Foreign Ministers of the five incoming non-permanent members of the UNSC; ministerial meetings of the Nordic CARICOM countries; events on the Geneva Consensus Declaration on women's health and protection of the family; working lunch between Member

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States of the Alliance of Small Island States and Germany; and the Annual Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Group 77.

Trinidad and Tobago's delegation also conducted an additional 20 bilateral meetings with the Foreign Ministers and senior officials of Afghanistan, Aruba, Bangladesh, Benin, Democratic Republic of Congo, Dominican Republic, Gabon, Kenya, Mexico, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Romania, the Russian Federation, San Marino, Sudan, the United Kingdom, and the United Arab Emirates. Mr. Speaker, these bilateral interactions reinforced Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to multilateralism, international peace and security, sustainable development and the advancement of the interests of small island developing states.

Importantly, they also yielded concrete diplomatic outcomes for Trinidad and Tobago, demonstrating that the Government's international engagement is being translated into practical results. We established diplomatic relations with three countries: Gabon, North Macedonia and San Marino. We signed bilateral agreements with eight countries, three of which were concerned with air transport, which would have been Chile, Ghana and Panama, and established political consultations with five countries, which would be Kenya, Romania, Paraguay, Bangladesh and the Dominican Republic.

These outcomes provide an important platform for Trinidad and Tobago to deepen engagement with partners on matters including trade and investment, energy, security, development cooperation, climate finance, and other areas of mutual interest.

Mr. Speaker, our engagements also produce important outcomes in the area of national and regional security. During the Shield of the Americas event,

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Trinidad and Tobago was recognized by the Trump administration as the first Shield of the Americas nation to join the US in designating 25 criminal organizations as foreign terrorist organizations, which will attract continued technical and financial assistance to combat criminal activity domestically.

In furtherance of the Government's commercial diplomacy objectives, a delegation was led by my colleague, the Member for Mayaro and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister, the hon. Nicholas Morris, who engaged several international bankers and investors at New York's financial district at One Vanderbilt plaza. Arising out of this engagement, a major investment mission will visit Trinidad and Tobago later this year from top financial institutions based in the United States.

Major successes: In connection with Trinidad and Tobago, two international markets were also achieved through the signature of three new air transportation agreements, which I know was discussed in the other House. The Government also used the opportunities, presented by the UNGA, to advance important bilateral relationships in our immediate region.

In this regard, a major success of the UNGA, 2025, was a mutually agreed setting of a new strategic partnership between Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela as a result of the bilateral meeting between the hon. Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar and President Rodríguez Gómez. The partnership will see both countries accelerate an ambitious work agenda aimed at strengthening exchange and mutual benefit in the areas of trade, energy, security, disaster risk management, environmental protection, agriculture, culture and tourism.

1.40 p.m.

The expanded and more holistic approach in engaging with the Bolivarian

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Republic of Venezuela will, for the first time, unlock the potential for a burgeoning trade in energy and non-energy products with Trinidad and Tobago for the mutual prosperity of both countries, which will strengthen manufacturers and lower the food import bill locally. Trinidad and Tobago also continues to attract international donor financing as a direct result of the hon. Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar's diplomatic outreach by obtaining a commitment for a major grant from the government of the United Arab Emirates for critical equipment for the Couva Children's Hospital.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. S. Sobers: And I have the permission from the Cabinet and the Prime Minister to indicate that Trinidad and Tobago will, for the very first time, open an embassy in the United Arab Emirates, being the first embassy in the Middle East.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. S. Sobers: Mr. Speaker, the extensive preparations undertaken by the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs ensure the incorporation of specialists into international statements delivered during the high-level week. I would like to thank all other Ministries for their assistance: the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Attorney General, Land and Legal Affairs, Public Administration, Public Utilities, Sports and Youth Affairs, and all other Ministries that participated in our preparation.

Mr. Speaker, the outcomes secured at the UNGA 2026 demonstrate the Government's commitment to a purposeful foreign policy firmly anchored in Trinidad and Tobago's national interests. Under the leadership of the hon. Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar, our diplomacy will continue to strengthen international partnerships, expand opportunities for trade and investment, advance our security

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interests, and mobilize resources in support of national development. We will continue to engage the international community with purpose and resolve, ensuring that the relationships we build and the opportunities we pursue translate into tangible benefits for Trinidad and Tobago and its people. This, Mr. Speaker, is a measure of our diplomacy engagement—

Mr. Gonzales: Mr. Speaker, point of order. I think the Member has used his allotted time.

Hon. S. Sobers:—as a country and contributes meaningfully to this Government's vision—

Mr. Gonzales: Mr. Speaker, a point of order. Mr. Speaker, point of order.

Hon. S. Sobers:—of a safer, stronger and more prosperous Trinidad and Tobago. I thank you.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: The time is up. I was trying to elicit whether there was an agreement, but the Member went over by 20 seconds.

Hon. Members: Fourteen seconds.

Mr. Speaker: So I think we could live with 14 seconds, right? Thank you very much. Minister, thank you very much.

Hon. members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: Member for Arouca/Lopinot.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

WATER SUPPLY DISRUPTION IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

(Measures to Address)

Mr. Marvin Gonzales (Arouca/Lopinot): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the following Motion standing in my name:

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Whereas access to a reliable supply of potable water is essential to public health, sanitation, economic activity and the general welfare of the people of Trinidad and Tobago;

And whereas communities throughout the country have experienced prolonged and repeated disruption in their water supply, affecting households, schools, businesses and healthcare facilities;

And whereas concerns have arisen regarding the adequacy of water distribution, infrastructure maintenance, contingency arrangements, and communication with affected communities;

And whereas prolonged water disruptions place significant hardship on citizens, particularly vulnerable persons, including the elderly and persons with disabilities;

Be it resolved that this House calls upon the Government to outline the measures being implemented to address the disruption of water supply in Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues on this side and my constituents for allowing me the opportunity to raise this very important Motion on their behalf, on behalf of the constituents of Arouca/Lopinot, as well as on behalf of all of the constituencies that we represent on this side. But I do trust that this debate will present to us an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to discuss, to deliberate, to debate the very important issue of water supply in Trinidad and Tobago that not only impacts and affects the constituents and the people that we represent on this side, but even the citizens that my colleagues on the other side represent.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales: I know my colleagues on the other side expect robust

discussions on this very emotive subject of water supply. It has always evoked a lot of robust discussions and sometimes political jabs and picing on both sides of the House. But I recall, Mr. Speaker, when I served as Minister of Public Utilities, I said very early in my career, serving in that capacity, that coming from a rural community in Trinidad and Tobago, I do understand the experience of citizens who do not have access to pipe-borne supply of water. And oftentimes, when you listen to my colleagues on the other side, they give the impression that somehow only communities that they represent are impacted by an unreliable supply of water. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales: Nothing could be further from the truth. Because I am sure, Mr. Speaker, all of us, all of the constituencies that we represent from Arima, going straight down to Malabar/Mausica, and from my colleague from Couva South, going all the way down to Tobago, we do have communities in our constituencies that continue to have challenges with respect to the supply of water. Oftentimes, Mr. Speaker, it is as a result of unplanned development that would have taken place over a period of time. Oftentimes, Mr. Speaker, a lot had to do with the fact that we have not upgraded the water distribution infrastructure to meet the growing demands all over Trinidad and Tobago. Oftentimes, Mr. Speaker, we have not grappled with the issue of what is a reasonable pricing for water so that our water utility authority would have the financial resources on its own to meet the growing demands.

Because in Trinidad and Tobago, the price of water, as we all know, is heavily subsidized to the tune of billions of dollars from the state. Because the revenues WASA collects on an annual basis to the tune of perhaps \$700 million,

unfortunately, it is not enough to meet the expenditure that is required for the full running of WASA's operation, and more so to expand the water distribution infrastructure, the water production processes, the treatment of water, et cetera, Mr. Speaker. In order to do so, the State has to expend billions of dollars on an annual basis to allow our sole water agency, WASA, to be able to meet those growing demands and challenges.

And it is for that reason the previous PNM Government expended millions of dollars in various programmes all over Trinidad and Tobago, cutting across race, geographical location, and across politics, with the limited resources as they become available, to ensure that communities that are unserved and not served at all—underserved as we call it—get access to a reliable supply of water.

Because you see, Mr. Speaker, without water our community centres will not be able to function, our hospitals will not be able to function, our schools will not be able to function, and even the work that we do here today in the Parliament. Very important democratic institutions will not be able to function effectively without the supply of water. And I can go on and on, Mr Speaker; food production, our agriculture sector, and our health sector. All of these very important sectors in our national development rely on a reliable access to potable water on a daily basis.

Mr Speaker, I will go in a very short while to speak briefly of some of those programmes that we put in place to ensure that communities that are unserved and underserved would have gotten access to a reliable supply of water. And the Government, unfortunately, not funding these very important programmes, resulted in 17 months after this Government coming into power, areas where we would have made improvements around the country, especially in some of the

constituencies that we represent, Mr Speaker, they are now crying out. They do not have a reliable supply of water, Mr Speaker.

In areas where we would have made significant improvements over the last five or six years, Mr Speaker. And when my colleagues on this side get up to speak, they will tell this country the challenges faced by their constituents, especially over the last 12 months. Because, Mr Speaker, the programmes that we put in place to ensure that all our citizens get access to a reliable supply of water have not been funded by this Government. And as I have predicted over a year ago, the citizens will feel it in their taps, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, I can tell you that since I have represented my constituents of Arouca/Lopinot, I have never had to consider shutting down my office as a result of a lack of the supply of water. And very recently, a couple of weeks ago, I had to almost cancel all of the appointments that I have made to see constituents in my constituency office as a result of the area not having a supply of water going for two weeks, Mr Speaker. And to the benefit of my colleague from Couva South, when the matter was brought to my attention, I immediately called him, and I want to thank him publicly because I will criticize publicly and I will commend publicly when I have to do so, Mr Speaker.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales: And I want to publicly commend my colleague from Couva South who made an intervention. And because of that, my constituency office gets a truck-borne supply of water so that I can keep my constituency office running, Mr Speaker. But it tells you, Mr Speaker—and by the way, you know, Caroni Central, when you represented a different constituency, I provided assistance numerous times to your constituents over and over again. Thanks to a PNM

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Minister of Public Utilities.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales: And I do not know why you left Point-a-Pierre and ended up in Caroni Central. I do not know why.

Hon. Member: “I doh care.”

Mr. M. Gonzales: “Yuh like jumping jack. Yuh all over de place.” Stay in one constituency. Sorry, Mr Speaker, through you. So yes, Mr Speaker. But, Mr Speaker, recently, the Trinidad and Tobago MET Office issued a very serious bulletin that should concern all of our citizens. Not only in Trinidad and Tobago here, but the entire region and the entire world.

2.10 p.m.

This is what the Trinidad and Tobago Meteorological Services said in a bulletin. The TTMS is currently warning that the strengthening of El Niño could have a significant impact on the country’s water resources and water supply going into the 2027 dry season. In its Sept 18, 2026 dryness drought outlook, the Met Office specifically identified the following water supply impacts:

“Reduced recharge...”—of—“...dams...”—and—“...reservoirs...”—
reduced recharge of—“...underground...”—water sources, reduced—
“...stream flows. Lowering surface water availability for water distribution
systems...”—increased water loss through evaporation because of—
“...above-normal temperatures...”

A need for:

“...continuous water conservation measures...”—because—“...drier-than
usual conditions...”—could—“...extend into the 2027 dry season.”

Importantly, the TTMS says El Niño is already present. It:

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“...is expected to strengthen...through the...”—remainder—“...of 2026...”—and has—“...a 97% chance...”—of persisting—“...through March to May 2027”

It further advised or explained that:

“El Niño...generally...”—brings Trinidad and Tobago—“...near-normal to below-normal rainfall...and warmer days and nights.”—because it suppresses some of the features responsible for rainfall.

Then, the Met Office described what is taking place in Tobago. The TTMS currently forecasts a:

“Drought Watch for Tobago...by the end of October 2026.”

By the end, Mr. Speaker, of October 2026 with severe drought warning conditions projected for parts of central Tobago.

The Met Office expects below-normal rainfall from October to December with a 66 per cent probability of below-normal rainfall across Trinidad and Tobago. The island’s reservoirs and groundwater are not recovering adequately. Hillsborough Dam is around 50 per cent, Mr. Speaker. A very serious development because, if in the month of October, well into the rainy season, your major dam and/or reservoir in Tobago is only 50 per cent around this time in capacity—Courland River, another major water source, is considerably low.

The Met Office is saying that we are facing a crisis in Tobago as it relates to the supply of water. That is the reason why, Mr. Speaker, this Motion today should not be wasted. Let me put it like that. Let us use this opportunity as legislators, as representatives of the people who send us here to do work and to advocate on their behalf, to treat and to examine the issue of water supply in Trinidad and Tobago and to come up and to propose measures, Mr. Speaker, that will protect the people

of Trinidad and Tobago. Because if we do not do so, Mr. Speaker, a serious water crisis will definitely hit the people of Trinidad and Tobago that will have serious implications for our health sector, our agriculture sector and all of the various sectors that I have just mentioned. Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious issue and a looming crisis in Trinidad and Tobago.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales: And that, Mr. Speaker, is the reason why this Motion today is very timely and is very critical.

Mr. Speaker, the Motion calls upon the Government:

“Be it resolved that this House call upon the Government to outline the measures being implemented to address the disruption of the water supply in Trinidad and Tobago.”

Mr. Speaker, when my colleagues stand here to contribute in this debate today or when it continues on a next day, they will tell you the reality of what is taking place in our communities. Never before, Mr. Speaker, since I started representing my constituents, has my office been inundated and overwhelmed with complaints regarding the supply of water, Mr. Speaker. We do understand the various challenges, especially the advanced and the serious El Niño effects on our supply of water. The reservoir, Mr. Speaker, the North Oropouche Water Treatment Plant, under strain; the Caroni Water Treatment Plant, Mr. Speaker, under strain; Navet Dam. All of these reservoirs are operating below capacity, even though we are well into the rainy season. As the Met Office continues to warn the people of Trinidad and Tobago, if and when we go into drier conditions in 2027 with the low recovery by our major water dams and reservoirs and the supply of water across Trinidad and Tobago, this matter can result in serious implications for the people of

Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Speaker, as a former Minister of Public Utilities, I can tell you, and when the Leader of the Opposition stands, she will also tell this country that, as a former Minister of Planning and Development, we knew that this was coming. That is the reason why, Mr. Speaker, we put measures in place to put programmes and strategies to protect the people of Trinidad and Tobago, the National Water and Wastewater Sector Transformation Achievements, and the National Integrated Water Resources Management Policy 2022. All of these policies and programmes we put together to ensure that we protect the interests of the people of Trinidad and Tobago where water supply is concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, the North West Water Supply Improvement Programme was put in place to ensure that all of the communities located in northwest Trinidad that rely on booster stations, especially people who live on elevated areas where water can only reach their homes via the functioning of booster stations— We put together the North West Water Supply Improvement Programme that saw the refurbishment of all booster stations located in northwest Trinidad, Mr. Speaker—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales:—benefiting over 350,000 citizens, Mr. Speaker, in Diego Martin, in Santa Cruz, in Maraval, in Port of Spain, in Laventille. We saw full refurbishment of these booster stations, and we were moving into the second phase, Mr. Speaker. And guess what? The UNC Government came into power.

In this fiscal year, I will ask all of my colleagues on this side of the House and on the other side of the House to look and see what this Government, what they have allocated for the North West Water Supply Improvement Programme that

improved and was designed, Mr. Speaker, to improve the supply of water for 350,000 citizens. This Government allocated not one dollar, zero, for the North West Water Supply Improvement Programme. So, when you hear of concerns in Diego Martin, when you hear of concerns in Paramin, when you hear of concerns in Cascade and in Laventille and Morvant and some of those areas, it is because the Government has refused to allocate the necessary expenses, the necessary financial resources, so that all of these communities representing 350,000 citizens will continue to get access to a supply of water, Mr. Speaker.

Those booster stations, they operate on a 24-7 basis. Pumps running on a 24-7 basis, and if you do not have standby pumps, when one goes down, Mr. Speaker, it can result in communities not having access, their schedules being disrupted. But my colleagues will go into further details with respect to their constituencies. But I just want to bring the Parliament's attention, in light of this very important Motion, the fact that the Government has not allocated one dollar for the North West Water Supply Improvement Programme. That is the reason why 350,000 citizens in the northwest region continue, right now, after seeing major improvement over the years to the reliability and the supply of water, they are now bawling, and they are now screaming, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we put together the Community Water Improvement Programme, CWIP, a development programme designed to target unserved and underserved communities, especially communities that never had access to water, Mr. Speaker. Seven phases, seeing projects being executed in Tobago, in central Trinidad, in northwest Trinidad, all over Trinidad and Tobago, southwest, southeast. Mr. Speaker, I journeyed, commissioning many of the booster stations, laying down a number of infrastructure, new infrastructure, upgraded water

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distribution infrastructure, and I would have seen for myself and witnessed many citizens with water in their eyes, crying, rejoicing that they would have gotten water for the very first time—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales:—thanks to the Community Water Improvement Programme, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Lee: Anita Haynes.

Mr. M. Gonzales: Even—yes. Anita Haynes and all, you understand. A UNC representative invited a PNM Minister who saw water in Corosal in the constituency of Tabaquite. I wonder if the Member for Tabaquite ever visited Corosal, you understand.

Hon. Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. M. Gonzales: But I went into Corosal, with the support of my colleague, the Leader of the Opposition, and we spent \$10 million, Mr. Speaker—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales:—where the people of Corosal, in a UNC stronghold constituency, got water supplied for the very first time. That is the reason why, Member for Chaguanas East, I am loved in UNC constituencies, as well as in PNM constituencies.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales: Because all of those areas benefited from programmes like the Community Water Improvement Programme, and the North West Water Supply Improvement Programme. We designed many of these programmes to improve the supply of water. Nothing. Nothing.

Mr. Speaker, the National Water Sector Transformation Programme, the

IDB—and I expect my colleague from Couva South, in the context of the Motion, would give the country an update because the Motion is also talking about the need for improved infrastructure and what have you. That IDB programme was designed to do exactly that, Mr. Speaker. Before the PNM Government left office, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, we would have journeyed to several parts of the country and just to name a few, the Santa Cruz Water Treatment Plant, Mr. Speaker—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales:—that we will see when it is commissioned—and I hope my colleague from Couva South gives the country and my colleague from St. Ann's East an update on that very critical project that started under a PNM government.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales: As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, that project was due to be completed in 2026 and does not seem as though it is going to be completed in 2026.

The North Oropouche Water Treatment Plant, the Leader of the Opposition and I serving in other capacities, we turned the sword that would have seen the upgrade of that major infrastructure in northeast Trinidad that stood to benefit over 300,000 to 500,000 citizens in parts of the east-west corridor and in east Trinidad all up to the way in Mayaro and some of those areas. I do hope my colleague will bring and give this Parliament an update on this very project.

The Freeport Water Treatment Plant, Mr. Speaker, during my tenure, we commissioned three new wells in the Freeport area that saw the improvement of the supply of water to 19,000 people in UNC heartland. A PNM project, Mr. Speaker, that commissioned three wells that brought and increased the capacity of water at the Freeport Water Treatment Plant and in the IDB programme—yes, ask

Indarsingh. He will tell you about it; and Arnold Ram. They were both there when we commissioned those three wells.

Hon. Members: *[Interruption]*

Mr. M. Gonzales: Because they are not being maintained because you are not giving them the money to maintain those wells.

Hon. Members: *[Desk thumping]*

Mr. M. Gonzales: Mr. Speaker, the Goldsborough Water Treatment Plant, a PNM project, when it is commissioned, it will be the biggest water treatment plant in Tobago that ought to have the capacity to produce over two million gallons of water per day. That project was supposed to be completed by 2026, Mr. Speaker. I am hearing from officials at the Tobago House of Assembly that it will now be due to be completed in 2027 or 2029. You could just imagine what Tobago is facing today, a serious water crisis as a result of the advanced El Niño condition, what the Goldsborough Water Treatment Plant would have done for water supply for the people of Tobago, Mr. Speaker.

The Chatham Water Treatment Plant to treat with the supply of water in southwest Trinidad, Mr. Speaker. A number of communities in the Chatham area, that whole area, La Brea, some of those communities, we upgraded under the IDB programme, Mr. Speaker. We allocated resources to upgrade the Chatham Water Treatment Plant that will benefit over 10,000 people in the southwest region, Mr. Speaker.

2.10 p.m.

So when my colleagues opposite, from time to time, whenever they get the opportunity to say that the PNM did not invest in water infrastructure and water distribution and everything was so bad and what have you, nothing could be

further from the truth because the evidence, Mr. Speaker, demonstrates that we have made and we continue to make, before leaving office, major improvements in the supply of water all across Trinidad and Tobago.

That does not mean to say that it was perfect, Mr. Speaker, because you can only do so based on the resources that are made available to you. But I am proud to say, Mr. Speaker, that over the last five years, the PNM being in Government, with all of these programmes that we put in place to see the improvement in the supply of water, the upgrading of water infrastructure, the drilling of wells all over Trinidad and Tobago, hundreds and thousands of people all over Trinidad and Tobago would have seen an improvement in their supply of water, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales: But what is happening today? What is happening today?

Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, my colleague from Diego Martin North/East serving as Minister of Finance, seeing the improvement that we were putting in place, accessed a loan to the tune of \$300 million to assist WASA to pursue other water development programmes because, Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, the evidence and the science showed us that if we did not make certain interventions in the water sector, many communities would be left vulnerable and left exposed, Mr. Speaker. \$300 million to fund, to finance a water stabilization and improvement programme to assist WASA to drill wells in strategic locations across Trinidad and Tobago, in Valencia, in Cumuto, Mr. Speaker, in Carapal, I remember it, in Arouca. The \$300 million was to ensure that the wells were targeted to serve unserved and underserved communities.

Guess what happened, Mr. Speaker? I can tell the people of Trinidad and Tobago confidently, without fear of contradiction by the Minister of Public

Utilities and the Minister of Finance, when the UNC Government came into power, that \$300 million that was approved by a PNM Cabinet to improve the supply of water all across Trinidad and Tobago, guess what happened? The Minister of Finance took back every single cent for budget financing and left all of those programmes in shambles, Mr. Speaker.

Those programmes that were designed to ensure that communities, especially those communities that they are representing, get access to a reliable supply of water, because the evidence from the Water Resources Agency indicated that those areas, Mr. Speaker, were filled with water, and if we drill wells and localize those wells, all of these communities who are relying on the major reservoirs like Navet and the Caroni Water Treatment Plant, they will now have access to their own localized supply of water in the wells in their communities, thereby releasing the dependence on some of those major reservoirs and dams. And when you do so, the domino effect is that those communities closer to our major reservoirs and dams will see a major improvement in the supply of water.

The worst thing that ever happened to Trinidad and Tobago in the water sector is the UNC coming into office. They took back the \$300 million to give the Minister of Finance to do budget financing, and all of these projects came to a crashing end, Mr. Speaker. Today, we are hearing the Minister of Public Utilities telling the people of Trinidad and Tobago that he is going to construct desalination plants. You are using desalination plants? Six desalination plants will cost the people of this country billions of dollars. WASA does not even have the training and the capacity to manage one desalination plant, and who is going to finance it? To construct it alone will cost billions of dollars, and to maintain it will cost hundreds of millions of dollars. Pie in the sky. Five desalination plants.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales: You crashed, you had access to \$300 million to drill wells, to improve infrastructure, so that people can get access to a reliable supply of water. Many of those communities are your constituencies. The Minister of Finance took back every single cent from it. Allocated not one dollar, and now you are promising desalination plants as the remedy and the panacea to solve the water crisis in Trinidad and Tobago. It is not feasible. It is pie in the sky, Mr. Speaker, and someone is misleading the Minister of Public Utilities. Especially when the Water Resources Agency confirms, Mr. Speaker, in various documents, that there are aquifers located in many of those communities where you can drill wells, treat the water, and provide a water supply to many of our communities. A cheaper form of water. A more reliable form of water. You will not require the expenditure like desalination water, but UNC came, took back the \$300 million and screamed and said that the PNM did not improve infrastructure. Hypocrisy.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales: Not true. When the UNC came into government as representing the people of Arouca/Lopinot, I asked the Minister of Public Utilities, what about the Arouca Water Improvement Programme? Are you proceeding with that? A programme that was designed to improve the supply of water to the people of Arouca and surrounding areas, Maloney and those areas. Five Rivers, we drill wells, laying down of pipelines, La Florissante, Lynton Gardens, Arima, Old Road. The Minister indicated that they are looking for the financing, even though the financing was already in place when the PNM was in government but they are reviewing the programme.

I asked about the well, Arouca Well 13 that was designed to ensure the

improvement of the supply of water to the people of Five Rivers. The Minister indicated that the well would be able to produce over 200,000 gallons of water per day. Today, Mr. Speaker, the reservoir in east Trinidad, what is the name of the reservoir again?

Ms. Beckles: Hollis

Mr. M. Gonzales: Hollis—experienced Minister of Public Utilities as well—

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales:—the Hollis Reservoir, operating below capacity. But those wells were designed to ensure that you reduce reliance on the major reservoirs. Up to today, after the well is drilled, the well cannot be integrated into the water distribution system. The people of Five Rivers are now seeing hell for water. The people of Borne Air West are seeing hell for water. The people of La Florrisante are seeing hell for water, because the projects, for one reason or the other, according to the Member for Oropouche East, I would hate, and I hate to repeat anything that he says, but I will run the risk on this occasion. Mr. Speaker, that is “wickedity”, UNC style.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping and laughter*]

Hon. Member: “Where he is?”

Mr. Hosein: “Look he appears.”

Hon. Members: “Right behind yuh.”

Mr. M. Gonzales: “Wickedity!” [*Laughter*]

Hon. Members: [*Laughter*]

Ms. Beckles: It is called perfect timing.

Mr. M. Gonzales: Mr. Speaker, “true talk, no lie”. I hope he does not represent “wickedity”, yuh understand”. What was I saying, Mr. Speaker? I mean we are

talking, it is good to laugh a little bit, but it is serious though. It is a very serious matter.

Ms. Beckles: You have 10 more minutes.

Mr. M. Gonzales: Thank you. The well cannot be integrated, and my constituents are now suffering for water.

The Valencia area, I asked the Minister of Public Utilities to answer on behalf of the Government what is happening with the Valencia well. He said, “Well, we are pursuing other options”. Before I left the Ministry, I was informed that the project was designed, contract issued, et cetera. They would have gotten all of the EMA approvals and they were ready to commence drilling of the Valencia well. Problems in Hollis Reservoir.

The project was cancelled, Mr. Speaker, and the people in Valencia, in the constituency of Arima and Toco/Sangre Grande, are now seeing hell for water. A project that was already designed, contract already awarded, and the PNM putting financial resources. Those projects were not designed like pie in the sky. They were designed because the evidence told us that if we do not put things in place to localize the supply of water and to reduce reliance on some of our major reservoirs and dams, Trinidad and Tobago will be in serious problems, and that prediction, Mr. Speaker, is now our reality today.

Mr. Speaker, let me go on to tell you. Before we left office, utilizing WASA’s internal resources, a major pipe-laying project, 8-inch dedicated main in the constituency of Toco/Sangre Grande was started. Mr. Speaker. I am told that over 800 metres to 1,200 metres of major pipelines were laid down to improve the supply of water to constituencies, or rather communities, like Bois Bandé, North East Settlement, Jacob Coat, Site A, B and C, to benefit over 4,000 citizens

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utilizing the authority's internal resources, Mr. Speaker. 8-1,200 metres of pipelines were laid down. Guess what? UNC came into office, project cancelled, and the 4,000 people who live in Bois Bandé, in North Eastern settlement, Jacob Coat Site, cannot see an improvement in the supply of water because of political wickedness and political spite by the UNC Government.

They are entitled to a supply of water and if the member for Toco/Sangre Grande cannot speak on behalf of his constituents, then the PNM will speak on behalf of the people of Toco/Sangre Grande.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. M. Gonzales: As I speak to you, Mr. Speaker, communities in Balandra, in Cumana Village, in Toco, Mission Village, L'Anse Noire, Tower Rush, Grande Riviere, Matelot, I am sure the Member for Toco/Sangre Grande does not even know where those communities are in his constituency. But I am told that some of those communities are out of water for over a month. Mr. Speaker, these are very serious issues. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have again?

Mr. Speaker: Four and a half minutes.

Mr. M. Gonzales: Of full time?

Mr. Speaker: Four and a half minutes.

Mr. M. Gonzales: Of full time?

Mr. Speaker: Surely, you must know the mover does not—

Mr. M. Gonzales: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Full time is 45 minutes.

Mr. M. Gonzales: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, as I said, these are very serious issues affecting all of our constituencies.

Mr. Speaker, I asked my constituents, or rather, I have been in contact with many

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communities in my constituency, and I will call out some of their names. Cumberbatch Lane, water challenges; Trestrail 1 and 2, major water challenges relying on the Hollis Reservoir; Windy Hill; Lopinot; Ridgeview Heights in Arouca; La Florissante Phases 1, 2 and 3; Lynton Gardens Phase 1 and 2; Pine Ridge; Sherwood Park; Five Rivers; Carib Homes; Borne Air West; all over my constituency, Mr. Speaker. They are complaining and most importantly, as the Minister would have promised this country, because the Minister was very right when he said, when he was appointed Minister of Public Utilities, that oftentimes WASA's advertised schedules are not met. They advertise a schedule and you decide to depend on that and the water that was supposed, or the schedule of water that was supposed to arrive at seven o'clock in the morning, the water arrived at five o'clock and after one hour or half an hour, especially if you live on an elevated area, the water goes.

And the Minister was right when he said that we have to examine and ensure—

Mr. Sturge: You had 10 years to fix it and you—[*Inaudible*]

Mr. M. Gonzales:—that WASA complies with the schedule, and the Minister told the country that his Ministry, the Ministry of Public Utilities, will now assume the role of monitoring WASA and to ensure that it complies with the schedules. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to ask the Minister what becomes of that programme? It is a very important programme, I would say.

2.25 p.m.

Because I would tell you this, as a Minister, you may have all your plans. You may have your work ethic. You may provide those agencies with the resources to do what they can, but you cannot go—you are not a turncock to go and turn on water, to make sure that people get water. That is not your

responsibility. You have to ensure that you have proper management in place to go and ensure that those who are responsible for turning on the taps do so in a timely manner so that you can meet those schedules.

So, whilst, yes, the initiative was well-intentioned, at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, it is misplaced, because at the end of the day, it is those agencies, the regional managers, the middle-level managers who have to be up and on the ground, working to ensure that those turncocks and those engineers get up and ensure that the taps are turned, the valves are turned, so that our communities can get water. And that is not the case, despite the promises of the Minister. I want to tell the Minister that you cannot do so in the Ministry of Public Utilities. You have to make sure that the agencies are properly managed, so that they can comply with advertised water schedules.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister also announced—which I thought was a very laudable programme—the water tank farm project. He said that the Ministry is going to construct 10 water tank farms in unserved and underserved areas. You cannot object to that. I mean, people need water. And if you want to construct tank farms, if you believe it is a viable option, then good. Mr. Speaker, I am told that those tank farms are not linked to the water distribution system. So, you are constructing tank farms and they are not linked to the water distribution system. But if they are not linked to the water distribution system, how are they getting water? Mr. Speaker, do you know how they are getting water? They have to contract. So, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the Government needs to put together a programme in place to improve the supply of water—

Mr. Speaker: Your 45 minutes are up.

Mr. M. Gonzales:—and they have failed to do so.

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Mr. Speaker: Your 45 minutes are up.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Yes?

Mr. Imbert:—I rise to second the Motion—

Mr. Speaker: Well, you see, we have a procedural problem there.

Mr. Gonzales: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Speaker: No, no, sit down. Have a seat.

Mr. Gonzales: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Speaker: No, your time is up. Have a seat.

Mr. Gonzales: No, Mr. Speaker, I was saying—

Mr. Speaker: Have a seat.

Mr. Gonzales:—I have wrapped up my contribution, and I beg to move.

Mr. Speaker: That is the point. We have a procedural issue here. Members have to be disciplined. We have a procedural issue, a serious one. The 45 minutes were up. I kept signalling the Member—and check the record, I am not wrong in this regard. Check the record. No utterance of “I beg to move” within the 45 minutes.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: We have a procedural problem. We have a procedural problem. You never begged to move your Motion.

Hon. Members: [*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: After your time had expired. That is the problem. So what are we going to do—

Hon. Members: [*Continuous interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Hang on a second. We are going to suspend for 15 minutes. We

are going to check the Standing Orders to see whether the Motion survives.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: So, we will come back at 2.45p.m. We will come back at 2.45 p.m.

2.28 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

2.45 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Mr. Speaker: Okay. Before we took the break, the Member for Diego Martin North/East rose. I am going to hear you, not on seconding the Motion, but whether or not—I assume you wanted to address me on whether or not the Motion survives. That is all you wanted to hear?

Hon. Members: [*Interruption*]

Mr. Imbert: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Speaker: There was no Motion moved. That is the problem.

Mr. Imbert: You did not allow me to second the Motion.

Mr. Speaker: Sorry?

Mr. Imbert: You did not allow me.

Mr. Speaker: No, no, no. The question of allowing you or disallowing does not arise. It is a different issue.

Mr. Gonzales: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Speaker: No, no, no. Do not twist my words. Do not misrepresent what I am about to say. The Standing Orders are clear. The mover of a Motion has 45 minutes. Let me have recourse to the electronic record. At four and a half minutes, the hon. Member enquired of me how much time he had. I said, “You have four and a half minutes.” At 20 seconds before the expiration of the time, I said to the Procedural Clerk, loud enough for the Member to hear, “He has 20 seconds again.”

Hon. Member: He heard you.

Mr. Speaker: Whether the Member heard me or not, that is not my concern. Members are experienced Members. I have been in the House for 17 months. This Member has been here for 10 years. And all of the Members are far more experienced than I am. It is contained in these Standing Orders, a document all of you collectively agreed to, that movers of Motions have 45 minutes. There are two things that happened here: The time expired. The Member failed to move his Motion in time. The Member then took his seat. Then the Member for Diego Martin North/East attempted to stand to move second a Motion, which had not been moved. The broad conceptual issue is: Does a Motion, which has not been moved, survive? And the answer to that is a plain and obvious no.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: I did not create these rules, you know. I did not create these rules.

Mr. Scotland SC: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Speaker: Port of Spain South, whilst I have the highest regard for you—

Mr. Scotland SC: Mr. Speaker—

Hon. Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Scotland SC: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Port of Spain South, why are you standing? Why are you standing? Have a seat. I am on my legs.

Hon. Members: [*Continuous crosstalk*]

Mr. Scotland SC: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Speaker: Have a seat. I am on my legs. The Standing Orders are clear. Once I am standing, no one else is permitted to stand. I did not create these rules.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: The Standing Orders are clear. There are two things wrong here: One, the Member knew that his time was almost up. The Member sat without moving his Motion. Let us go through the chronology, and the electronic record will bear me out on this, you know. This is not my creation. This debacle is not my creation. This procedural debacle is not my creation. I want to make that pellucidly plain.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: And in case one adjective does not work: Plain, pellucid, palpable and patent.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: All right? Let us have recourse to the electronic record, and all of this will be borne out on *Hansard*. I wish to repeat it, not for the benefit of Members of this House, but for the benefit of members of the public looking on, so that I am not accused of suppressing a debate on a legitimate area of public concern.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: Water is something which touches all the lives of citizens. But I do not have the jurisdiction, all right? The power to extend time—and the Member enquired whether it was full time at four and a half minutes. Then I jokingly told him, “Surely, you must know a mover is 45 minutes. There is no”—that is full time. The Member then took his seat without moving his Motion. Then the Member for Diego Martin North/East attempted to second a Motion, which had not been moved. The Member realizing, of course, the procedural lapse—I do not want to call it an error, I want to use neutral language—then, out of time, sort to stand to move a Motion. The Motion does not survive. That is black-letter law.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: I do not have the discretion to extend time—

Mr. Gonzales: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Speaker: I will hear you just now. I will hear you just now. All right? I do not have the discretion to extend time. It is as simple as that. I have checked the May's. I have checked all of it. If somebody could point me to some learning in the parliamentary practice and procedure books, which says that I have the power to extend time, or to “a Motion survives without it being moved”, I am willing to listen.

However, let me make it plain, the collective Members of this House, you run the affairs of the House by consensus. So, the Members, pursuant to Standing Order 122, I think it is, can vote to suspend the Standing Orders and allow the Member. That is a matter I throw it out for agreement, all right? So, short of these Standing Orders, investing me with a discretionary power to allow an unmoved Motion to survive, I think the answer to this is now plain and obvious. Member for Arouca/ Lopinot, I will hear. You raised your hand. I will hear you.

Mr. Gonzales: Thank you much, Mr. Speaker. Can you identify where in the Standing Orders—because I have looked at it—that stipulate that the “I beg to move” formula must be done within the 45 minutes, and if it is not done within 45 minutes, then even though it is moved outside of the 45 minutes, it cannot be sustained?

Mr. Speaker: It stands to reason that a mover of the Motion has 45 minutes to speak. It stands to reason that you must move your Motion within the 45 minutes.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: Otherwise—

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Hon. Members: *[Interruption]*

Mr. Speaker: Otherwise, that interpretation, that laissez-faire interpretation, which you seek to impose on the Standing Orders, can be subject to serious abuse. There will be nothing to stop Members from speaking beyond their 45 minutes.

Mr. Gonzales: *[Inaudible]*

Mr. Speaker: Yes, just now. I am explaining this to you.

Mr. Gonzales: *[Inaudible]*

Mr. Speaker: Hang on a second. Because as a broad conceptual proposition, what you are saying is that movers of Motions have no obligation to observe time limits and they continue to speak without moving their Motion within the time period, all right? The sub-issue, which your submission raises, is that you have no obligation to beg to move. So, if a Motion standing in your name is not moved, then what is the person seconding the Motion? It says so—it says in the Standing Orders that the Motion must be seconded. What is the person seconding if you do not move the Motion?

Mr. Gonzales: *[Inaudible]*

Mr. Speaker: No, no, no. You sat down. I am not—

Mr. Gonzales: *[Inaudible]*

Mr. Speaker: Listen, as a broad conceptual proposition, that is what you are saying. You are saying—if I am to distil what you are saying, your argument, into a broad conceptual proposition, it is this: That the mover of a Motion has no obligation to move his Motion within the stipulated time. So, you know what that means? Time limits have no meaning in these Standing Orders. Time limits have meaning to them if the House arrives at a consensus. I am merely here to administer the proceedings of this House in accordance with the will of the

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Members, all right?

2.55 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: If you examine that in any great detail, and I say this with the greatest of respect, that is a palpably preposterous proposition.

Hon. Members: Ooh! [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: So, I will hear you further. I see your hand is up.

Mr. Gonzales: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, according to the Standing Orders, from our understanding, you have 45 minutes in which to make your contribution. I took my 45 minutes. It came to an end. What you are saying is that you must say, “I beg to move”, within those 45 minutes. “I beg to move” is not part of your contribution. That is the point I am making.

Hon. Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Gonzales: So, you have 45 minutes in which, Mr. Speaker, then I exhausted the 45 minutes—

Hon. Members: [*Interruption*]

Mr. Gonzales:—in accordance with the Standing Orders, and I am saying that the “I beg to move”—Mr. Speaker, why are you allowing the Members—

Mr. Speaker: Alright, Members, allow the Member to make his point.

Mr. Gonzales: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The “I beg to move” formula, Mr. Speaker, the Standing Orders do not say that it has to form part of your 45-minute contribution.

Mr. Speaker: Alright. Let us examine that with some critical analysis. So, you can speak for 45 minutes, sit down, do not beg to move and then stand up and say, “Well, I beg to move?” And that is exactly what happened.

Mr. Gonzales: [*Inaudible*]

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Mr. Speaker: Look. You sat down. The Member jumped up, and that is when I said, “We have a procedural issue.” Before I entertained Diego Martin North/East, I said we have a procedural issue, and that is when you realized that you had failed to move your Motion. The failure to move the Motion renders it—

Hon. Member: Null and void.

Mr. Speaker:—null and void.

Mr. Gonzales: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Speaker: Yes, I stood up because your time was up.

Mr. Gonzales: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Speaker: No, no. You continued speaking. Come on, let us—

Mr. Gonzales: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Speaker: Well, I do not want to use that word. Let us be frank and forthright with each other. The fact of the matter is—

Mr. Gonzales: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Speaker: Here is the solution I am going to propose to the House if all the Members agree. There can be a consensus as to the suspension of the Standing Orders pursuant to Standing Order 122. If the House agrees, we will suspend the Standing Order and allow you to do it. If the House does not agree, Members regulate themselves. I am giving a way out. Both sides can agree or disagree. Leader of Government Business, can I ask you very pointedly whether you are prepared to—

Mr. Padarath: Mr. Speaker, the Government will not engage in an infraction against the Standing Orders of this House.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: That being the case, the Motion having failed to move, there is

nothing to second. I think that concludes the business of the House before it.
Leader of Government Business.

Hon. Members: [*Desk thumping*]

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Public Utilities and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Hon. Barry Padarath): Mr. Speaker, well, that was anticlimactic. However, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to Wednesday—

Mr. Scotland SC: A point of order, Mr. Speaker. A point of order.

Hon. Member: No, no, no, no.

Hon. Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. B. Padarath: I have been called upon to adjourn the House, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Scotland SC: I am trying to make a point of order.

Hon. B. Padarath: I am on my legs to adjourn the House.

Mr. Speaker: Is it a point of order with regard to the adjournment?

Mr. Scotland SC: No, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: We have moved past that.

Mr. Scotland SC: Mr. Speaker, it is—

Mr. Speaker: We have moved past that. Have a seat.

Mr. Scotland SC: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Speaker: Port of Spain South, have a seat. Have a seat.

Mr. Scotland SC: [*Inaudible*]

Mr. Speaker: We have moved beyond that.

Hon. Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. B. Padarath: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn to

Wednesday, October 07 at 10.30 a.m.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Gonzales: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: I have put the question.

Hon. Members: [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Gonzales: Mr. Speaker, can the Government indicate—

Mr. Speaker: I have put the question.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 2.59 p.m.