



REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Debates of the House of Representatives

5th Session – 10th Parliament (Rep.) – Volume 32 – Number 17

**OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)**

THE HONOURABLE WADE MARK
SPEAKER

THE HONOURABLE NELA KHAN
DEPUTY SPEAKER

Friday 5th December, 2014

CLERK OF THE HOUSE: JACQUI SAMPSON–MEIGUEL

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Leave of Absence

Friday, December 05, 2014

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 05, 2014

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 the hon. Member for St. Joseph, Mr. Terrence Deyalsingh, who has asked to be excused from today's sitting of the House. The leave which the Member seeks is granted.

VISITOR

**(Hon. André Hilton
Member of Parliament,
Eastern St. Andrew, Jamaica)**

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, in the Speaker's gallery to my immediate left, we have with us one of the participants of this week's Information and Communication Technology Conference for Parliamentarians, which was hosted by us and sponsored by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation and was held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. We have with us, in that area of the public gallery, the hon. André Hilton, Member of Parliament for Eastern St. Andrew, Jamaica. I would like us to warmly welcome the hon. Member. [*Desk thumping*]

PAPERS LAID

1. Annual Report on the Operations of the National Insurance Board of Trinidad and Tobago (NIBTT) for the year ended June 30, 2014. [*The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Dr. Roodal Moonilal)*]
2. Annual Report (2012/2013) on the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago for the period October 01, 2012 to September 30, 2013. [*The Minister of Science and Technology (Hon. Dr. Rupert Griffith)*]
3. Ninety-Ninth Report of the Salaries Review Commission of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the determination of the salary and other Terms and Conditions of Service of the offices of Director and Deputy Director of the Electronic Monitoring Unit. [*The Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Nela Khan)*]

4. One Hundredth Report of the Salaries Review Commission of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the review of salary and other Conditions of Service to be applicable to the office of the Lay-assessor, Equal Opportunity Tribunal. [Mrs. N. Khan]

WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION

**Growth Poles
(Status Report on)**

20. **Mr. Fitzgerald Jeffrey** (*La Brea*) asked the hon. Minister of Planning and Sustainable Development:

Could the Minister provide a detailed status report on each of the five growth poles identified for opening of new economic spaces, including a listing of the planned construction activities of each growth pole which have commenced?

Vide end of sitting for written answer.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (Hon. Dr. Roodal Moonilal): Mr. Speaker, the Government will be in a position to answer all questions, except question Nos. 23 and 29 posed to the Minister of Works and Infrastructure, who is absent at this time.

In addition, question 12 to the Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs. We will ask that the answers be deferred for two weeks.

Mr. Speaker: There are two questions directed to the Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs. He is here to answer just 10? Ten and 11. Thank you.

The following questions stood on the Order Paper:

**Trinidad Tesoro, Trintopec and Petrotrin
(Retirees Pension Upgrade)**

12. Could the hon. Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs state:

When will the retirees from Trinidad Tesoro, Trintopec and Petrotrin receive their pension upgrade in accordance with the agreement signed between Petrotrin or its predecessors and the relevant Trade Unions? [Mr. F. Jeffrey]

**Arouca/Maloney URP Projects
(Details of)**

- 23.** Could the hon. Minister of Works and Infrastructure state:
- A. The number of infrastructure projects done by the URP in the constituency of Arouca/Maloney for the period 2012 to present;
 - B. The location of each infrastructure project;
 - C. The name of the contractors for each infrastructure project;
 - D. The cost of each infrastructure project;
 - E. The start date and end date of each infrastructure project? [*Miss A. Hospedales*]

**Bridges in Port of Spain North/St Ann's West
(Details of)**

- 29.** Could the hon. Minister of Works and Infrastructure state when the following bridges in the Constituency of Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West will be rehabilitated:
- a) The bridge at the end of Cascade Main Road near to Carlton Savannah Hotel and leading onto St. Ann's Main Road;
 - b) The bridge at the other end of Cascade Main Road near to Massy Stores (formerly Hi-Lo) and leading onto St. Ann's Main Road? [*Mrs. P. Mc Intosh*]

Questions, by leave, deferred.

**Pointe-a-Pierre Refinery
(Details of Insurance Coverage)**

- 10. Mr. Fitzgerald Jeffrey (*La Brea*)** asked the hon. Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs:

What is the status of insurance coverage for the operation of all the units/plants at the Pointe-a-Pierre refinery?

The Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Kevin Ramnarine): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to answer question 10 on the Order Paper from the Member for La Brea. I will get straight to the answer.

Petrotrin has operational insurance for its operating plants, including the refinery and construction insurance for plants under construction. Both insurances are placed overseas. The operational insurance covers property damage to assets and that is processed units, non-processed buildings and storage and product movement, with a replacement value of around US \$3 billion with an accompanying annual business interruption loss on the refinery for US \$377 million.

The period of coverage for these assets is March 15, 2014 to March 14, 2015. Several underwriters collectively insure these assets, with the lead underwriter being Liberty International. Liberty International is a leading insurer which underwrites energy risk. Its head offices are in the United Kingdom.

Risk surveys on the refinery are conducted annually in January by external risk surveyors and these risk reports are presented to underwriters prior to renewal in March.

Annual meetings are held with the brokers, Petrotrin's executive leadership and senior management. Quarterly meetings are held with insurance risk staff and Petrotrin's brokers.

Petrotrin has acquired construction insurance for the GOP plants, that is the gasoline optimization programme plants, and the ultra low sulphur diesel plant, which is under construction. These plants include the FCCU, fluidized catalytic conversion unit, and the C3/C4 alkylation unit and sulphuric acid regeneration unit.

The insurance coverage is for all construction risk in the sum of US \$475 million for the FCCU and US \$343 million for the acid and alkylation units with total insured sum of US \$818 million. The period of coverage is up to December 07, 2014. Further, an extension to February 28, 2015 is to be attained after receipt of final fitness for service report on the FCCU, or cat cracker.

Several underwriters collectively insure these plants, with the lead underwriter again being Liberty International. Risk surveys are conducted annually by risk engineers representing the lead underwriter, Liberty. Ongoing status reports are provided by Petrotrin to Liberty via brokers with conference calls as required.

With regard to the ultra low sulphur diesel plant, the insurance coverage for the ULSP or ultra low sulphur diesel plant is for all construction risk in the sum of US \$425 million. The period of coverage is from March 15, 2010 to February 28,

2015. Again, several underwriters collectively insure this plant, with the lead underwriter in this case being American International Group or AIG.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the answer to question 10.

Mr. Jeffrey: Supplemental: hon. Minister, were there any periods over the last four and a half years when parts of the Pointe-a-Pierre refinery did not have adequate insurance cover?

Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine: Mr. Speaker, the question posed to me was: what is the status of insurance coverage, and that is what I gave to the Parliament, so if the Member for La Brea wants to file another question, I will gladly answer that question.

Alkylation and Acid Unit (Details of)

11. Mr. Fitzgerald Jeffrey (*La Brea*) asked the hon. Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs:

- A. How soon will the defects of the Alkylation and Acid Unit be completed?
- B. What is the name of the contractor who built the Alkylation and Acid Unit?
- C. What was the amount paid to the contractor for the Alkylation and Acid Unit Project?

The Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs (Sen. The Hon. Kevin Ramnarine): Mr. Speaker, with regard to question 11 from the Member for La Brea, no defects have been identified on either the alkylation or acid units and both units are available for operation. The operation of these two plants is linked to the operation of, again, the fluidized catalytic cracker, or the FCCU, as the FCCU is the sole source of propylene and butylene feed streams to the alkylation unit for the production of alkylate. Given that the FCCU, or the cat cracker, is currently not operational, the alkylation and acid units are also not operational.

With regard to the second part of the question posed by the Member—what is the name of the contractor who built the alkylation and acid unit?—the answer is the contractor is ABB Lummus Techint, a joint venture between ABB Lummus Global Incorporated and Techint Compagnia Tecnica Internazionale SACEL, and that was for the engineering procurement construction, the EPC, for that plant.

With regard to part (C) of the question, the total amount paid to the contractor was US \$323 million. That concludes the answer.

Mr. Jeffrey: Supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Hon. Minister, are you aware that following the handing-over of the alkylation acid unit plant, operators discovered 2,430 welding knots in the plant? Defective welding knots. That is where the welding in the joints—2,430?

Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine: Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of that. If the Member could supply me that information, I would certainly follow up. I do not have that information.

Mr. Jeffrey: Further supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Seeing that the alkylation acid unit plant is down, what is the cost to Petrotrin because it is a non-functional plant?

Mr. Speaker: I think it is a new question, but the hon. Minister—

Sen. The Hon. K. Ramnarine: Again, that is a new question. I did not walk with those figures in my back pocket or at the top of my head. I would be very grateful to share that information if you would file another question.

Mr. Speaker: You have a final supplementary?

Mr. Jeffrey: Hon. Minister, the closure of the two oil refineries in the Caribbean and the 13 that you mentioned that were closed in Europe, is that an indication of the Government's plan to close down the Pointe-a-Pierre refinery?

Mr. Speaker: No, no, no. Listen. That is out of order. You have a final supplementary? Do you have a final supplementary? That is it? Okay. Let us go on to the hon. Member for Arouca/Maloney, please.

Ministry of Sport
(Details of Non-Profit Institutions)

25. Miss Alicia Hospedales (Arouca/Maloney) asked the hon. Minister of Sport:

Could the Minister state:

- a) The number of non-profit institutions that received funding from the Ministry of Sport for the period 2010 to present;
- b) The names of the non-profit institutions.

The Minister of Sport (Hon. Dr. Rupert Griffith): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have the approval to answer question No. 25 on the Order Paper. As Government's lead agency for the initiatives associated with the delivery of sport services, the Ministry of Sport provides grant funding aimed at assisting individuals and structured entities engaged in sport and development activities.

Grant funding is disbursed to national governing bodies for sport, community groups and individuals in support of their plans, programmes and activities that foster sport development, facilitate athletic performance and engender a spirit of community living. The provision of financial assistance is informed by the Ministry's policy guidelines for the disbursement of grant funding.

With respect to part (a), for the year 2010, 166 non-profit institutions; for the year 2011, 135 non-profit institutions; for the year 2012, 145 non-profit institutions; year 2013, 238 non-profit institutions; for the year 2014, 66 non-profit institutions; and for the year so far, for 2015, nine non-profit institutions.

1.45 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to part (b), now this is a very long part, it has 759 organizations.

Mr. Speaker: Hon Member, please, may I? Hon. Member for Arouca/Maloney, there are some 750 institutions, and that will eat into time for other questions. With your leave and with the leave of the House, I would ask the hon. Member to have those names circulated to you, and to hon. Members of this House. Okay? We will proceed to the next question.

Vide end of sitting for written part of the answer.

Dr. Moonilal: Mr. Speaker, could we ask that question No. 26 be also deferred for two weeks, please?

Mr. Speaker: You want 26 to be deferred?

Dr. Moonilal: Yes, thank you. No. 28.

Mr. Speaker: And 28? We can proceed with 28? Okay.

The following question stood on the Order paper in the name of Miss Alicia Hospedales (Arouca/Maloney):

**Transformed Life Ministries
(Details of)**

- 26.** Could the hon. Minister of the People and Social Development state:
- a) Whether there are street dwellers housed at Transformed Life Ministries on behalf of the Ministry;

- b) The cost of housing each client there;
- c) The total sum of money paid by the Ministry to Transformed Life Ministries for housing the street dwellers during the period 2011 to present?

Question, by leave, deferred.

**UTT Secondary Specialization Graduates
(Details of)**

28. Miss Marlene Mc Donald (*Port of Spain South*) on behalf of Mrs. Patricia Mc Intosh (*Port of Spain North/St. Ann's West*) asked the hon. Minister of Education:

- a) How many of the UTT secondary specialization graduates have, to date, been upgraded from the primary school system to Teacher 1 (Secondary)?
- b) What is the timeline for all these secondary specialization graduates to be upgraded to Teacher 1 (Secondary)?
- c) What is the status of the creation of positions of Special Education Teacher for each school as recommended by the Miskey Witt Report?

The Minister of Education (Hon. Dr. Tim Gopeesingh): Mr. Speaker, 24 graduates from UTT who had specialized in secondary specialization have today been upgraded from the primary school system to Teacher 1 (Secondary). That answers part (a) of the question.

I have been advised that within the next three months, the rest of the secondary specialization graduates will be upgraded to Teacher 1 (Secondary) but, of course, that is a little dependent upon the communication between the CPO and the Teaching Service Commission, as all these matters are before the CPO and the Teaching Service Commission.

Answer to part (c) of the question: 109 teachers who graduated from UTT in specialization education between 2010 and 2013 have graduated with a Bachelor of Education degree in special needs, and are now being asked if they would be willing to—they have all been placed in primary schools, but their real specialized services are not being utilized in a manner that we would like to see them utilized—so they are being asked now if they would be willing to come out from the individual schools and work with the Ministry of Education so that they can have a cluster of primary schools to manage—out of the 476 primary schools, the

109 specialized special education teachers. Now, once they have agreed, we will place them across the 476 primary schools to give assistance. More are being trained at the moment.

Miss Mc Donald: Supplemental. Minister, the Teacher 1 position, is that a graduate position?

Hon. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: Yes, it is a graduate position. Let me just mention, I believe 99 per cent of our teachers in the primary schools now either have a Bachelor of Education degree or have the certification from the Teachers Training Colleges of Valsayn or Corinth. Long ago, we had a number of teachers with O Levels within the school system as assistant teachers, but now with the advent of UTT, we have given scholarships to a few thousand over the last three or four years—and, previously, by the past administration as well—and they have now graduated and filled the positions, so that all our graduates now in the primary schools are fully qualified, and those in secondary schools, of course, are fully qualified with a bachelor's degree.

We have been speaking with UTT. We have approximately 8,000 teachers in primary schools; 1,200 administrators, like principals, heads of departments, vice-principals, senior teachers and deans; and in secondary schools close to 7,500 secondary school teachers.

Attempts are now being made between the Ministry of Education and UTT. I met with the provost yesterday. They will now be entertaining students for the Postgraduate Diploma in Education. So that within a two-year period most, or if not all our teachers in the secondary schools would have achieved a Postgraduate Diploma in Education thereby raising the quality and standard of our teachers in our secondary schools.

Miss Mc Donald: Minister, I asked that question because I know that Teacher 2—there is a difference between Teacher 1 and Teacher 2—was the graduate teacher. So, could you tell me now: what is the difference between a Teacher 1 and a Teacher 2, please?

Hon. Dr. T. Gopeesingh: They are all qualified with a bachelor's degree or some are even qualified with a masters and we have some teachers with PhD now in the school system, but the Teacher 1 can teach up to Form 3, because of the modules that they have satisfied within their degree programme; a Teacher 2 can go up to Form 5 and a Teacher 3 now can teach up to the CAPE level.

But to move from Teacher 1 to Teacher 2 and to Teacher 3, the teachers are now asked to allow themselves to be trained in a number of modules which the University of Trinidad and Tobago is facilitating—some for a short period of time, about three months—so that they can move from Teacher 1 to Teacher 2, having satisfied these modules in the degree programme for that particular subject and then, therefore, they can move from teaching up to Form 3 to Form 5. There is a certain amount more that they need to do to be able to satisfy moving from Form 5 to CAPE. I hope I have answered your question.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for St. Ann's East. The hon. Member for Port of Spain South, would you like to ask the question?

**Maracas Bay Police Station
(Details of)**

30. Miss Marlene Mc Donald (*Port of Spain South*) on behalf of Mrs. Joanne Thomas (*St. Ann's East*) asked the hon. Minister of National Security:

- A. When will better accommodation be sought for the officers of the Maracas Bay Police Station?
- B. What is the target date for the commencement of works on the Maracas Bay Police Station?
- C. What is the target date for completion?

The Minister of National Security (Sen. The Hon. Gary Griffith): Thank you. Mr. Speaker, in relation to the question pertaining to better accommodation being sought for the officers of the Maracas Bay Police Station and the target date for the commencement of works on the Maracas Bay Police Station, let me say that the original police station was located on a hill—the southern side of the roadway which was used to enter the Maracas Bay area. However, in 2002/2003, the Maracas Bay Police station was moved from that previous location to the old market which was refurbished to accommodate the operations of the station. At present, there are six officers at the station on a daily basis. They rotate 24 hours.

The Ministry of National Security is committed to providing comfortable and appropriate working conditions for all its employees inclusive of police officers. The accommodation at the Maracas Police Station is not ideal. However, measures are being taken to make it more comfortable for the hard-working and dedicated officers assigned there to ensure their health and well-being and, at the same time, allow them to address effectively the security and safety needs of the public.

Alternative accommodation is being pursued aggressively. Discussions continue between the Ministry of National Security and the Ministry of Tourism for an appropriate site for the police station in the development plan of the Maracas Bay area.

Consequently, the new Maracas Bay Police Station has been included in phase II of the construction programme for new police stations which is scheduled to begin in fiscal 2015. It is anticipated that it will be completed by June 2017 and will join the other police stations that have been completed within the last four years being: Arima, Piarco, Maloney, Cumuto, Brasso, La Brea, Oropouche and Moruga.

In the interim, it is important to improve the existing accommodation as a matter of urgency. In this regard, repair works are being undertaken on the building including the following: the strengthening of the wooden fixtures and structural members of the building; replacement of windows and doors to those of a more resilient nature; installation of a standby generator and repainting of the building. It is estimated that these works will be completed by February 2015.

To ensure the well-being and safety of the officers at the station, additional measures have already been initiated and they are as follows: installation of CCTV cameras at the facility; effective sewer maintenance; exploration to determine the feasibility of providing additional accommodation through the use of retrofitted containers.

And, finally, I might add also that we also will be implementing mobile command centres shortly. The mobile command centres will be these centres that can be used in areas of responsibility, moving the actual headquarters such as the National Operations Centre into what you could consider ground zero or the area where it is the centre of that natural or man-made disaster. This is what we saw during 9/11, and this is what should have been there during July 1990. This can be used for floods; it could have been used during CHOGM—through any major event that takes place—and it can also be used as a temporary facility for police officers in the line of their duty, and this will provide the National Operations Centre with this mobile facility at that location of that area of responsibility when you can get that real-time video footage from different areas fed into one particular area on the location for an immediate response.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

**Las Cuevas Bay Beach Facilities
and Fort Abercromby Tourism Project
(Work Details)**

31. Miss Marlene Mc Donald (*Port of Spain South*) on behalf of Mrs. Joanne Thomas (*St. Ann's East*) asked the hon. Minister of Tourism:

- A. When is work expected to commence on the Las Cuevas Bay Beach facilities?
- B. When will works resume on the Fort Abercromby Tourism Project?

The Minister of Tourism (Sen. The Hon. Gerald Hadeed): Mr. Speaker, in relation to question 31, the Tourism Development Company Limited is the agency responsible for product development. The company is also committed to establishing and implementing standards for the development and maintenance of tourism infrastructure and amenities as well as standards for specific tourism sites and attractions.

The Las Cuevas Beach Facility Enhancement Project falls under the Tourism Development Company Limited, and strives to develop the site into international standards in order to provide visitors with a safer and more secure recreational experience.

Enhancement works have already commenced on the Las Cuevas Beach Facility. Work has started on the new sewerage system; specifications and requirements for a new security lighting system. Perimeter fencing and a campsite are currently being developed. Landscaping for a new campsite will begin after completion of the fencing.

The Ministry of Tourism has the responsibility for the lifeguard unit, and for fiscal 2014 the Ministry renovated the lifeguard facilities at Las Cuevas to include accommodation for female lifeguards and constructed three lifeguard towers.

Part B: the Fort Abercromby Tourism Project also falls under the TDC. The company has advised that in 2012, the following works were done at Fort Abercromby: site cleared and cleaned; restrooms were rebuilt and water tanks installed; installations of traffic barriers and handrails from the road to the lookout; improvement to the cannon area and safety gates to fishing areas installed.

No funds were allocated to this project in fiscal 2014/2015 and the Ministry will seek to get funding in the mid-term review.

Thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

Miss Cox: Thank you very much. Minister, exactly when did this work start at the Las Cuevas facility?

Sen. The Hon. G. Hadeed: I was advised that in 2012 it started.

Miss Mc Donald: Minister, can you give a sort of time frame as to when the work will be completed, please?

Sen. The Hon. G. Hadeed: Well, we did not get any funding in this year's budget, but we will put in for an allocation in the mid-year review, and we hope to be able to get money then to complete the work. Thank you.

Miss Mc Donald: Minister, I think you answered with respect to the Fort Abercromby Tourism Project. I was really referring to the Las Cuevas Beach Facilities. It seems as if there is refurbishment going on, and I am asking when these works will be completed.

2.00 p.m.

Sen. The Hon. G Hadeed: Well, we have approximately \$3.565 million in the budget for this and work is going on, and I hope before November/December it would be completed.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for St. Ann's East—the Member for Port of Spain South.

**Brian Lara and Gasparillo Recreation Grounds
(Details of Lighting)**

32. Miss Marlene Mc Donald (*Port of Spain South*) on behalf of Mrs. Joanne Thomas (*St. Ann's East*) asked the hon. Minister of Public Utilities:

Could the Minister state the target dates for the lighting of the Gasparillo Recreation Ground and the Brian Lara Recreation Ground in Santa Cruz?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister of Public Utilities.

The Minister of Public Utilities (Hon. Nizam Baksh): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) has informed the Ministry that works for the lighting of Brian Lara Recreation Ground are scheduled to commence by mid-December 2014, with an expected completion date of March 2015. Works on the Gasparillo Recreation Ground are scheduled to start by January 2015, with an expected completion date of March 2015. When these grounds are completed it will mean that this Government has now lit four grounds in that constituency, having previously lit two—namely, Bourg Mulatresse and Maracas Recreation Grounds.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that from May 2010 to November 2014, this Government has illuminated 159 recreation grounds across the country. [*Desk thumping*] The yearly breakdown is as follows: 25 in 2010, 32 in 2011, 22 in 2012, 29 in 2013, and 51 to date in 2014. [*Desk thumping*] As a contrast under the PNM tenure, 87 grounds were lighted up, with 67 being done in PNM constituencies alone.

Mr. Speaker, under this PP Government, 35 of the grounds completed were in some PNM constituencies which had been neglected for years. [*Desk thumping*] For example, in the constituency of Arouca/Maloney the PP Government lit six grounds while the PNM did only one. In the constituency of Point Fortin, the PP Government lit five grounds while the PNM did only one. In Diego Martin Central, the PP Government lit four grounds while the PNM did zero. In Diego Martin North/East, the PP Government did three grounds while the PNM did zero.

Mr. Speaker, the Government recognizes that recreation grounds are critical to the accomplishment of the Government's goal of developing a fit and healthy nation. Grounds provide the opportunity for individuals and their families to engage in physical activities. These can contribute to reducing obesity and other non-communicable illnesses, such as heart disease and diabetes. The grounds also contribute to the holistic development of our youths. A number of clubs and organizations are now utilizing these grounds to develop community and sporting activities, as well as nurturing and developing sporting talents.

To this end, for fiscal 2015, pending the availability of funds, we will continue to illuminate these recreation grounds across the country. Thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for Laventille West.

**Delegation to Argentina
(Details of)**

- 40. Mr. NiLeung Hypolite** (*Laventille West*) asked the hon. Minister of Tourism:
- A. Could the Minister confirm whether a delegation from the Ministry of Tourism travelled to Argentina at any time over the period May 10—September 10, 2014; and
 - B. If the answer to part (A) is in the affirmative, could the Minister state:
 - i. the names of the persons who were part of the delegation;
 - ii. the purpose of the travel;

- iii. who approved the travel;
- iv. whether the aircraft for this trip was chartered and if so, at what cost; and
- v. the breakdown of expenditure associated with the trip.

The Minister of Tourism (Sen. The Hon. Gerald Hadeed): Mr. Speaker, in response to question 40, a delegation containing members of the Ministry of Tourism and others travelled to Argentina over the period June 01—05, 2014. The names of the members of the delegation are as follows: Mrs. Juliana Johan-Boodram, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism; Mrs. Satie Jamraj-Marimuthu, Director, Research and Planning (Ag.); Mr. Anand Maraj, Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator; Miss Ria Elie, Communications Assistant; Mrs. Myroon Ramdass, Executive Assistant; the Tourism Development Company Limited, Mr. Umesh Rampersad, Chairman of TDC Board of Directors; Mr. Naidu Powdhar, Miss Carol Ann Birchwood-James and Mr. Samuel Sankar, all from the TDC.

The full contingent to Argentina comprised the Ministry of Tourism and Tourism Development Company staff, the national football team, administrative and supportive staff of the TTFA, a culture contingent, and other invited guests and members of the paying public.

Part (ii): the purpose of the travel was threefold. The contingent attended the friendly football match between Trinidad and Argentina. The tourism team also utilized the opportunity to market and promote Trinidad and Tobago to the South American markets in furtherance of the interest expressed in South-South travel and to meet the tourism personnel to initiate discussions for joint promotions and further exchanges.

Part (iii): Cabinet agreed to the attendance of the Minister of Tourism at the friendly football match in Argentina and to initiate discussions for joint promotions and further exchanges. By Ministerial Minute, the Minister of Tourism approved the participation of the delegation of the Ministry of Tourism officials to attend the friendly football match in Argentina. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Minister of Tourism did not undertake the trip to Argentina. The aircraft for the trip was chartered by the Trinidad and Tobago Football Association.

Part (v): the total expenditure associated with the trip to Argentina was \$2,644,682.38. The details are as follows: TTFA, description: sponsorship of

tickets for ground transfers and match tickets, \$300,000; TTFA, sponsorship of administration fees and overheads, \$200,000; TTFA, National Senior Team, \$900,000; TTFA, accommodation, \$700,000; FV Holdings, promotion of Trinidad and Tobago in Argentina, \$253,862.50; FV Holdings, advertising in Argentina, \$206,910.88; cultural contingent, per diem, \$49,595; Nissi Tours, departure tax, \$12,225; Ministry of Tourism staff, per diem, \$22,059; total expenditure, \$2,644,682.38. The expenditure was offset—[*Interruption*] What is this?

Mr. Hypolite: Twenty-six—how much?

Sen. The Hon. G Hadeed: \$2,644,682.38—2.644. This expenditure was offset by revenue, receipts—[*Interruption*] The expenditure was offset by revenue, receipts of \$716,613.19—7-1-6-6-1-3-1-9, to clarify what you wanted to know—which was generated from packages sold to the public. The result is a net cost to the Ministry of Tourism of \$1,928,069.19.

Mr. Speaker: The Member for Laventille West.

Mr. Hypolite: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister, after spending \$2.6 million on this trip, how has this trip contributed towards the development of tourism here in Trinidad and Tobago?

Sen. The Hon. G Hadeed: Well, the actual cost to the nation was \$1,928,069.19. How it helps? Well, as you know, sport is international, and to expose Trinidad and Tobago to a couple of hundred million people with the football certainly is an opportunity that one can see when it generates that amount of passion amongst the world, and Trinidad and Tobago playing in Argentina before the World Cup was a great opportunity. I think it was money well spent.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for Diego Martin Central.

Dr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister, for your response. With respect to public funds, can you state whether there is \$400,000 unaccounted for with respect to expenditure on that tour?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

Hon. G Hadeed: Yes, there is. When the money was paid to Nissi Tours for the trip, what took place was a person who was working for the TTFA at the time, Mr. Darren Millien, he requested \$400,000 from Nissi Tours which was not supposed to be done, and according to information I have from the TTFA, he had no authority, whatever, to ask for the money. The money was given to him and TTFA is investigating that at the present time, how to recover the money.

Dr. Browne: Minister, thank you for your response. With respect to those same public funds, can you indicate whether this matter has been referred to the police service and whether there is an investigation occurring at this time?

Hon. G Hadeed: Well, I would not be able, at this present time, to answer that, but if you do file a question I will get all the information and present you with it. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Hypolite: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister, could part of that \$2.6 million have been used to pay for the footballers' meals and transportation? [*Interruption*] Could any part of that \$2.6 million have been used to support the footballers in purchasing of food and their transportation?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister of Tourism, if you wish to—

Hon. G Hadeed: I would not be able to answer that “off the bat”, but if you do request a response on the question, if you pose it to me in writing I will bring the answers for you.

**VISITOR
PATRICK FABER
(Member of Parliament, Belize)**

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, before dealing with this particular item on our agenda, if you will allow me to revert to announcements. We have, in the Speaker's gallery, another Member of Parliament. He is from Belize. He is the hon. Patrick Faber. He is the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, and he also was a participant at the recently concluded ICT Conference for Parliamentarians. Welcome, hon. Minister. [*Desk thumping*]

**PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND DISPOSAL
OF PUBLIC PROPERTY (NO. 2) BILL, 2014**

[Third Day]

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on question [November 07, 2014]:

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question again proposed.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for Chaguanas East and Minister of Transport. [*Desk thumping*]

The Minister of Transport (Hon. Stephen Cadiz): I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I am very, very pleased to be part of this debate on probably one of

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the most important pieces of legislation brought to this Parliament in the last 53 months, and that of course is this “ACT to provide for public procurement, and for the retention and disposal of public property, in accordance with the principles of”—and I want to stress—“good governance, namely accountability, transparency, integrity and value for money, the establishment of the Office of Procurement Regulation, the repeal of the Central Tenders Board Act, Chap. 71:91 and related matters”.

Mr. Speaker, the Central Tenders Board Act, 71:91, which was formerly the Central Tenders Board Ordinance, No. 22 of 1961, and the Central Tenders Board Act came into operation on January 01, 1965. The Ordinance was re-enacted and validated by Act No. 31 of 1980, which would have brought it into conformity with the Trinidad and Tobago Constitution, and the “Act provides for the establishment of a Central Tenders Board for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and certain Statutory Bodies and for matters incidental thereto”.

Mr. Speaker, the CTB, as we know it, and anybody who has dealt with procurement or selling of services to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago—over how many decades—they would understand how woefully inadequate the current CTB Act is, and businessmen for decades have complained about the way in which Government procures goods and services, and the whole point of bringing this Act to this Parliament is to be able to deal with that.

I really want to congratulate and to commend the Minister of Planning and Sustainable Development, Sen. The Hon. Dr. Tewarie, [*Desk thumping*] for bringing this Bill, and poor Dr. Tewarie—and I have to say “poor Dr. Tewarie” because the “balisier brigade”, at least in the Lower House, has tried to do a real number on the goodly Senator by casting aspersions, making all kinds of wild statements—okay?—and yet still what really bothers me is that the new boys on the block, the poster boys in the Upper House—[*Interruption*]

2.15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: No, no, no, please, please.

Hon. S. Cadiz: The Senators—I apologize.

Mr. Speaker: Please, please.

Hon. S. Cadiz: I do apologize, Mr. Speaker. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member is speaking, please

Hon. S. Cadiz: Mr. Speaker, in the Upper House, when each one was asked to vote—Sen. Robinson-Regis, yes; Sen. Al-Rawi, yes—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member, please; just sit for a moment. We do not interfere in the business of the other place, and the other place has no business in our business. So let us not go in terms of what they did up there and who voted; that is not our business. Our business is to debate a Bill and get it through with the support of every Member in this honourable House. Let us not deal with what went on in the other place, please. Proceed, please.

Hon. S. Cadiz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So here it is that we come today to debate this Bill, and what is of concern is what happened over the last however many years. Why is it that public procurement has always been an issue for Trinidad and Tobago, and why is it that previous administrations did not bring public procurement to the fore, as we have done here today. And I want to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, this is after 53 months of being in office that this Bill is here at the Lower House.

I want to read from the statements being made by the Member for Diego Martin North/East, and he said:

“...but for four years they have pussyfooted with this procurement legislation and pretended”—and there was an interruption for whatever reason—“‘Pussyfooted’ is a word in the English language. It means Procrastinate”—and just to—”prevaricate and just play the fool. That is what pussyfoot means. So this Government has pussyfooted with this legislation for four years while pretending that it required the support and the votes of the Opposition.”

Yet still it took those on the other side 25 years to bring a White Paper entitled “Reform of the Public Sector Procurement Regime”—25 years. The Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, when he made his contribution, listed from Lock Joint—the only thing he did not go back to was Caura Dam, because I do not believe the “balisier brigade” was in office during the Caura Dam, but that would have been part of the legacy of the PNM, if it was that they had actually done the Caura Dam. So we move forward from Lock Joint and he comes right down: horse racing complex, GTL—a whole host of issues regarding procurement.

So why is it that a supposedly responsible administration—I am using that word loosely—a supposedly responsible administration that understands the value of proper procurement, took 25 years to do that? Not to bring legislation, you know; to draft a White Paper for legislation.

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Then you move on from 2005, and then they come in 2006 with a Bill that was never debated. How come? How come after 26 years now and you will still not debate the Bill? There has to be reasons for that. The reasons for that to me are very, very simple: they did not want proper procurement legislation in this country—proper procurement legislation that would be in accordance, as the Bill states, with the principles of good governance; something that they probably have never heard of before, namely accountability; something that they would never have heard of before, transparency, same thing. “Integrity”—that is not a word that goes together with them—and value for money. That is one of the key issues here, when we talk about value for money.

This is not the Balisier House cheque book. This is money from the taxpayers of this country, and they will demand and they will get value for money, and we will show that the People’s Partnership Government has done just that. Member for Diego Martin North/East you could say what you want, the fact of the matter is you failed miserably in your tenure as a parliamentarian. You failed miserably to even start to bring this procurement here. So do not let us even go with that. [Crosstalk]

Mr. Speaker, when we came into office in May of 2010, and we started to look at the procurement policies of the “balisier brigade”, it was horrifying. The Minister of Tourism, Sen. The Hon. George Hadeed, just spoke about refurbishment, et cetera, of Las Cuevas, but I want to ask: What could possibly cost \$236 million to fix Maracas beach? You hear the figure? The Member for Laventille West “jump up just now and asking if we feed the footballers”; if we did not spend the \$1.6 million, that could have gone into food for the footballers—as though this Government has footballers starving.

Mr. Speaker, \$236 million to fix Maracas Bay. Maracas Bay already had a beach; it already had water; it already had coconut trees; it already had headlands. It had all of that; we did not have to build all of that. All we had to do was to make Maracas beach safer, more comfortable for the visitors.

They want to talk about transparency, and they want to talk about value for money, and they want to talk about good governance. Those words do not equate with the “balisier brigade”, and it will never. [Desk thumping] I am sorry the Member for Diego Martin West is not here, because I understand that every month now he is going for a makeover, flying out of Trinidad and Tobago and going for a makeover. “I do not know why he doh check the—” [Interruption]

Miss Mc Donald: Mr. Speaker, 48(6) please; out of order.

Mr. Speaker: Yes, please. Member, let us not get personal with any Member, please. Do not go there, please. Leave that for the campaign, but not for the House. Let us not deal with personalities, please. Continue, hon. Member.

Dr. Khan: I could do the makeover for you. [*Laughter and crosstalk*]

Hon. S. Cadiz: I apologize, Mr. Speaker.

The fact of the matter is, I understand that the PNM will be celebrating 60 years in two years' time—correct?—60 years. They will never ever in life change the way in which they do business—never. [*Desk thumping*] No matter how you dress them up, no matter how you make people smile, no matter how you put on nice suit, no matter what you do, it will never change, because that is not inherent in the “balisier brigade”; it is not inherent in them. It is not in their DNA. And the simple reason is: for the length of time that they have been in office, never ever before bringing proper procurement. And then they want to talk about pussyfooting after 53 months?

Mr. Speaker, the amount of legislation that this People's Partnership Government has brought to this Parliament, the amount of work that this People's Partnership has done, the value for money on every single project—no longer do you hear— The Member of Parliament for Tabaquite was making the statement: you do not hear the words “cost overrun” again, you do not hear that. You do not hear about projects being delayed.

When I hear the Member for Caroni East speaking about the amount of work that he has done—imagine Paramin could not get a primary school in 15 years. In 53 months the Minister of Education has given Paramin a brand, spanking new school, [*Desk thumping*] soon to be opened, and I am pretty sure, the kind of person I know that the Member of Parliament for Caroni East is, will actually invite the Member for Diego Martin North/East to attend the opening, and let him see what value for money is. [*Crosstalk*]

So when they keep “pushing this head” constantly about this Government not delivering—today they have a big march—well, I do not know how big. They have a march now with the new party group for the “balisier brigade”—the new party group with a chairman—anyway they say I must not call names. I will not call names.

Dr. Moonilal: Dumb and Dumber.

Hon. S. Cadiz: But all of a sudden now it is about delivery. You all are not delivering to the people. In Morvant, Redwood Street never had pipe borne

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water—never had pipe borne water, imagine that. I do not know how long the “balisier brigade” has represented the people of Redwood Street in Morvant—no water.

Miss Cox: That is not true!

Hon. S. Cadiz: You know “I get ah call de other day”, they say they do not know what to do with all of this water they are getting now, too much water. [Interruption] So the fact of the matter is, when they want to talk about delivery, this is a Government—[Interruption]

Mr. Speaker: Member for Laventille East/Morvant.

Miss Cox: He is telling stories.

Mr. Speaker: You cannot disturb the Member while he is speaking. You cannot disturb the Member while he is on his legs. Let the Member speak in silence. Allow him to speak.

Hon. S. Cadiz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will let the residents of Redwood Street in Morvant let the representative know whether they are getting water now or not. Let them tell her. Maybe she does not know where Redwood Street is.

Miss Cox: But you know about Robocop.

Hon. S. Cadiz: Under the current conditions of the CTB, what this Government has been able to deliver is unbelievable. You have never had a Government deliver this amount. [Desk thumping] So I am not worried with them.

They “bawl” Vision 2020, then I hear the Member for Diego Martin West, the Leader of the Opposition and soon to be the Leader of the Opposition again, making statements that they are no longer with Vision 2020. But I wonder if he realizes that Vision 2020 was actually perfect vision. That is what they were going on; it was perfect vision. [Interruption]

Miss Mc Donald: Mr. Speaker, I rise on 48(1), please, relevance. I am trying to follow this debate. Have a seat, because I am on my feet now—[Laughter] 48(1), I mean, relevance. [Crosstalk] I am getting trouble to understand.

Mr. Speaker: Let the hon. Member develop his point and I will determine. Continue, please.

Hon. S. Cadiz: Mr. Speaker, it is obvious, so when they hear the words “transparency, integrity, value for money, accountability and good governance”, they have a real problem with that. Anytime they hear those words they have a problem with them.

But my point was, they talk about Vision 2020; 20/20 vision in optical terms is perfect vision. He does not even understand what 20/20 Vision is, because he is now talking about 20/30 vision, and 20/30 vision means you get “cross eye”, that is exactly what it means. [*Laughter and desk thumping*]

Dr. Khan: “Coki-eye!”

Hon. S. Cadiz: It is esotropia, it is a condition. So when you move from 20/20 and you go to 20/30, all of a sudden you get cross-eyed, and that is the vision that the Member for Diego Martin West is presenting to this country.

My point is, when we talk about a responsible Government, let us deal with this thing in general terms, and the public procurement Bill is exactly that. We are talking good governance.

Miss Cox: “Leh we hear bout the Bill nuh”. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member for Chaguanas East. Member for Port of Spain South, I think you have not spoken as yet, so you are anxious to rise. Member for Laventille East/Morvant, I think you are still to speak, so could you kindly take notes and allow the Member to speak in silence. You all are continuously and in a very noisy manner, interrupting the proceedings. Allow the Member to speak in silence. Continue hon. Member.

2.30 p.m.

Hon. S. Cadiz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, when we— [*Crosstalk*] again, the issue of delivery. I want to show you, I want to let the “balisier brigade” know what governance is all about because that is what the public procurement Bill is all about. It is about good governance.

When we had the natural disaster recently in Mayaro—okay—it is a natural disaster. There is nothing that could have prevented that. Nobody knew that we were going to get three and four times the rainfall in the space of two weeks that we would normally get. It is not to say that it did not happen before. There is a breach in the system in the road before, about 30 years ago, somewhere around there. So it is not something that happens just like that. It is a natural disaster. We did not even have to get a call, Mr. Speaker, and the PTSC goes ahead and puts in a free bus service between Mayaro and Sangre Grande for the people of that area, [*Desk thumping*] understanding the plight of the people.

So when we talk about good governance that is what we are talking about. That we immediately recognize a situation, and we deal with it, and we work with

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the people. If that was the “balisier brigade”, all now “dey studying what kinda” bus to send, who to send, who is “de” driver, what to do, what to do. And on that point, when the Panday administration brought in the Integrity in Public Life Act, soon they were voted out of office. They took—the “balisier brigade”—three years to decide what form they should use—three years to determine a form. If the form should be—what condition one, or whatever it is. What should be number two, what should be number three—three years before they agreed. The reason for that is, to escape the Integrity Commission. That is what. That is how they operate.

Miss Cox: Mr. Speaker, 48(6).

Mr. Speaker: Yes. I think I want to sustain that point. You cannot say the Members did that to escape the Integrity Commission. You are imputing improper motives to the Members of the honourable Opposition. Please.

Hon. S. Cadiz: I apologize. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, it took them three years to decide on a form. All right? Three years. [*Crosstalk*] So at the end of the day—[*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: Member for Point Fortin, you will speak.

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: I spoke already.

Mr. Speaker: Hold your fire. Oh, you spoke already. All right. Well just be silent. Please, continue please. [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. S. Cadiz: “She backfiring.” [*Crosstalk*] So when we come back to the existing legislation, which is the Central Tenders Board legislation, and we look at the weaknesses, we look at a lack of regulatory oversight. We look at an absence of a complaints mechanism, and dispute resolution, something that the Member for Diego Martin North/East has gone on and on and on about. Okay. The absence of a complaints mechanism and dispute resolution. The current CTB Act, there is a lack of national registry. There is a lack of an electronic public information system. There is poor data collection and reporting, and of course, numerous concerns of suppliers and service providers to the CTB. So, obviously this thing has to change—obviously. And where it is that we constantly hear—”yuh hear them ratiray” all the time, talking about this Government and the People’s Partnership, and the Government and corruption, and what have you and all of this, and yet still there is a Bill before this Parliament now that deals with all of that. It deals with the issues of corruption. It deals with the issues of whistleblower legislation. It deals with all of these things. Yet still you hear the Member

for St. Joseph make a very definitive statement, and I will read from the *Hansard*. [Member shuffles through his papers] Like the Member for St. Joseph gone. And here, this is the *Hansard*, quoting the Member for St. Joseph when he presented.

“We have come back again, not considered a single recommendation, none, and they are asking the Parliament to pass it.”

And hear him—hear the Member:

“We cannot pass it. Mr. Speaker, we reject it and I am hoping that civil society pays attention to the draconian nature of this piece of legislation and the infringement of their basic rights.”

Yet still we have quote after quote after quote from the same civil society that fully supports the Bill—fully supports the Bill, and I will read those in a bit. I will read those in a bit, the quotes from civil society fully supporting. Civil society is 110 per cent behind the passing of this Bill, and yet still the Member for St. Joseph “bawl”, we reject it. We are not passing it under no circumstances.

Dr. Gopeesingh: They never wanted it in the first place.

Hon. S. Cadiz: Mr. Speaker, the Bill is an Act to—commences in the following manner, eh:

“An Act to provide for public procurement, and for the retention and disposal of public property, in accordance with the principles of good governance...”—again namely—“accountability...”

Let us remember those words:

“accountability, transparency, integrity and value for money...”

Of course, the Member for Diego Martin North/East in his contribution stated that the Procurement Regulator who is appointed by the President, and I quote:

“In his own discretion”—who will have office.

And he had a problem with that. He had a major problem with that, but I will refer the Member to clause 10 of the Bill which reads:

“The Office shall be governed by a Board which shall be appointed by the President after consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition...”

It will be governed by a board. It is not the President in his own discretion who will have office. So clearly the Member did not and could not understand what the

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legislation actually provides for, and of course as is norm, he comes in here and he misleads the honourable House.

The Member has sought to make the most of the removal of the Procurement Regulator—of how do you remove this Procurement Regulator, and I will want to refer the Member for Diego Martin North/East and those on the other side to clause 12(c) which reads:

“The President may remove a member from office upon being satisfied that the member—”

and this is under (c):

“has neglected his duties or has engaged in conduct that would bring his office into disrepute:”

And he goes on, but he continues to talk about the only way you could remove the regulator is if he had to file for bankruptcy or if he was declared insane or what have you, and that is not the case. But of course, the Member for Diego Martin North/East always comes to this House with half a page. He always comes with half a page. And you know, he has cut the page down—not across you know, but down. So, he only reads part of what he is supposed to be reading—constantly. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker, again clearly, the Member did not and could not understand that should the Procurement Regulator neglect his duties, or should he engage in conduct that would bring his office into disrepute, the President shall be at liberty to remove him from his office. So there are all of those provisions there. So when he talks about this czar—I think one of them used the term a “procurement czar”—that this man, this person was going to be above all, and there was no way in which you could remove him. It is all there in the Bill.

But, Mr. Speaker, I cannot help emphasize that this administration always, will always ensure that fairness and equity is displayed even in the drafting of the legislation, and we have proven that time and time again. This administration will not attempt to draft and enact legislation which will allow for the arbitrary removal of any officeholder. Apparently that is what the Member for Diego Martin North/East is asking us to do. So, if he has a problem that he would want to be able to go and remove the regulator, and that is not the purpose of this legislation at all.

But continuing to examine the Bill and to point out to the public just how valuable and effective this Bill is, I refer Members on the other side to clause 22 which states that:

“Section 116 of the Constitution shall apply to the accounts of the Office.”

And just in case he does not know what section 116 is of the Constitution, it relates to the Auditor General of Trinidad and Tobago who, and I quote, who:

“is...empowered to carry out audits of the accounts, balance sheets and other financial statements of all enterprises that are owned or controlled by or on behalf of the State.”

So, it is not to say this office, this regulator is somebody who is going to be operating on their own with absolutely no—who has no responsibility, who does not have to report to anyone. It is all there in this legislation, and the Constitution also provides for that. So when the Member for Diego Martin North/East seeks to argue that there is no one above the Procurement Regulator, I suggest that he revisit his view.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, clause 24 of the Bill mandates that the Procurement Regulator:

“...shall submit his reports annually to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to the President of the Senate and the Minister.”

So, I want to know if the Member for Diego Martin North/East feels that by the regulator submitting to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate, that that is not adequate enough. Where else you want to go with this? He wants to set up a tribunal. Then when they set up a tribunal procurement regulator, he the Member for Diego Martin North/East the first thing he is going to ask is: who is appointing the members of the tribunal? And when they appoint the members of the tribunal, how they could appoint that person as a member of the tribunal? And around and around we go—they report to the House of Representatives and they report to Senate. [*Crosstalk*]

The Member for Diego Martin North/East has also argued at length, the challenges faced in seeking judicial review relevant to the awards of contracts for goods and services. Again, it is either the Member did not or could not understand what clause 41 of the Bill in fact provides. So, why would an aggrieved person consider seeking judicial review in the manner when the Bill does in fact provide—and I read from 2:

“A person who wishes to allege or make a complaint that—

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- (a) bid rigging or any other forms of collusion between all or any of the interested parties to procurement proceedings has occurred; or
- (b) an irregularity in procurement proceedings or a breach of this Act has occurred,

may do so in writing to the Office.”

So it is not to say that service providers and people who have tendered projects, et cetera, feel as though they have absolutely no say in what has happened. It is a far cry from where the CTB is now. Where the CTB is now, nobody has that. You cannot do it.

Mr. Imbert: What nonsense! You can go to court.

Hon. S. Cadiz: I think the Member for Diego Martin North/East should be very careful about how he takes people to court. [*Crosstalk*]

Hon. Member: “Yuh pay Elias yet?”

Hon. S. Cadiz: So, Mr. Speaker—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Member for Diego Martin North/East, I think you should withdraw those remarks. You cannot describe a Member in those terms.

Mr. Imbert: I withdraw.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much. Continue, hon. Member, please.

Hon. S. Cadiz: So, Mr. Speaker, with a clause of the above nature combined with the challenge proceedings provided for in Part V of the Bill, I wish to now proceed to read and explain certain clauses under Part V.

Clause 49 reads, 49(1):

“A supplier or contractor may bring challenge proceedings where it is alleged that—

- (a) a procuring entity made a decision or took action that is not in compliance to the Act;
- (b) the supplier or contractor has suffered or is likely to suffer loss or injury because of the decision or action of the procuring entity.”

And 2:

“Challenge proceedings may be made by way of an application for review by the Office under section 50.”

So it simply means that a supplier or contractor who is justifiably dissatisfied with the decision reached by the procuring entity, may bring challenge proceedings.

Under clause 50 it reads—in the interest of time I will not proceed to read all because 50 is a fairly long clause, but it says 50(1):

“A supplier or contractor may apply to the Office for review of a decision or an action taken by the procuring entity in the procurement proceedings.”

Of course, it goes on in subclause (4) and it says:

“The Office may within three days of the receipt of an application for review—

- (a) order the suspension of the procurement proceedings at any time before the entry into force of the procurement contract; or
- (b) order the suspension of the performance of a procurement contract or the operation of a framework agreement that has entered into force,

if and for as long as it finds such a suspension necessary to protect the interests of the applicant.”

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the speaking time of the hon. Member for Chaguanas East and Minister of Transport has expired. Minister, you need to advise me.

Hon. S. Cadiz: Yes. I would like the extra time.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the question is that the speaking time of the Member for Chaguanas East and Minister of Transport be extended by 15 minutes.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: You may continue, hon. Member.

Hon. S. Cadiz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would not be too long again, I promise you.

You know, when we go back, and again this is where I really and truly, you know, we need to understand the other side and how they think. In their manifesto in 2010, one sentence:

Enhanced trading and procurement facilitation through the introduction of a single electronic window.

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And that was their idea for procurement—the SEW. But the SEW does not even start to deal with procurement policy and how a government, how the State should actually procure. The SEW it does something else. It provides for efficiency in systems. That is what it does. So to say that you are going to have an enhanced trading and procurement facilitation through the introduction of a single electronic window, really and truly does not cut it by any means. But that is how they think. They really and truly do not want this procurement legislation going through, for again, and I will just say, for reasons best known to themselves.

2.45 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, all the talk we heard about civil society rejecting this procurement legislation, outright, eh. Today is what? Friday, December 05, 2014, and I am quoting from the *Trinidad Guardian*, an article written by Raphael John-Lall, the article is on statements made by Afra Raymond who is president of the Joint Consultative Council.

“We now have in the Lower House where we have a lot of people making”—and I am quoting Afra Raymond—“points and objections and many of them are members of the PNM,”

I go further down and I am quoting again:

“We started to make a new law to control public money, well let us finish the task. Let us be serious. It cannot be serious as a parliamentary political party that six of your members approved...”—

you told me do not quote about the other place so I would not go there. Raymond says:

“...T&T needs stability which will be achieved by order.”

Meaning that this procurement Bill very much speaks to that. Okay? And he ends by saying:

“We want that law and we want it now.”

So much for civil society saying dump the Act, it is a waste of time, we do not want it. We listen, that is one thing that the People’s Partnership has done in the last 53 months, is the consultation, listening to what people have to say. [*Desk thumping*] I want the “balisier brigade” to understand, this is the Government here on this side. This is the Government. Not because they make a statement on the other side on some political platform that we have to listen to them. We go to the people when it matters. We go to all and sundry. Sen. Dr. Tewarie has been all over this country with the consultations, and that is what we have come up with.

So, Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, the *Business Guardian*, and this is an article by Dr. Jaishima Leladharsingh, who is an independent researcher and writer, and I quote:

“The crux of the bill is the mandatory compliance with the principles of good governance: accountability, transparency and value for money and objectives of ethics, efficiency, fairness and competition by all involved in a public procurement transaction.”

So here it is you have all of these people, the Joint Consultative Council, all business, there have been quotes from the chambers of commerce, everybody wants it. Mr. Speaker, the whole purpose of legislation, the whole purpose of any legislation is really and truly to bring change. And yes, that is why you can come back to the Parliament if needs be, if there are amendments, if in five years’ time, 10 years’ time, you find that the things have changed or whatever it is, the systems have changed, you come back to the Parliament and you make the changes. They on that side, 25 years they did not bring a change in public procurement where the world moved on, the world became digitized and computerized, and all kinds of things happened in the world, and here it is we are still with this dinosaur legislation, the CTB. So, we pass this legislation here today and then we move on, and again, if it is we have to come back to this House, whenever we have to come back to this House to make amendments that will tweak the legislation, fine, we do it. But this is good legislation. [*Desk thumping*]

The Bill speaks to e-commerce, and I do not know if the Members understand, or at least the Members on the other side understand what e-commerce is, and this is under clause 38(1) that allows for the electronic—

“...public procurement under this Act may be undertaken using electronic...”—means.

And there is a system that is used in procurement now and it is called e-auction. In a typical auction the highest bidder is the one who gets the item. That is what happens in a normal auction. In e-auctioning procurement, the lowest bidder is the one who gets the project. So, what we do is, you go and you determine the technical evaluation of the bid to make sure that all the persons who have bid are in fact in a position to bid, and you are not getting a barbershop quoting on rockets and aeroplanes, and what have you. So you make sure that the people who are bidding are in fact, they have proven themselves as being able to carry out this particular type of work. When you evaluate that, you then move on to the next stage which is the e-auction. And in an e-auction nobody knows who is bidding

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against whom. Not even the procurement, not even the end client, they do not know who is bidding against whom. It is all being done through a coding system on a computer, and it is only at the end of when the bidding is closed then you know who is the successful person. And it the fairest way for Government. It is one of the fairest ways for Government to procure any goods and service where we determine the eligibility of the contractor in the first place, as far as their technical ability and competence, and then we move to the next stage.

So, that is what this Bill is providing. This Bill is to revolutionize the way in which we do business in Trinidad and Tobago, and all I can say is that the business community, the service providers, the people who are involved in assisting Government in moving along, whether it is infrastructure, whether it is in the hospitals, whether it is education, wherever it is, that all business would be given a very fair chance, and the best thing at the end of the day is that the taxpayers of this country, the citizens of this country will finally get value for money.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. NiLeung Hypolite (*Laventille West*): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to believe that every single citizen of this country would want to see better governance. I want to believe that every single citizen would want to associate himself or herself with proper accountability, transparency and, of course, the highest level of integrity. And that is one of the reasons why there are thousands of persons gathering right now at Woodford Square, to march against the corruption that is taking place in this country.

Mr. Speaker, this is the third day that we are back in this House dealing with this simple Bill of which this Government is indicating is such an important Bill. Third day. When we had to deal with the Municipal Corporations (Amdt.) Bill, better known as the proportional representation Bill, they came inside and in two-twos we were back out. When we had to deal with the Tobago House of Assembly Bill to deal with internal self-government, the same thing took place, they came in and in two-twos, Bill passed, back out. When we had to deal with the infamous run-off Bill, which is the Constitution (Amdt.) Bill, 2014, which is still to come back to this House, they came in, and yes, in two-twos, dealt with and gone and that is what the Member for Oropouche East represents. That is what he represents. In fact, this Government is known to be associated with a number of issues in this country that can be perceived to be corrupt. [*Interruption*] That can be perceived, Mr. Speaker. I do not know, to be perceived.

Why I say that, Mr. Speaker, is because the Member for Chaguanas East—and he is running out of the Chamber at this point in time—stood there and made mention that they would have had a number of projects and these projects had absolutely no cost overruns. And I think the Member for Caroni East said basically the same thing. Mr. Speaker, I ask the question, with respect to the children’s hospital what was the original cost of that hospital and what is the cost now? Was it \$120 million and now \$1.2 billion? Question: the Debe campus, what was the original cost? Was it \$900 million and now \$1 billion? Question—we want answers. What about the LifeSport Programme, was that started off at \$6 million and now some \$400 million? Mr. Speaker, we seek answers, instead of the Government Members sitting across there and talking about transparency and accountability and all these different things in a vacuum. I ask the question, what was the original cost on those projects and what is the cost now?

The Member for Chaguanas East stood there and in his normal way would speak about the “balisier brigade”, the PNM, the balisier, that is what he would have been speaking about for the past four and a half years, and he would not stand there and talk about the public utilities programmes put on by the People’s National Movement. He would not stand and speak about the buildings that they are in right now that they are using as the Chamber for the Parliament, the offices, the Hyatt; they would not speak about those things. NAPA, SAPA, even the intersection at Aranguez, all of those projects done under the People’s National Movement of which [*Desk thumping*] every single citizen of this country tends to use, even each and every one of them on that side tends to use those facilities.

Mr. Speaker, it is the Chamber of Industry and Commerce that sent out a statement when it comes to public procurement, and I wish to read from their business magazine which states:

“A Public Procurement Policy

The Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce supports the current process to update and reform the system by which the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and its agencies purchase goods and services on behalf of the people of Trinidad and Tobago. Procurement in Trinidad and Tobago has evolved over a number of years...”—

And, yes, Mr. Speaker, over a number of years, because we started off with the Central Tenders Board, and yes, we need to move away from the Central Tenders Board into something much more in tune to what is taking place right now in our society.

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However, there are some amendments that we on this side would like to see take place, and what we are indicating is just like every citizen in Trinidad and Tobago, we would also want to see better accountability, transparency in this country. [*Desk thumping*] But we also have some amendments that we would like to see added on to the Bill. Mr. Speaker, I continue:

“...however, the procurement process has not kept abreast of these changes. We believe that change to the current system is necessary to improve efficiency, ensure equality of access, improve transparency and oversight, and restrict opportunities for corruption of the processes, thereby benefitting the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

Procurement reform is critical and modernisation of the existing system will bring significant benefit to our people through more efficient use of taxpayer’s money. Greater accountability throughout the process will ensure adherence to good procurement practice. Increased transparency will allow greater public oversight of procurement activity and ensure broader access to procurement activities. Ability to challenge contract awards with due cause will create confidence and promote adherence to the principles and guidelines. New institutional development and training will support the proposed new rules and regulations.”

3.00 p.m.

So, Mr. Speaker, we all would like to see proper legislation put in place to deal with what is taking—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Could you give us the date of that publication, the name of that publication?

Mr. N. Hypolite: Mr. Speaker, it came off of the website—“Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Commerce and Industry—Chamber means business.”

Mr. Speaker: Date.

Mr. N. Hypolite: No, I do not have the date, but it is recent, Mr. Speaker, it is recent.

Mr. Speaker, if the Member for Chaguanas East would go on the website and pull up the Chamber of Commerce, I am certain he will find that, providing he knows how to use the computer. [*Laughter and crosstalk*]

Mr. Speaker: I think the Member would get in to what you have said. He is quite efficient in that department.

Mr. N. Hypolite: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, we need this piece of legislation and we need this piece of legislation as early as yesterday. But, of course, we need to have some amendments. You see, they stood across there, individually, and they would have spoken about transparency and accountability and all of those different things. They would have also spoken about money being spent on a number of programmes and projects done by the People’s National Movement. It is the Prime Minister who would have indicated that an enquiry must be done into the Las Alturas buildings. But I want to quote from the *Trinidad Guardian*, dated December 04, where it was reported that the:

“Chairman of the National Building Code Committee...has welcomed the Las Alturas commission of enquiry as a positive move to finally bring closure to the controversial project. He hopes the commission will not only find the root cause of the collapse of the \$40 million project but makes recommendations to ensure such a situation does not happen again.”

Mr. Speaker, a commission of enquiry. But you know what? You have another project that started and ended under this Government, that moved from \$6 million to \$400 million, and you heard absolutely nothing coming from the Member for Chaguanas East on that misuse, mismanagement of funds from the Ministry of Sport. [*Desk thumping*] No commission of enquiry.

However, you can read in the dailies, and I again wish to quote from a story published by Ria Taitt—okay?—where the Prime Minister:

“...disclosed some of the findings, she expressed her own ‘shock’, ‘deep, personal disappointment and dismay that a programme that was intended to save lives, to build lives, was used by a group of people for fraud and personal gain.’”

That is not me, Mr. Speaker. That is not the writer Ria Taitt. That is the Prime Minister indicating that to the people of Trinidad and Tobago. No commission of enquiry—\$400 million gone into the hands of all kinds of persons. Mr. Speaker, it is the Prime Minister who also said that:

“...the report revealed a number of discrepancies which included:

1. There were widespread breaches of proper procurement practices
2. The approval given by Cabinet was not strictly adhered to
3. Persons at the co-ordinating level may have been involved in criminal activity”

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And we saw the headlines, the front page of today's *Trinidad Guardian*.

“4. There were several instances of fraudulent activity by suppliers to the programme”

Mr. Speaker, this is not a PNM Prime Minister speaking, you know, this is the Prime Minister of today, of the People's Partnership, a UNC Member indicating:

“There were several instances of fraudulent activity by suppliers to the programme”

Five—[*Crosstalk*] St. Augustine, I will come back to you just now, my friend, just now:

“5. There may have been widespread theft of equipment from the programme”

This is the Prime Minister speaking, the Member for Siparia:

“6. There may have been breaches of the Proceeds of Crime Act

7. ...questionable payments were made...

8. There was poor control and monitoring of the Programme...”

But, Mr. Speaker, no commission of enquiry, and you are not even hearing anything about this \$400 million. And where would that \$400 million have gone to?

Mr. Speaker, you have situations where people would have received \$59,000 as stipend, as a stipend.

“...the Ministry of Sport one month after Roberts took office in 2010.

While there is documented evidence that the club was approved by Roberts for a monthly subsidy of \$59,000 for staff and stipends to players in June 2010.”

Mr. Speaker, \$59,000. Members of Parliament do not even get half of that, not even half of that, and we can go on and speak about the \$36 million that one individual would have received for doing absolutely nothing, and made it quite clear that he will not repay.

Hon. Member: Shame.

Mr. N. Hypolite: Mr. Speaker, and the Member for Chaguanas East would stand there and talk about—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: Shame.

Mr. N. Hypolite:—the PNM, and the PNM, and the PNM. The PNM has a track record. We have a track record that we can speak about proudly, proudly so, all right? [*Desk thumping*] He spoke about Vision 2020, compared to vision 2030. Mr. Speaker, after 20 comes 30, and after 30 comes 40, and what we are saying to the Member is that we have gone beyond just looking at the year 2020. We are now looking at the year 2030. I wonder what year they are looking at, because all they can speak about is 1976, 1986, 1996, that is all they can speak about, that is all.

Miss Mc Donald: And Uthara Rao and Ken Julien.

Mr. N. Hypolite: They will not speak, they will not speak—

Miss Mc Donald: I wonder where is Anil?

Miss Cox: Where is Anil?

Miss Mc Donald: Where is he? Uthara Rao.

Mr. N. Hypolite: They will not speak about the high ranking on corruption in this country. You pick up the newspapers this morning and you read the headlines of yesterday:

“T&T still ranking high on corruption index”

Mr. Speaker, [*Crosstalk*] there they go once again wanting to put the PNM as the institution responsible for the high index. We are in 2014, we left office in 2010. You are speaking about a high corruption index moving from 80 in 2012, to 83 in 2014. It is not the People’s National Movement that is in office, that is administering the affairs of this country. It is the People’s Partnership, and if in 2012 it was at 80 and in 2014 it is now at 83, then, Mr. Speaker, it is the People’s Partnership that must take the responsibility [*Desk thumping*] for that, not the PNM.

Mr. Speaker, when you want to talk about blatant corruption and you want to talk about procurement, let us look at—just that simple issue with NIDCO. It is a very, very simple thing, you know, you have NIDCO. And of course, I am getting to, somewhat like the *Sunshine*. [*Laughter*] But in the *Sunshine*, Mr. Speaker, today, dated December 05, it states, and this is pertaining to:

The board members buss the mark

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And it goes like this:

Two directors of the National Infrastructure Development Company Limited have alleged that the Minister of Works and Infrastructure, Dr. Surujrattan Rambachan has been trying to force the board to agree to grant contractor, Lakshmi Singh, the Curepe interchange contract before the term of office ends in December 2014.

Where is the transparency in that? Where is the good governance? If it is you have a Minister who is trying to overshadow the board and speak directly to a contractor so as to give to that contractor preference in having—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: You cannot quote from a newspaper. The newspaper is not here and you are quoting on a newspaper article. You take full responsibility and you cannot impute improper motives. The newspaper did that, but they are not here, and the newspaper raised the conduct of the Member or the Minister; the newspaper is not here. If they were here I would have told them to file a substantive Motion.

So, I am asking you, if you are going to raise the conduct of a Member quoting from a newspaper, I would ask you to file a substantive Motion. Do not raise the conduct of a Member, quoting a newspaper. That is no excuse for bringing a Member into disrepute in this organization and in this Chamber, please.

Mr. N. Hypolite: Thank you kindly, Mr. Speaker, but there is an issue to be dealt with by this Government with respect to the manner in which the Curepe interchange project is being handled. That is what I will say for now, okay?—because you see we are dealing with accountability, we are dealing with transparency, we are dealing with good governance, and the thing about that is, when you have a situation where some 400 truckloads of dirt to assist in the distinguishing of a fire on the Beetham Landfill—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Cadiz: Distinguishing a fire? [*Crosstalk*]

3.15 p.m.

Mr. N. Hypolite:—to extinguish the fire with a very distinguished \$9 million, one also has to ask the question—[*Crosstalk*]

Miss Mc Donald: Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear, please—53(e), please. Crosstalk! Crosstalk! I want to hear! As soon as the Member for Siparia comes, the noise!

Mr. Speaker: I think if there is any queen of crosstalk, I know it is Port of Spain South. [*Laughter and desk thumping*] Queen of crosstalk. I am not going

there now, but I want to uphold the position advanced by the hon. Member for Port of Spain South that we should allow the Member to speak in silence and listen to the hon. Member's contribution. Continue, hon. Member, please.

Mr. N. Hypolite: Thank you kindly, Mr. Speaker. The distinguished amount of \$9 million to extinguish the fire on the Beetham.

Hon. Member: "Ah like dat." [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. N. Hypolite: Mr. Speaker, over a three-day period, 400 truckloads? It will take probably 400 trucks to move every day to take care of that situation. But it is also very interesting to note that when the \$9 million invoice was submitted, they moved from \$9 million down to just over \$6 million. And you see, you can look at the manner in which the Government continues to do their procurement for goods and services. You have to ask the question: how did that contractor get that contract, and what was the criteria used in procuring that particular contractor? And more so, Mr. Speaker, how come, or how did they manage to work back that 400 truckloads to that \$9 million?

But in addition to that, you have the whole question of over 20 contractors at the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure who would have done some work. In fact, they would have been part of a programme to assist in the restoration of road works—some 289 projects—some time last year, 2013, that came up to a value of some \$111 million. But the thing about it is, again, the manner in which those contracts were issued. It was a matter in which you walk onto the job site and it was said, "I want this done, I want that done, I want the other done. Give it to this contractor, give it to that contractor, give it to the other contractor", and now, when the projects have come to an end and these contractors are looking for their payment, to date some 20-plus contractors have not been paid.

But very interesting also is that from the Ministry they requested an audit to be done, and therefore an audit was done by Central Audit. But yet still, the contractors have not been paid. Why? It is said that the audit done by Central Audit is not a proper audit and, therefore, auditors from the Unemployment Relief Programme will therefore conduct a new audit. That is so wrong. It is so wrong because we still have over 20 contractors waiting for their payment, and it is said that those who would have received payment to date are close members of the Government. I am just saying what I am told.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Standing Order 48(6), Mr. Speaker, imputing improper motives.

Hon. Member: That is not improper motives.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Of course it is improper motives.

Mr. Speaker: Member, you would know that you cannot impute improper motives to Members of Parliament who may be Ministers, so do not go there. Please, do not go there.

Mr. N. Hypolite: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, but I never said anything about any Ministers. I said—

Mr. Speaker: I think your time has now expired—your speaking time. The speaking time of the hon. Member for Laventille West has expired. I would like to be advised.

Mr. N. Hypolite: Yes, please, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: You would like me to “please”? [*Laughter*]

Mr. N. Hypolite: Mr. Speaker, I would like to have my additional 15 minutes, or 30 minutes. Thanks.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: You may continue, hon. Member. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. N. Hypolite: Thank you kindly, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I am saying is that members of this group of contractors would have been identified as persons who are still being owed, and what they are saying is that they want their payment. What they said was at that point in time when their services were needed, they were called, they offered themselves, they were given the go-ahead, they would have gotten permission from the then Minister, a new Minister would have taken over and, as such, they are still awaiting their payment.

But while this is so, Mr. Speaker, you also have the case whereby contracts are being given out to individuals along the lines of, you have three projects—and Madam Prime Minister, just in case you want to say, “Oh please”, it is here.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: What is here?

Mr. N. Hypolite: You have three contractors—one, two, three contractors, three different locations. Each of the three contractors would bid on each of the projects. So you will have project number one, the three contractors will bid, project number two, the same three will bid, and project number three, the same three will bid.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: It is the same kind of work.

Mr. N. Hypolite: And what will happen is that each of those three contractors will get one of these contracts.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: So you want them to get all three?

Mr. N. Hypolite: No. What we are saying is, again, if you are looking at transparency, then it must be open to all contractors. Not just three, all contractors. [*Desk thumping*] All! Okay?

Miss Cox: Give an example of it.

Dr. Gopeesingh: So you advertise on the newspaper for the whole country.

Mr. N. Hypolite: You can advertise for the whole country. What is wrong with that? Nothing is wrong with that. In fact, that is transparency! [*Desk thumping*]

Miss Cox: That is transparency!

Mr. N. Hypolite: That is transparency. Let all and sundry be aware of it, rather than keeping to three persons. And it is the same three persons and the same three contract projects.

Miss Cox: Give an example. You have the papers there.

Mr. N. Hypolite: The same three.

Hon. Member: That is why we bring law. That is why we are changing the law.

Dr. Gopeesingh: Which they “doh” want.

Mr. N. Hypolite: Yes, that is why Trinidad and Tobago needs to get this piece of legislation in place, and we are also saying, yes, we need new legislation. We need it. [*Crosstalk and desk thumping*] What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, and we said it time after time, that we—[*Interruption*]

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. Member for Laventille West give way? Are you saying to us that you would support procurement legislation then?

Mr. N. Hypolite: Mr. Speaker, I am certain that the Opposition will support the piece of legislation [*Desk thumping*] only if it is good legislation, and in its current form, it is not. [*Desk thumping*] And what we are saying is that we have amendments and we are hoping that the Government Members will listen and—[*Interruption*]

Miss Cox: And look at our amendments. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. N. Hypolite: That is what we are saying, that they will listen; they will look at our amendments and use them so as to enhance the present piece of legislation.

Miss Mc Donald: That is right. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. N. Hypolite: Mr. Speaker, there is a lot more that one can say on this but, again, I will end by indicating that I am hoping that the Minister will take into consideration the amendments that we will put forward once again, to assist the Government in bringing good legislation to Trinidad and Tobago.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Prime Minister and Member of Parliament for Siparia. [*Desk thumping*]

The Prime Minister (Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar SC): Thank you very much, hon. Speaker. I am just trying to get the volumes, and these are only some of the volumes which are representative of PNM procurement. This here is just some of the documents from the Uff Commission of Enquiry. [*Referring to documents on desk*] But there are many others. The desk will not accommodate the tons of paper during the years from 1962 until today, where we have not seen any steps taken to bring into this Parliament, legislation to deal with procurement issues.

So when the hon. Member says, “Yes, we will support procurement legislation, but”, and that has been the history of the PNM from day one. “Yes, we will do it, yes we will do it, but, but, but.” And until we came into office, nothing was ever laid in this Parliament to deal with procurement on a fair, accountable and transparent scale. That is my answer to the hon. Member, and the others who have spoken on the other side. When they say there are issues, those issues did not arise at this point in time. Those are issues that have been facing this country from way back when. Even in colonial times I am sure there were issues that dealt with transparency and accountability and the need to have legislation and other measures to deal with proper procurement.

That is why I am very proud that my Government has kept its promise made in 2010—[*Desk thumping*—]—when we said in our conversations in the 2010 campaign, we promised, and then we put it into our manifesto, which manifesto then became Government policy. We promised that within 30 days of the sitting of the Parliament of the House that we will lay the package of the draft

procurement Bill, together with all the legislative measures proposed, all documents relating. So said, so done. We promised and we delivered. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker, the rest is history—and I will come back to it in a moment. The rest is history as to what transpired from then to now. But I want to reiterate, today we plan to pass this procurement Bill with or without the support of the PNM. [*Desk thumping*] And it is fortunate that we do have the parliamentary majority to allow this Government to carry out its promise to bring accountability, transparency and fairness in the procurement exercise. [*Desk thumping*] So, whilst the PNM is insisting they will support procurement legislation—as they have done—there is always the “but” and it never gets done.

As I say, I will come back to it, I will look at some of the documentation. Let me first take a moment, with your leave, to congratulate the Women Soca Warriors. They brought us together, united in red, white and black. They made us very proud. They played out to the best that they could have done and we are very proud of the work. So let us give them kudos for that work. [*Desk thumping*]

3.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting also that today when the vote is to be taken on this procurement legislation that the hon. Leader of the Opposition is not here.

Miss Mc Donald: Prime Minister, Prime Minister.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: It is also interesting that the hon. Member for Chaguanas West, the corruption buster, is not here. Very interesting because this is a vote that will be taken—[*Interruption*]

Miss Mc Donald: Prime Minister, could I?

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC:—you did not speak yet so you will have a chance.

Miss Mc Donald: I want to correct something you said earlier.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: It is interesting that both Members are not here—[*Interruption*]

Miss Mc Donald: Because he will be here.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC:—and I trust that they will come here when it is time to take the vote. Because I would hate to think that to avoid voting to say, “no”, because they have already indicated on that side, “no”, I would hate to think

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that both gentlemen would be coward with a “K” and stay away from the Parliament to avoid taking a vote. [*Desk thumping and laughter*] I will hate to think that, after all these years when we have dealt with legislation to bring us—It reminds me of when we set up the Joint Select Committee when the Members on the other side absconded and abdicated all responsibility, did not attend those joint select committee meetings, speak here every week, the rhetoric inside here and outside, about corruption, and yet when they had a chance to frame that legislation, when they had a chance now to come and make it law, they abdicated their responsibility to the people of Trinidad and Tobago. I say today, judge me not by my words but judge me by my actions. We talk the talk and we walk the walk. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker, judge us by our action, not by articulation because we can all speak very well, and so the rhetoric—yes, talk is cheap. The rhetoric there that you want to fight corruption—right now, I am told the massive march that the Member for Laventille West spoke about, bust. The massive march that you planned—even though your leader may have gone to join them—that has been extinguished. [*Laughter*] That march has been extinguished. [*Desk thumping*] And it will distinguish itself as being the most advertised march that just went totally squid and bust.

And you know why? Because this is where we have an opportunity, we were voted to do this job, we were voted in on that promise and others, and this is where the responsibility, if we really are committed to dealing with transparency, to dealing with fair procurement practices, then this is where we can make that difference, we can take that vote today, but you have said that you will not. So, they are absent. I think the hon. Member for Port of Spain South wants to say, maybe, they will be back. Let us see if they come back and let us see if they are brave enough and not coward with a “K” to vote against this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill itself, what does it seek to do? It is a very simple, very clear, very focused Bill: to build integrity in public procurement. It seeks to promote the principles of accountability, integrity, transparency and value for money. It seeks to promote efficiency, fairness and equity. But, at the same time, it seeks to have local industry development, sustainable procurement and sustainable development in public procurement and the disposal of public property. So we ask today: are they opposed to the objectives of this Bill and of this legislation that we seek to bring here today?

I think we can judge them, Mr. Speaker, we can judge all of us, if we use these words I found coming from Dr. Karen Franklin. She is a forensic psychologist and I quote:

“...‘when it comes to human beings, the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior.’”

And so today, a leader of one of the factions of the Opposition believes he is going to win the next election but he has never apologized for the waste, for the squandermania, Mr. Speaker, none of that, the decades of corruption and wastage, has never apologized for that. Even when he was there as part of that Government and when he was removing himself from it, he spoke in this Parliament about their squandermania and their waste, he has never apologized for that. And so, they talk about the fabricated history, the hon. Member—look, the hon. Member for Laventille West is a very good gentleman, very honourable gentleman. I think that is why they did not give him back his seat. [*Laughter and desk thumping*] And I feel sorry, we will miss you in the Parliament but I am sure—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Hypolite: “They tell me I going for Chaguanas East.”

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: I am sure you were not extinguished but I saw someone has already been named for Chaguanas East so they are deceiving you if they did say so, goodly Member for Laventille West, good gentleman.

You know, but you spoke about the proud history of the PNM, yes, there are things. Every Government, there will be things that we can speak about that you have done, and that you continue to try to do, yes, that proud legacy. But remember in that legacy is the DNA of corruption that runs through the PNM. [*Desk thumping*] The DNA of the PNM corruption and we have to acknowledge that, and if we acknowledge that, even as you stand today and others stand today, and say, “Listen, there are procurement issues taking place in the country, there are questions about them, there are controversies about them, then that is why, for the decades plus now, that we must pass this piece of legislation.” That is the way we can hope to put “ah crankle, put ah handle, put ah lid” on the corrupt practices. But if we do not do that, if we do not have that commitment—yes, it may not be a perfect Bill and, in fact, I would like to quote Afra Raymond in today’s *Guardian* when he says it is not perfect. He said it is not perfect but this is the way to go.

This is the *Guardian* today, December 05, 2014, page A22:

“Afra Raymond, president of the...(JCC) says Parliament needs to approve the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Bill.

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‘The most important thing after the Constitution is the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Law. The most imminent thing is the Procurement Bill that comes back to the Parliament on Friday in the Lower House. We need to note it was approved unanimously by the Upper House on June 11. Six PNM Senators sat in the Senate and all of them voted for it. We now have in the Lower House where we have a lot of people making...objections and many of them are members of the PNM...’”

He was speaking on Wednesday and so on, Mr. Speaker.

“Raymond accused some members of the Lower House of ‘delaying’ the process.”

He went on and I quote:

“‘We started to make a new law to control public money...let us finish the task. Let us be serious. It cannot be serious as a parliamentary political party that six of your members approved in the Senate but now you come and say you discovered issues.’

Raymond said...”—Trinidad and Tobago—“needs stability which will be achieved by order.”

The *Guardian* Editorial again, today as well:

“Take decisive steps...”

And says very clearly that this piece of law:

“One step that can be taken quickly is the passage and implementation of the long awaited Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Bill...

The legislation is not perfect...”

I am quoting:

“The legislation is not perfect, as even its supporters admit, but it is better than nothing. It would certainly be preferable to the current situation, where there are large question marks over...major public projects...”

And so I want to thank the JCC and all those other stakeholders who worked together with hon. Dr. Bhoë Tewarie and, of course, Dr. Tewarie, himself, in steering this process for us to reach where we are today. I want to thank Afra Raymond and all in the JCC for the years of work, [*Desk thumping*] the years of work it took to bring this procurement legislation to the Parliament. So yes, here we are.

We all recall the PNM past, all the major corruption scandals, again, procurement issues, Mr. Speaker, very relevant. Those were the things we could have stemmed had this legislation been placed before, the PNM past. We can go way back and talk about the gas station racket, talk about O'Halloran and talk of all those other things. Those are the ghosts of PNM corruption past. And we have PNM corruption present, Mr. Speaker.

I would not want to spend much parliamentary time, but I know when the Member for Laventille West raised it, it juggled my memory of landfills and other materials being siphoned off the hospital site in Scarborough, Tobago, for a private development. That is a procurement issue as well. And yes, it went before the Integrity Commission. Yes, the Integrity Commission referred the file because they found that there was a prima facie evidence within it to do certain things the DPP needed to, and then there was a judicial review. But let us remember, the judicial review matter was won, not because of the substance, it was won on a technicality on procedural points that the person named was not spoken to before the file was sent to the DPP. So let us not fool ourselves. Procurement issues have been PNM past, PNM present, still continuing, and it will be the future ghost—PNM ghost for the future, PNM corruption. [*Desk thumping*]

And yes, I agree with you, I can name all the projects, I have seven deadly sins of the PNM, we have 50 corrupt acts—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: “Read dey sins.”

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: No, my time will not permit. I do not think we will forget those things and others have spoken about it here today. But I want to spend a little more time on some other matters so let us take it.

Look at Petrotrin, Mr. Speaker, \$14 billion debt, where did it come from? It was to do with improper procurement practices. We inherited the debt of \$10 billion—over \$10 billion in 2010. Why? Again, because of procurement practices there. And we can see with Petrotrin, so many other things—the GTL plant, the gas optimization plant. All of these were matters that took us into the debt that we have under Petrotrin. So, I am saying, we look at the corruption that we have seen in the past.

You will recall the former Government rushed into a \$700-million deal between WASA and Israeli consortium. When, Mr. Speaker? Just before the election. Similar in 1995, rushed into a \$570-million-contract with Severn Trent five days before the 1995 election. The failed rapid rail project, half a billion for a box of paper called a feasibility study. Half a billion dollars, Mr. Speaker. What

they paid for that study alone, we could have sent every child in this country for free GATE education for one year. We could have paid for GATE, free tertiary education, for everyone in this country for a box of paper for almost half a million. The Brian Lara Stadium, a cost—[*Interruption*]

Hon. Member: And they want to bring it back.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: Yes, and they want to bring it back. We have termed it “the racket rail”, want to bring it back but we will speak on that on another occasion. The Brian Lara Stadium in Tarouba cost \$175 million. When the Government demitted office, project costs stood at approximately \$1.1 billion. Petrotrin, the Gasoline Optimization Programme, US \$1.4 billion final cost, and there is a further US \$521 million in interest loan fees, withholding taxes and other charges. All of these things and more, we have seen in the past and, as I say, questions on certain projects right now.

There is another matter that is related and I really wonder whether we could remember those. I mentioned World GTL scandal, gasoline optimization scandal, the shed of shame, the new headquarters shell which cost \$170 million, you can see it when you are passing Petrotrin on the highway, and then you see that they deliberately run down Trinmar. A deliberate running down of Trinmar, again, leading to losses, and this leads me to raise a matter that is procurement related of an incident that occurred in Trinmar several years ago at—what was it? Platform 22, September 19, 1999. I hold in my hand an internal audit report of Trinmar Limited, November 1999. The incident was September 19, 1999. An investigation team was established on October 22, 1999 to review the events surrounding the restart of compressor unit 25, platform 22, on Sunday, September 19, 1999. The audit team comprised several persons and we can share this with the House by laying it.

The investigation was initiated when a casual employee, Irvine Toolsie alleged in writing that on September 19, 1999, while working in the cooler box of compressor unit 25:

1. that the foreman in charge of the repairs started the compressor while he was in the cooler box of compressor unit 25;
2. that his right ankle and foot was injured in the process by the fan hub rotating blades of the compressor fan and that he could have been killed;
3. that an attempt was made to conceal this accident by all crew members, namely Ancel Roget, foreman in charge, and others.

The investigations continued and the summary of findings which I will go to, so as not to spend all our time, in the internal audit report was as follows:

Conclusion:

- The foreman, Ancel Roget, exhibited gross carelessness and negligence in the execution of his duties which could have resulted in the death of Irvine Toolsie.
- The foreman, by his actions, caused injury to Mr. Toolsie.
- The foreman violated commonly accepted safe working practices.

3.45 p.m.

- The foreman failed to report the accident to his supervisor.
- The foreman gave false testimony in connection with the investigation.
- The foreman attempted to bribe the injured employee to keep his mouth shut. He offered him \$300.
- The foreman and other members of the union were intimidating two crew members so as to ensure they withheld the truth from the committee.

Mr. Speaker, they recommended that the foreman endangered life, near death injury to the employee and sought to conceal same and they recommended the maximum disciplinary action commensurate with the findings be implemented. I am saying they deliberately sought to run down Trinmar. These incidents were covered up. Legal advice was sought from the firm of Boynes, legal advice/opinion dated November 22, 1999, Boynes and Company, signed by one attorney-at-law Ronald Boynes. Again, in the legal opinion, it states very clearly at the end of it, that it is open to Trinmar, in conclusion:

to take the ultimate disciplinary action of summary dismissal against Roget on the grounds of:

1. negligence.
2. failure to follow company's procedure.
3. giving misleading and false information to the investigative committee.

Mr. Speaker, this is what was happening when he was then the union representative at Trinmar. And so that is another issue, they attempt to run down Trinmar.

And now today, when Petrotrin workers are saying that we do not want to pay them and they say that we are hiring friends and family, that is procurement too, the hiring of persons. It is goods and services. That is what procurement is, hiring persons. We have here a clear table of employees over the years hired by Petrotrin, I have it in my folder, which shows that the number of workers on contract from 2003 to the present and the number of workers on full establishment is basically the same as it was 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. So, again deceiving and deception and misleading people about procurement issues of contract labour and full labour. The average was between 4,000, 4,300 to 4,400 remained steady, from before we went into Government and after.

I see a union leader railing about this Government hiring friends and family in Petrotrin. You would recall the last Government, they labelled it “Petrosingh”. And when you look at it from 2002, through the UNC first, the Panday administration, through that period down to now, the numbers have not changed. Misleading and deceiving members of the public.

We talk about procurement then we need this legislation. The hon. Member for Point Fortin occupied a Petrotrin house for seven years. What was the process of procurement to have access to the service of that house?

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: I am on my legs. Mr. Speaker, Standing Order 48(6), I did not occupy any house for seven years.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: Hon. Speaker—[*Interruption*]

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: Hold on.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: Hold on?

Mr. Speaker: The Member has raised a point of order under Standing Order 48(6). Hon. Prime Minister, I would like you to be very cautious, in terms of imputing any improper motives to the Member for Point Fortin, please.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: I am guided, hon. Speaker, and therefore I will refrain from there, but I will go to the court judgment handed down by the High Court when the court ordered, Justice Vasheist Kokaram, who heard the lawsuit filed by Petrotrin against Gopee-Scoon in the San Fernando Supreme Court. Gopee-Scoon was served notice on September 29, 2011, to vacate the house by December of that year. However, she responded by letter dated December 19, 2011, refusing to leave. This is the court documents.

Petrotrin issued a second letter in February last year, and this would have been in 2013, calling on Gopee-Scoon to vacate and giving her another month to pack her belongings before taking legal action. Pre-action protocol letter was sent last May and Gopee-Scoon, who has a home in Westmoorings, west Trinidad, contested the lawsuit.

Petrotrin's lawyer—now we had to procure the services of the lawyers too, you know. Petrotrin had to pay lawyers, procure services of the lawyers. They hired Prakash Deonarine, submitted the company was losing \$1,260 per month in rent by Gopee-Scoon's refusal to vacate the home she has occupied since being elected Member of Parliament in 2007. This is done in 2013. The company stated they needed the property to house its workers. The claim was disputed and so on. However, Justice Kokaram ordered that Gopee-Scoon vacate the premises on or before March 09 and that the parties had to discuss Petrotrin's rental claim. Gopee-Scoon was present in court yesterday when the order was made.

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: It was a technicality.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: I understand the technicality. The technicality was that the hon. Member may have been residing in Port of Spain—*[Interruption]*

Miss Mc Donald: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, Madam Prime Minister, please. Mr. Speaker, Standing Order 48(1). I am trying to understand exactly what is happening here. Standing Order 48(1), relevance, relevance, Madam Prime Minister. Prime Minister, relevance.

Mr. Speaker: Well, yes. We are dealing with procurement. The Prime Minister is speaking on this issue and Prime Minister, I would ask you to connect those contributions that you have made to the relevant legislation, please.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: I am guided, hon. Speaker. The Bill before this honourable House is to deal with procurement of goods, services by the Government and Government officials. In my respectful view, the matter is relevant. It pertains to utilizing the services of the Government. That is a Government house, Petrotrin's house, owned by the State, and therefore it is relevant. I am saying these are the kinds of practices—*[Interruption]*

Dr. Browne: Mr. Speaker, point of order 48(6). She is imputing improper motive.

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: That involved no procurement, absolutely no procurement.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: That is even worse.

Mr. Speaker: I think, on this particular matter, hon. PM, Member of Parliament for Siparia, I think the point has been made. I think we can move on, please.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: Certainly, certainly. Sometimes the truth offends. And, therefore, I am guided.

Mrs. Gopee-Scoon: I am not offended.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: You are not offended? Well I am, with due respect. But hon. Speaker, here we are then.

Mr. Speaker: I am defending you. [*Laughter*]

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: Let us come to the Bill. So these are the procurement issues we are speaking about when we are saying that we need the procurement legislation. We need to prevent unfair practices, improper practices, have transparency, accountability and so on and that is why this Bill is so important.

But I note the hon. Members on the other side. I notice the very said Member for Point Fortin—I did not plan to go there but I will. The hon. Member for Point Fortin, having said I must deal with procurement issues, I am dealing with the Bill and the hon. Member has said in her contribution on this Bill, November 19, as the *Hansard* record will show:

“So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you for this intervention and to say that the people of Point Fortin join me in not supporting this Bill...”

Not supporting.

The hon. Member for St. Joseph who is not in the Chamber at the moment, likewise said we cannot pass it. So we have their words. I hope they have a change of heart by the time the vote is taken, which is very clear that they will not support.

We come back again then. What happened in the Senate? This Bill is the identical Bill passed by all the Independents, certainly—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: PM, I made a ruling on that earlier. We do not deal with the business of that place.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: Sure.

Mr. Speaker: So I would not want us to go there. Do not do that.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: The point is, Mr. Speaker, we will not go to the Senate, but we can take notice that this legislation was supported in the Senate by all Members present, which was the PNM and the Independent Senators. [*Desk thumping*] But here we are, where there is this anxiety and angst not to pass it and I want to point out what I started off, best predictor is your past behaviour, your habits.

How you behaved previously is how you will behave in the past [*sic*] and, therefore, it is an opportune time for us to look into the timeline, with respect to anti-corruption legislation. That is very important, because I am saying the PNM has always been averse to dealing with anti-corruption legislation and we would start off 1961, which was the Central Tenders Board Act. It says the Central Tenders Board Act, 1961; 1961 to 1974, rampant corruption, gas station racket, petroleum contract scandal, National Gas Pipeline scandal, NHA scandal, Chaguaramas Development Authority scandal; 1974, the Wooding Commission recommended the establishment of a parliamentary integrity commission. The PNM from 1974 to 1986, refused to establish that Commission. So our 1976 Constitution contained a provision that there shall be an integrity commission—contained in the 1976 Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, it was not until 1986, when the PNM was booted out of office, the NAR came into office—they came in 1986 and in 1987 they brought the Integrity in Public Life Act 1987, never the PNM.

During 1974 to 1986 meanwhile, the PNM corruption continued, fraud in government departments, National Stadium scandal; Hasely Crawford Sport Fund discrepancy; DC9 scandal; 100 bus deal scandal; Tesoro scandal; Leyland scandal; Caroni Racing Complex scandal, airport paving scandal, Bon Accord housing scandal; NEC squandermania; county council scandal; Telco write off; Plipdeco scandal, et cetera. This is between 1974 and 1986, when the Wooding Commission in 1974 recommended the establishment of an integrity commission. Nothing done right up to 1986.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the speaking time of the hon. Prime Minister and hon. Member of Parliament for Siparia has expired. Would you like to have your time be extended, hon. PM?

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: I beg to move, hon. Speaker, that I be permitted the extra 15 minutes. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the question is that the speaking time of the hon. Prime Minister and Member of Parliament for Siparia be extended for 15 minutes.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: You may continue, hon. Prime Minister.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So, 1974 to 1986 and the 1976 Constitution put into effect that the Integrity Commission be established—none established. It took the NAR Government, in 1986, to establish that commission. From 1986 to 1990, the NAR uncovered more examples of PNM corruption. They passed, as I said in 1987, the Integrity in Public Life Act.

From 1991 to 1995 nothing again was done by the PNM. There was the Pegasus Pride scandal, Fertrin, road improvement fund, the Lenny Saith scandal; 1997, the draft National Tenders Board Bill considered by Cabinet. It was not introduced in Parliament. In 2000, it was the Panday administration which finished the legislative framework started by the NAR, putting in amendments to the Integrity in Public Life Act and the Prevention of Corruption Act which had been passed by the NAR.

From 2001 to 2009, the PNM Government formed a committee with representatives from the JCC, the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the TTMA and the TTTI to produce a green paper on reform of government's procurement regime. Mr. Speaker, that Green Paper was in fact done June 2004. This was the Green Paper that was prepared. The committee in 2005 began work on a White Paper following on the Green Paper. In 2006, the public procurement system in Trinidad and Tobago stood in need of revision.

In the budget statement of that year, the then Prime Minister stated that some work was needed on the White Paper. He promised full implementation in the early months of the next fiscal year, which would have been 2007, however, no provisions were made in the budget. The White Paper then becomes the public procurement and disposal of public property Bill, 2006, was not debated.

From 2006 to 2010 again, nothing done even though there was a proposed Bill that Government had. Nothing was done. In 2007, then Minister Sahadeo said discussions on the White Paper had come back on the front burner, procurement legislation was expected to be discussed in the upcoming budget statement. In that year, 2007, no mention of procurement reform in the budget speech; 2008, the JCC and TTTI were assured by the then Government procurement legislation would not be stalled; 2009, down the road, nothing; 2010, nothing, and the rest is history.

4.00 p.m.

In 2010, as we promised, we laid the legislation, the draft Bill and other documents into the Parliament. We set up the Joint Select Committee, that committee was stalled, as we said. It was reappointed in the second session, a

second Joint Select Committee. The matter in 2012 went to the LRC. In 2013, the Bill was approved by the LRC. In 2013, the F&GP reverted the Bill to the LRC. In 2014, the Bill was finally approved by the LRC on March 17, 2014, approved by Cabinet March 20th, then laid in the Senate, passed in the Senate unanimously—unanimously passed in the Senate, and then was brought to this House. There was some debate and that debate is also taking place at this time.

So, Mr. Speaker, that is the history—the PNM’s history of legislation, that you watch their past behaviour as a predictor of their future behaviour. When it comes to human beings, the best predictor of future behaviour, is past behaviour. We have seen from all the years that they have been in office, they have never attempted to bring anti-corruption legislation to the Parliament, never brought to the Parliament anything dealing with integrity in public life. It took other Governments, first the NAR Government, then the UNC Panday Government, and then this People’s Partnership Government to make that a reality in the Parliament. [*Desk thumping*]

In the time I have left, Mr. Speaker, you may say, well, what else have we done to fight corruption? What have we done to deal with procurement issues? There are a number of legislative measures that we have put in place, several of them, but even before that, I come back to the Uff Commission of Enquiry. Out of these, Mr. Speaker, of the recommendations from the Uff Report dealing with procurement and so on, in the construction sector, with respect to the HDC, 16 of those recommendations have been implemented; all 16 with respect to HDC. There were 45 recommendations that applied to UDeCOTT, all 45 of those recommendations have been implemented. [*Desk thumping*] In addition, we have taken other measures to deal with procurement issues in the fight against corruption.

Legislation passed in—we will look backwards in 1999, Act 26 under the Panday administration, we passed the Freedom of Information Act. Mr. Speaker may well recall that. Again, that has to do with transparency and accountability. Regrettably, when the UNC demitted office or lost office, the then Government came in, and they attempted and brought legislation here to remove many of the agencies out of the purview of the—how many?

Hon. Member: 15.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: Almost 15 of them, to remove them out.

In 2011, we passed the Electronic Transactions Act, which again, helps us with transparency and accountability. We have implemented many of the

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recommendations to the Financial Action Task Force, several of them, and time will not permit.

With respect to the Financial Intelligence Unit, which deals, of course, with the proceeds of crime, helping us with money laundering and so on, we have strengthened that unit. We also passed an amendment Act, No. 2, in 2011. We passed another amendment Act for the FIU in 2012. Just recently, November 26th in El Salvador, the hon. Attorney General was elected Deputy Chair of the very influential Caribbean Financial Action Task Force and—[*Desk thumping*] In addition, we have passed the Miscellaneous Provisions (Administration of Justice) Act, 2014, which allows special jurors to sit on juries to deal with specialized areas, such as finance, banking, accounting, forensic accounting and so on.

Hon. Member: White-collar crime.

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: White-collar crime, yes, to deal with white-collar crime. We also passed the Miscellaneous Provisions (Proceeds of Crime) Act, 2014 which amends the Proceeds of Crime Act, the Anti-Terrorism Act and the Financial Intelligence Unit of Trinidad and Tobago. What this does, again, is to increase operational efficiency in both the supervisory and other processes. Again, to deal with white-collar crime and to assist again in upholding transparency and accountability.

We amended the Securities Act, by Act No. 17 of 2012, again, to provide protection to investors from unfair, improper or fraudulent practices. There are several other measures that are coming. We have also, as you know, amended the Standing Orders to give again, more accountability and transparency. [*Desk thumping*]

You know, it was only in the last budget, hon. Speaker, which the Speaker may recall as presiding over that Standing Finance Committee, which was a very gruelling process, where the Members of the Opposition had one week to question every Member of the Government, to answer questions on the budgetary measures from the year before and the present year. You know, in that whole five-day session, I read the *Hansard* reports. Unavoidably, I was not here because of the United Nations, but hon. Minister McLeod was Acting Prime Minister. I read it and I did not see one issue of corruption being raised in that whole five days that we were present here during that time, Mr. Speaker.

Dr. Browne: What!

Hon. K. Persad-Bissessar SC: But what is important, is the Members of the Opposition, through that measure, are now given an opportunity which was never there and never happened before, to question the Government about its budgetary measures and, therefore, its procurement measures. [*Desk thumping*]

We have also amended the Standing Orders to have the Urgent Questions to Members, again, for accountability and transparency. And, of course, the very gruelling Prime Minister's Questions that we have to answer within 20 minutes of receipt of same. So, these are some of the matters.

I have dealt with the timeline, the delivery and so on. In all of this, I want to congratulate Minister Cadiz and the others; they have spoken of all the projects that we have done. On the one hand, they say we are not delivering; the other hand, they say we are biased in delivery. When we do deliver, they cannot come to terms with the fact that this Government has delivered more than any other Government in the history of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*]

The facts are that we have increased tertiary education participation to 65 per cent. [*Desk thumping*] We have increased water supply from just about 20 per cent in 2010 to over 60 per cent today. [*Desk thumping*] We have built over 250 metres of road, Mr. Speaker. We have delivered the dualling of the Diego Martin Highway. We have delivered the Port of Spain access project, east bound and west bound, of the Beetham Highway from the market overpass to the lighthouse.

Now, without procurement legislation, these are some of the matters that have been delivered. We have also completed the Navet trunk main project; the supply and installation of potable water treatment plant; storage tanks in Talparo, north Oropouche, Matura and Clarke Road. Several other projects, Mr. Speaker, all that we have delivered and it seems that equity hurts others.

So despite the torrid past and present, the Opposition has used countless baseless allegations of corruption to tarnish the names of people and organizations. Yet, when we come to a measure that will assist in removing those controversies, will assist in having greater accountability and transparency, the Opposition is saying, no we will not support. It is very strange when half their membership supported it, unanimously supported it, the identical Bill, supported the identical Bill. Yet today, when this decision has to be made, the hon. Members on the other side are saying that they will not.

Mr. Speaker, I say again, when it comes to human beings, the best predictor of human behaviour is past behaviour. Throughout the history of the PNM, we have seen an aversion to any measures to deal with corruption—anti-corruption

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measures. Whether it be with respect to integrity legislation, whether it be with respect to sharing information, Government information and accountability through committees of the Parliament, or through the Freedom of Information Act, and whether it be with respect to prevention of corruption, proceeds of crime and so on, the PNM has never taken the lead, and indeed, has strung Members along.

I was in the last Parliament in Opposition, when we were promised repeatedly, repeatedly, that the Green Paper on public procurement and then the White Paper, that these things will become a reality and become law. Having taken all of those things that were done all over the years, put them together, having the Joint Select Committee, Dr. Tewarie meeting all of the stakeholders, coming up with the legislation, giving sufficient time for debate—the hon. Members are taking the usual PNM way out of saying, “Yes, we will support procurement legislation, but not this”. Similar to the THA internal self-government, “yes, we will support internal self-government, but not in the form of the Bill brought”, when this was the only Government that brought such a Bill to the Parliament. [*Desk thumping*]

So I commend this Bill to this honourable Chamber, and to Members of this honourable Chamber. I say we are very proud to be part of a Government, not only speaking about transparency and accountability, and about procurement issues, but very proud to be part of a Government that is not only working through articulation and talk, but working through deeds of action and to put in place things done.

I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. [*Desk thumping*]

Dr. Amery Browne (*Diego Martin Central*): [*Desk thumping*] Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the privilege of speaking on this very important debate, and this very important Bill. The final words of the Prime Minister continue to echo in the Chamber, and those were words describing how proud she is of her Government and its record on corruption. [*Interruption*] Mr. Speaker, those words would ring hollow to every citizen of this country, [*Desk thumping*] who would open any newspaper today and see damning revelations about a former Minister of this Government, who was defended and coddled and protected, including right here in this Chamber. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker, there were matters of privilege—[*Interruption*] by the Prime Minister. There were matters of privilege, there were matters—[*Interruption*]

Dr. Rowley: Motions!

Dr. A. Browne:—Motions on the adjournment, there were issues brought, there were direct challenges to this very same Minister, coddled, protected and

supported directly, [*Desk thumping*]—proud of a record against corruption. [*Interruption*] So those words really would define that particular contribution. Mr. Speaker, all this is really somewhat ironic, when we look at the impending arrival or advent of the International Day Against Corruption, which occurs on December 09th. I do not think the Prime Minister mentioned that.

If you look at what the United Nations has to say on the issue. The theme for this year's—I do not know if to call it a celebration, commemoration, the theme for this year, International Anti-Corruption Day is, “Break the Corruption Chain”. I think that theme is very significant, because what we are talking about is not a one-off event or issue, but a chain, and in my contribution, once I am allowed, I would look at that chain and where the chain begins, and where in my opinion the chain is going to end, and basically the UN summarizes it on their website as this:

“Corruption is a complex social, political and economic phenomenon that affects all countries. Corruption undermines democratic institutions, slows economic development and contributes to governmental instability. Corruption attacks the foundation of democratic institutions by distorting electoral processes, perverting the rule of law and creating bureaucratic quagmires whose only reason for existing is the soliciting of bribes.”

To close this quotation:

“Economic development is stunted because foreign direct investment is discouraged and small businesses within the country often find it impossible to overcome the ‘start-up costs’ required because of corruption.”

So, Mr. Speaker, we are talking about a very serious issue that affects every single citizen of Trinidad and Tobago. I must confess with all respect to the Prime Minister, I did not think that her contribution really treated this issue and this Bill with the seriousness that it deserved. I saw her using the opportunity to take some potshots, well, which I will respond to on a number of issues. I will respond to it directly. I will not leave it very vague, Madam Prime Minister.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want the Prime Minister to get too nervy or nervous. I am not going to be in any way offensive or personal. [*Crosstalk*] She is not accustomed to anyone responding in the Chamber, because normally she chooses to speak last.

Hon. Member: And run.

Dr. A. Browne: So I will bear that in mind. Mr. Speaker, I want to quote—it is the truth—[*Interruption*]—and run. I am not going to say “and run”, come on.

Mr. Speaker, we see a pattern developing, where the Government and the Prime Minister said it today—she basically ticked it off—the Government has kept its promise. So she holds up the Bill and says the Government has kept its promise. We are seeing that sort of election rhetoric starting to step in.

4.15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of citizens are taking note and are saying: this seems to be like government of spreadsheet where they just have a tick box and they are just ticking off as they go, but the devil is in the details. Let me give you an example.

We have some new parents in the Chamber. If you are a parent and you have a child and you I say: I promise to take you to the zoo, but you just take them down the road to see a goat tied at the side of the road and you put a tick, you saw the animals. You have not gone to the zoo. So this approach by tick; you tell your child: I am going to show you Tobago; we are going to Tobago, and you just take them to Toco and show them the silhouette of the island, you put a tick. *[Interruption]* I am going to prove to you that is exactly what is going on here.

The Prime Minister is saying that this is some important corruption fighting measure when this is not that at all. This is just a little tick on the spread box and is not what was promised to the citizens of this country. Again, I will explain by looking at that chain of corruption. The devil is in the details.

And then she accused the Member for Diego Martin West, in his absence—and there is irony even in doing that—of being possibly a coward with “K”. You heard that Mr. Speaker. She said that three times—a coward with a “K”. Again those words will ring to many citizens because many out there are starting to spell corruption with a “K” and that “K”—I am not going to explain that “K” because it has implications for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that the Prime Minister even took note of the fact that there were contributions by Members on this side that gave very specific recommendations—not to take away the procurement Bill from the Government; not to remove it from this Chamber; not to strike it off the agenda, but to improve and support effective procurement legislation.

Specific amendments have been circulated and I am wondering why the Prime Minister did not even take a note of that or respond to those amendments should she have any insights or details or responses that she should share with us. Very simple, very specific and, in my view, very helpful recommendations and amendments have been made and circulated in this very Chamber.

There was a portion of that contribution that I really have to reprimand very strongly because the hon. Member for Siparia came here and, in my view, made an attempt to blacken the name and character of a gentleman by the name of Ancel Roget, and read out some reports which some might feel were quite damning against that particular gentleman, who is not here in the Chamber, of course, to defend himself.

Hold on! Hold on! Hold on! That is what I heard, Mr. Speaker, and the Member for Siparia read a number of reports, old reports, from the 1990s and 1980s and so on to build her case, which obviously is a case of convenience, because the said gentleman is protesting against the Government today.

That is fair enough. I do not think there is any dispute in anything I have just said, but, Mr. Speaker, all of those old reports and judgments and audits and the things that she read about the same Ancel Roget were available to the Member for Siparia in the year of our Lord 2010, when she marched arm in arm with the same trade union leader; when he was supportive of the partnership that they were trying to assemble.

In fact, the public record shows that the MSJ and Mr. Roget were part of the Government and were triumphed and held up as part of the Partnership. So, Mr. Speaker, it is—*[Interruption]* Sorry.

Mr. Seemungal: Not PNM.

Dr. A. Browne: Exactly. Mr. Speaker, the Member for La Horquetta/Talparo has had a moment of clarity. What he is saying is he was not PNM then and, therefore, it was not convenient to attack him. *[Interruption]* Restrain yourself Member. Restrain yourself. Be calm! Be calm! Be calm!

Mr. Speaker, there is further irony in this matter.

Mr. Seemungal: What was the irony?

Dr. A. Browne: No, but you are correct. Because the—

Mr. Speaker: Let us avoid the crosstalk. Member for La Horquetta/Talparo—

Mr. Seemungal: He is engaging me.

Mr. Speaker: Yeah, no, but the crosstalk. Let us avoid the crosstalk. Member, continue, please.

Dr. A. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the point is he no longer supports the Government and, therefore, he is fair game and even though

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he was their colleague, partner, supporter and helped put them into office, now we can refer to those old reports, come here in the Lower House of Parliament as the Prime Minister of this country and attack his character. I am ashamed of that approach to governance in this country. Absolutely.

Worse than that and again I am referring to you, but I have expected some of his colleagues, Mr. Roget's colleagues, right here in the House to sound a word of protest in his defence—the Member for South, the Member for Pointe-a-Pierre or others.

I raised that issue because I remember about a year ago when I ran into some trouble with the Chair. And you know why I ran into that trouble—and I respect your ruling; it was the correct one at that time—but I was seeking to defend a gentleman who I had never met here in this Chamber, when the Member for Chaguanas West raised some other spurious allegations—right here in this Chamber—about a gentleman. I think his name is George Bell. I never met him; I do not know who the man is, but in my view as an elected Member of Parliament on this honourable Bench, I determined that I would have to say something to try to interrupt that horrific approach.

We saw this happening today again with Mr. Roget and his trade union colleagues sat silently and attentively. That is not something any of us could be proud of and I wonder what they will say after 2015 when they might be arm in arm once again with their comrades. I was thrown out of the House at that time.

I do not want to spend too much time on the Member for Siparia, but she had a lot of insights and explanations on a number of issues—of course all related to the PNM—and had no insights and explanations on all of the issues related to the UNC in the last four years in office. She told us a bit about Landate and the seven deadly sins of the PNM. What do you expect? That is part of her—

Miss Mc Donald: And got personal with Gopee-Scoon.

Dr. A. Browne: Well, I think the Speaker somewhat ruled on that, but if I go down that road, I myself might get a little too emotional because that was totally and completely unnecessary. I think even the Prime Minister would agree, so I am going to move over that—totally and completely unnecessary. But we heard about those things, the seven deadly sins and so.

People listen to these debates and sometimes they wonder because you hear all of these personal attacks going on and hear talk about the billions and the millions. But there are families out there who are not counting in billions and

millions. They are counting in hundreds and pennies and as Members of Parliament, we have to interact with them. So when we talk about procurement, public procurement, they are thinking about their own private household procurement and they are struggling. I thought the Prime Minister would have used today's opportunity to respond to some of their concerns. I heard none of that today.

I just want to give one example when you talk about the example of procurement at the domestic level. In August of this year, all Members of Parliament were written by the Minister of Social Development, who happens to be the Member for Siparia, and were invited to submit 60 names of needy families for financial assistance.

We provided those names. The idea was for needy school children to receive five hundred, not five billion, \$510 to help with their school supplies for the start of the new term. This new term started, when was it? September 02, 2014. Today is December 05, 2014. The school term is coming to an end in a few days' time—next week—not a single one of those needy families and school children—this is for school supplies to start the term. And we come here and we talk about billions and Landate and seven deadly sins of the PNM, and there are families out there with their ears peeled to their radios and televisions wondering how would they be expected to survive during that period while billions are being spent all over.

So, I just wanted to make that connection because while we are talking public procurement, there is private procurement; people are struggling with their private procurement in households. Four months later, school term is finished now and those parents, on receiving that information would have catered for that money to buy supplies. They have not gotten any of it and it is a disservice even to the Member for Caroni East, the Minister in that sector, because it puts additional pressure on him as the Minister of Education. I do not know if the Ministries are talking.

Anyway, the hon. Member for Siparia also made the following statement. She read the *Hansard* record and she heard or read no issue of corruption raised in the Standing Finance Committee which occurred over a one-week period.

Mr. Speaker, because I read the same thing, I wish I had the time to pull it. First of all, she admitted she was not present in the jurisdiction at the time, but I would invite the Member for Siparia to go and read again because the majority of issues that were raised in that Standing Finance Committee right here in this Chamber were with respect to concerns about corruption and the expenditure of

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public funds—the majority of those issues raised. [*Desk thumping*] So how could you come here and put that on the record in a procurement debate. It really is very counter-productive. But, again, they are just putting ticks.

Just a little reference to the Member for Chaguanas East. He was all over the place to be frank. He talked about the “balisier brigade”. [*Interruption*] That is a good point. I did not hear anything about dragging coffins in the road, but he talked about the “balisier brigade”. He spoke about the Integrity in Public Life Act, et cetera, and then he asked a very remarkable question. He was directing it at the Member for Diego Martin North/East who he knows has spoken already and does not have the opportunity to reply and who was not even in the Chamber at the time. Clever of him.

He asked the question about the tribunal: who will appoint the tribunal that is recommended from the Member for Diego Martin North/East. The reason he asked that is because he is trying to create the impression that these amendments that were circulated were not properly thought through and trying to give the rationale why the Government would not accept them.

I just want to very briefly put in the record the new clause 13(3).

“If each House of Parliament by resolution decides that the question of removing the regulator from office ought to be investigated, then—”—remember he threw out a challenge, who will appoint this tribunal? Mr. Speaker, in black and white in English:

“(a) the President shall appoint a tribunal...”

There is no simpler phrasing. I sat and I studied this phrase. How could we make this simpler for the Member for Chaguanas East? It is impossible. I challenge any speaker after me in this debate to make it simpler than it is in this amendment. The President shall appoint the tribunal. But he stands up here in the Parliament and challenges us: Who is going to appoint this tribunal? That is the kind of content we are getting from the other side on such an important issue.

This is the crux of my concern, you know. The Government has made a huge song and dance and has floated the premise that the Opposition does not want procurement legislation. That is the premise that connects many of the speakers on the other side. They are in receipt of specific amendments, which are very simple, except for the Member for Chaguanas East. They are complex for him. For any other Member, they are very simple. They have not responded to those amendments in any way, shape or form and yet they are holding the Opposition accountable for the final shape of the Bill.

I am trying to understand their logic. If this Bill is so important and if these amendments only help to improve and tighten the legislation, then why are they being rejected out of hand? [*Desk thumping*] And that being the case, Mr. Speaker, they cannot lay any responsibility on the PNM Opposition for the delays that we [*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I think it is a good time for us to have some tea. This sitting is now suspended until 5.00 p.m.

4.30 p.m.: *Sitting suspended.*

5.00 p.m.: *Sitting resumed.*

Dr. A. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and to those Members who have re-joined us after tea on the debate on the procurement Bill. I was really making the point, a very serious point, with respect to the Government's position on this Bill and their lack of response to the amendments that the Opposition has circulated thus far. The point needs to be made, and I really want to address some of the calls by civil society, and very right-thinking and intelligent members of civil society stating: "The debate is being dragged out too long, and why not just pass the Bill, let us not have any further delays" and so on.

But, Mr. Speaker, I must make the point that from the beginning of this issue—certainly from the time this Bill was tabled and piloted in this House by the hon. Minister—the Government has had sufficient vote to pass this legislation at any time. When I listened to the Prime Minister today, she has indicated that they will be passing this Bill with their votes today, and there is further evidence right here in this Chamber which I would not refer to, which tells us that the Government is looking to vote on it today. So, it really makes me a little bit curious, why they would want to blame the Opposition if they have had the votes all along, and we could have had this procurement Act months ago, if the Government was so minded. [*Desk thumping*]

But, I listened to the speakers that came before me, and it is almost a predictable rhythm now in the Lower House. Members of the Government would stand and would pretend that the Bill is perfect which speaks to its merits, et cetera. They would use the debate to recite a litany of issues with PNM procurement in the past and, guess what? They did exactly that, and there was a lot of desk thumping and so on. And then we would have speakers on our side who would use the opportunity to focus on corruption and allegations of

procurement irregularities in the past under the UNC, and in the present under the current Government, and that is exactly how the debate unfolded, a bit predictable.

The UNC went a little further on this occasion, because some of them appeared to indicate that the Bill is perfect, and it requires no amendment whatsoever. The hon. Minister very early on made a declaration that I interpret would suggest that he is not prepared to accept any amendments on this particular Bill, it must be passed exactly as it is. Yet they explained the long delay and the debate and the many sittings on this Bill as an attempt to achieve consensus, because they would rather have the Opposition's vote. I cannot square those two positions at all, if I am thinking with a logical brain that God has given me. The two positions cannot be juxtaposed, because if they are seeking consensus and have been extending this debate sitting after sitting to arrive at such consensus, then they cannot say that they are not willing to make any amendment—they would demonstrate no flexibility—and it must be passed as it is. So that is a fundamental contradiction in the UNC's position.

I want members of civil society, some of whom have been asking questions of the Opposition for the delay in the passage of this Bill—and the Government has been trying to blame the Opposition for such—that their position, the UNC's position, is not a tenable one if we approach this in a logical fashion.

We have suggested some amendments, very limited amendments. I have seen many more amendments on past Bills, some of which have been accepted. In my view and in the views of Members on this side initiated by the Member for Diego Martin North/East, these amendments will strengthen the Bill—and that is why I thought we were all here, but clearly only some of us are here for that purpose—which is why we tabled it and debate it otherwise the Government should just stand up—the Minister would pilot it, and then they curtail this thing and put it to a vote. We are here to debate and strengthen it. Maybe I am not around long enough to understand the UNC logic. They are saying those are delaying tactics. I do not think they are delaying tactics at all.

Mr. Speaker, in fact, right now, at 5.05 p.m., the Minister or any Member could stand—ask to interrupt me—and say: “We will accept your reasonable amendments”, and you would see magic happen in the Lower House of Parliament. You will see magic happen, but it seems they are incapable of any good magic. They are only capable of bad magic for the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago [*Desk thumping*] and I will give you some examples of UNC bad magic. It is not hard to find at all. It would be magic, very simple.

Further to that, the only other reasonable response by the Government, in my view, would be to actually consider these amendments and demonstrate to the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago how this would make the procurement process unworkable or untenable for the future of this country. Those are the only two positions that I see as logical given everything I have heard the Government say so far. I may be asking a bit too much of them here today.

So, the Minister has claimed some noble intent and talking about consensus and listening and so on, but I am saying we can get that consensus right now if they wish. But I am saying that, Mr. Speaker, but I am not fooled. We on this side are not fooled at all. And while they claim noble intent, every citizen of this country is now fully aware that this is a Government that is incapable of nobility in any of its actions. [*Desk thumping*]

If there is any question as to why the Government did not put this to a vote a long time ago, given that they boast that they have the votes and they will pass it anyway, and they are not making any changes, one does not have to look very far. You may have to look just a mile or two to the west to Invaders Bay; we might have to look just a mile or two to the east to the Curepe Interchange or the Beetham Wastewater Plant or any of the other issues [*Desk thumping*] that can more readily account for their reluctance to put this matter to a vote, given everything that I have just described.

Mr. Speaker, there is something in logic called Occam's Razor, and it was explained by Sir Isaac Newton thusly: when you have two competing theories that make exactly the same predictions, the simpler one is the better.

Mr. Speaker, I can find no more satisfactory or logical explanation for the Government's behaviour in this debate than a desire themselves to delay this legislation until they can do some more of their—what is the word?—the wrong kind of magic for themselves and not for citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Speaker, the case for effective procurement legislation has already—that case has been laid out by many speakers that came before me on both sides of the aisle, and each presented its own unique perspectives. I want to certainly say for my part, the PNM has made many mistakes in the past in this regard, there is no dispute about that but, Mr. Speaker—and the Member for Oropouche East knows this in his heart of hearts—on its worst day, the PNM in Government is far better, a thousand times better, than the UNC [*Desk thumping*] on their best day; a thousand times better.

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From my own perspective, and speaking on behalf of the very good people of Diego Martin Central, this Bill is a very important one, but it does not go far enough in my own view. Just look at the newspapers on any given day. The Minister of Health said repeatedly that he had bought—he was buying and he had bought hazmat type A suits for US \$20,000—he said that repeatedly—and then he came here and said he misspoke—another misspeaking—and it was really TT \$20,000. That is only when challenged he said that. Mr. Speaker, even if we accept that TT \$20,000, I challenge any citizen to go on any retail site on planet earth and identify a type A hazmat suit for TT \$20,000. If you find 500 such suits being sold on the retail market, 499 of them would be less than US \$2,000 and may be one or two between US \$2,000 and US \$2,200. I do not know how on earth he could arrive at \$20,000 in either US or TT currency but, again, the question arises: who is the middleman? Where is the middleman in that particular procurement? Unless, of course, Louis Vuitton is starting to make hazmat suits [Laughter] or Dolce and Gabbana.

Mr. Speaker, another example, that same Minister—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the speaking time of the hon. Member for Diego Martin Central has expired—[*Crosstalk*—your original speaking time. Would you like to have an extension?

Dr. A. Browne: Yes, thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Could you advise?

Dr. A. Browne: Yes, I would like an extension please, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the question is that the speaking time of the hon. Member for Diego Martin Central be extended by 15 minutes.

Question put and agreed to.

Dr. A. Browne: Thank you colleagues and Mr. Speaker. Another example I was giving, the Minister of Health schemes to pay private clinics and private doctors with public funds, and the pretext is to help with the timeliness of surgeries and other procedures on behalf of the citizens. When you look at some of the private clinics that are benefiting from this scheme, you really wonder who are the intended beneficiaries. I would invite attention to one particular clinic that is currently under serious investigation at this time as a possible mafia hospital right here in Trinidad and Tobago. And, again I ask the question—just in the east, just east of here—what is the connection with the Ministry of Health?

Another example would be what is happening with e Teck right now, and I serve this House notice that I will bring a matter on the adjournment on that particular matter. There is a scandal unfolding with procurement under e Teck, as we speak, and you have these agencies rushing and hustling to get their scams in, in the hope that they can proceed as they had planned previously. More about that on another occasion.

We had the example earlier on question time on that joyride to Argentina. The Minister was asked: what is the benefit for Trinidad and Tobago, and he said: “Well, we are playing in front of hundreds of millions of people around the world, and that is good for Trinidad.” Mr. Speaker, the TDC and the PS and that whole entourage, none of them took the field to play any football for Trinidad and Tobago, so they brought no value to that particular process, but it was a huge entourage that went down there. The Minister of Tourism gave those details. He admitted to \$400,000 taxpayers’ having vanished, and he gave a convoluted explanation for that.

Mr. Indarsingh: What is the convoluted explanation?

Dr. A. Browne: Well, you need to speak to your colleague Minister about that.

Mr. Speaker, another example is the ongoing “rango tango” in the Cabinet over the Curepe Interchange project worth between \$300 million to \$500 million depending on who you speak to; serious allegations about bid rigging; serious allegations about ministerial or junior ministerial interference in some of those processes; allegations of spying by a former Minister of Works and his involvement in this issue; allegations of ambitions of a junior over her senior, but I would not dwell on that much further. But the question I am asking is: who stood to gain the most from any manipulation or alleged manipulation of that process? And I could tell you, it is not the taxpayers of this country who stood to gain the most. The real question that arises is: what distinguishes that favoured contractor from those who are not favoured? And that should arise in many of the examples that we have been given. What distinguishes that favoured contractor over the others?

5.15 p.m.

I am not going to dwell on it, but the live example also is of the LifeSport Programme that we have spoken about on this side, sanctioned by the Cabinet and the Prime Minister, defended by Members of this Government time and time again, including the Member for St. Augustine and, of course, the Member for

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Oropouche East, who participated in those debates. The State was defrauded by about half a billion dollars with nothing at all to show, nothing to show whatsoever, and the question is, who benefited, Mr. Speaker?

A former Minister, for four years in this Cabinet—well, he certainly benefited. Somebody built a house in west Trinidad, he benefited. Somebody got a personal army to conduct domestic affairs and other things, that person benefited—elimination of competition. These are live issues in front of the citizens of this country. But, Mr. Speaker, it did not have to come to that because that same former Minister was exposed right here in this Parliament, as—well, I do not know if I could say “a crook”. Can I say a crook? Right here in this Parliament, Mr. Speaker.

I remember in December 2010, early, early in the issue, an issue arose of procurement under that Ministry then of Sport and Youth Affairs. I brought a matter on the adjournment right here, he stood up shouting, ran out of the Chamber using all sorts of language directed against me, and the appeal then—and I have it here on the *Hansard* record. A direct appeal I made to the Prime Minister:

Conduct an audit of what is going on in that Ministry. Conduct an audit and check on this Minister.

I called on the Prime Minister to conduct a full audit and to apologize to the children and citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

You know what the response was, Mr. Speaker? She laughed. It was a laugh. Here we are, \$500 million later, and in front of the whole country now, somebody is on the run. It did not have to come to this, and they are saying the cure for all of this, all of this corruption, is this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, even on the best day, I say, this is not the cure for the kind of mentality that the UNC has brought to governance in this country. [*Desk thumping*] It is not the cure at all but now the shoe is on the other foot. We cannot talk about improved public procurement—I know I do not have too much time—without talking about the Point Fortin Highway, which most of us want, which I certainly want and Members on this side, but at what cost? How can we justify the most expensive stretch of roadway on Planet Earth being right here in Trinidad and Tobago? How can we justify that? How can anyone justify that in this country? And then you have one gentleman who is saying, definitively, he does not necessarily need it to stop but he just wants dialogue with the Government and they are refusing so to do.

That is the part I do not understand, Mr. Speaker. I checked, you know, because I said, “Does the highway have to stop to save this man’s life?” He is just asking for dialogue, and, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell this Prime Minister, through you, you do not have to agree with what somebody has to say, you can still speak to them. I mean, I did my history, Reagan spoke to Gorbachev, Mandela met and spoke with FW de Klerk, who was his sworn mortal enemy—there was nothing wrong with that—Obama met with Chavez, Panday met with Manning [*Laughter*] on occasion. For God’s sake, I want pride to be lowered on all sides and they should meet with—[*Interruption*] Yes—with Dr. Kublalsingh. Absolutely.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Point Fortin want their highway, we would not deny it to them. The Member for Point Fortin wants the highway. I want the highway to be built, Mr. Speaker, but we do not have to bury your former colleague to achieve that. Your former comrade, we do not have to bury him to achieve that, Mr. Speaker, and the message to the Prime Minister, through you, there is a more intelligent and caring way to do this. You know the saying, Mr. Speaker, “you can have your cake and eat it too”? Well, you can have your highway and your doctor too. You can have your highway and your doctor too, Mr. Speaker. So that is a direct message to the Government.

Mr. Speaker, in the minds of many citizens there is a reason they do not even want to talk about it, you know, because there is a drumbeat that has not been addressed fully in this debate that underpins many of the decisions of state in this country. There is a drumbeat, and you know what that drumbeat is, Mr. Speaker? It is the nexus between three things: greed, power and money. Greed, power and money, Mr. Speaker, and until we deal with that, this procurement Bill is one step, there are other critical steps that have to be taken, because there is an imperative, and you see it with Point Fortin and many other projects, that this Bill is not responding to.

Procurement is supposed to be about making the best decisions with public funds, but the truth is, every single day in this country we have people of means who are looking to purchase politicians—to purchase politicians, Member for Arima. That is the literal reality. They are seeking to mind us and our families. That is the reality, and I am telling you as a Member in public life myself. They are seeking to pay our trips, take care of our children’s education, buy tickets and trophies to make them look good, pay for our campaigns, pay for contributions to

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NGOs in our name—that is what is going on out there. They are looking to put cash in people in public life’s hands, and when they tell you there are no strings attached, there are always strings attached. This thing is widespread, Mr. Speaker.

I want members of the public to take note, public officials are always complaining and grouching, “The salary is too small. The salary is too small. They are not paying us anything”, and yet when it is selection time and election time, it is crab in a barrel, everybody fighting, and people outside fighting to get in as well. Why is that? Think Occam’s razor—what is the explanation?—tip of the iceberg. There is a lot more beneath the surface than you would see above the surface.

Mr. Speaker, all of that to say that this procurement Bill is salvageable. There are very specific, and I say again, simple amendments that the Government has to take into account and, in my view, this Bill can be passed in this House today—simple amendments. But even if that is done, there is a larger task. I believe the next Government under the People’s National Movement will be efficient and capable of that task, [*Desk thumping*] and that is to remove that lack of transparency and accountability in how we deal with our politics, our politicians, and our political parties.

Mr. Speaker, I will just use one example to clarify because, in my view, our political system is addicted to secret finance at this time. If you have an addict in your own house, there are families who have dealt with addiction, you can give them how many rules you want: “Don’t open de fridge; don’t sell the cutlery; “Don’t take my cheque book, et cetera.” You can give all the rules you want but if that addiction is still there, they will find a way. And, Mr. Speaker, on this particular Bill, I am saying, there is more work to be done by public officials in this country, notwithstanding what may have been done in the past, otherwise we remain in trouble. That addiction is still there.

So, it gives me no joy to say these things. Last time I alluded to that nexus I was attacked by a Member, the Member for Caroni Central. I understand now why he took such offence to talk about financiers and so on, he was offended. Mr. Speaker, again, and we have examples right in the House, you know—anyway, let me not dwell on that aspect too much, I might run afoul of you, Mr. Speaker. How much more time do I have?

Mr. Speaker: You just have one minute.

Dr. A. Browne: Excellent! Excellent!

Mr. Speaker, I just want to be clear—and I will probably be attacked again because people like the Member for Oropouche East are offended by these things, you know. *[Interruption]*

Dr. Moonilal: I am. I am.

Dr. A. Browne: Yes, I know that. Mr. Speaker, but I just want to state, definitively, that I support effective procurement legislation, and I have listened to every speaker on this side and they support exactly that. *[Desk thumping]* But, Mr. Speaker, that is not what the Government has brought to us here. I am not going to pretend that it is not worth anything, but there are some very basic amendments that need to be made to ensure that this legislation is as effective as it could be.

A lot of work has gone into this Bill but I am convinced it will only be strengthened and improved by accepting the amendments that have been circulated.

Mr. Speaker, but my warning on behalf of my constituents is this: unless we address that addiction, we will look back and we will realize that we have been spinning top in mud in this Parliament. Mr. Speaker, that is my contribution on behalf of myself and the people who elected me. I thank you. *[Desk thumping]*

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition, Member of Parliament for Diego Martin West. *[Desk thumping]*

Dr. Keith Rowley (*Diego Martin West*): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to make a few observations on this long drawn-out process with respect to this Bill that is before the House. Mr. Speaker, I want to make it abundantly clear that none of us in Trinidad and Tobago will benefit or have our conditions improved by not having modernized procurement legislation on our books. The corollary to that statement is that if we have improved legislation on the books, it stands to benefit all of us.

We do have, Mr. Speaker, procurement legislation. If you listen to those who are promoting it at the personal level, in the hope of advancing themselves individually or as a political entity, you will get the impression that we do not have procurement legislation. Mr. Speaker, the Central Tenders Board Act is the existing procurement legislation *[Desk thumping]* in Trinidad and Tobago and we have done a number of things in this country using the Central Tenders Board Act to procure, but that Act dates back to way back when the national budget was a couple of hundred million dollars, or thereabouts, when procurement was for a bridge or a standpipe, or probably a school, and in the public service they might

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have been procuring, in a Ministry, a few hundred thousand dollars of items. The national budget is now in the order of \$60 billion, and a significant portion of that expenditure is discharged and disbursed through various procurement processes in various agencies.

What we are aiming to do now and what we have been aiming to do for many years is to upgrade the procurement legislation to make it fit for purpose. That is all it is. So when people come here, holding high office and using—[*Interruption*] I am not prepared, Mr. Speaker, to be disturbed by the Member for Lopinot/Bon Air, who has no useful purpose in life [*Laughter*] other than to warm a seat in this House, and I will not be disturbed by him. [*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Look, please. Please. [*Crosstalk*] You in your—please. Please, Member for Lopinot/Bon Air. Hon. Member of the Opposition, Member for Diego West, you cannot say the hon. Member does not have any useful purpose for himself. I do not think that is—[*Interruption*] No. No. No. I do not think, you know, in the context of how it was said—it is always context and how it could be interpreted. It could be interpreted in many ways, but I am saying that in the context in which you said it, I do not think the hon. Member appreciated it.

Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, I would like to withdraw that statement because I was trained not to argue from positions of extreme on any matter, and I think that was an extreme position. He might have one or two purposes, [*Laughter*] I suspect that. So, I think it was a bit harsh to say, no useful purpose. [*Laughter*] I am sure he is good for something. Mr. Speaker, you see what I mean.

Mr. Speaker: Please. Please. Please, Members.

5.30 p.m.

Dr. K. Rowley: So let us get that clear, especially the children, and for those who were not paying attention: we are not creating procurement legislation, we are talking about modernizing it, and that ought to be a good thing.

Secondly, I heard the Prime Minister today—I stepped out of the House to go home to deal with a personal matter to come back, and I heard the Prime Minister on the way home making a big statement in Parliament about my absence—I did not know she missed me—and that the PNM never made any effort to bring procurement legislation.

Do you know what amazes me, Mr. Speaker? This country has a very intelligent quotient, notwithstanding what others might think, and we invest a lot

of money in education. In fact I think education is still the largest item on our budget. I wonder why people who have and know better, should take the rest of us for fools.

Mr. Speaker, this country has had many Governments, the PNM is only one. In the last 25 years—the PNM has not been in office for 25 years; we have been there for 14 years. There were other people in office for 10 years. There was an NAR Government with 33 seats in this House; she was a part of it. There was a UNC Government that won two elections and had two administrations; she was a part of it. What is this story you are talking about the PNM did not do this and the PNM did not do that? You know why they are saying that? Because the only time anything useful goes on in this country is under the PNM. [*Desk thumping*]

If it was so easy and so much child's play and so obvious, it would have been done in the NAR, under the first UNC Government, under the second and, of course, she has been head of a Government for four and a half years of a five-year term. So do not waste our time and come here talking about PNM did not do and PNM did not do, that is a waste of valuable parliamentary time.

The truth is always a stranger when they speak. The PNM never brought—I seem to recall I was part of a Cabinet where this whole issue which had been going on, this thing about modernizing the legislation, had been part of the process of that administration, and it came to this House as a Green Paper. Unlike the run-off, it was out there being consulted upon by way of a Green Paper—standard practice in Westminster Parliament. You put a Green Paper out because you are dealing with policy, to establish the foundation for policy. You put the talking points out or the ideas at this stage, through a Green Paper. The PNM did that in the last administration, because the intention of the country was to modernize, because in the meantime you have the Central Tenders Board Act, and certain adjustments were made to that Act.

I can tell you, I was a member of the WASA Board for five years. I was a member of the Tenders Committee of the WASA Board. To deal with procurement, in the face of the existing procurement legislation, and in recognition of the shortcomings of the Central Tenders Board Act, where it was found to be slothful and not sufficiently responsive, and so on and so on, the Cabinet of the day—and other Cabinets allowed it to happen up to now—that WASA has a tenders committee, but as part of the procurement procedure on the WASA tenders committee, an integral part was a member of the Central Tenders Board. So a member of the CTB sat on the WASA Tenders Committee. That is how it was modified.

I was Minister for the Housing Development Corporation, the HDC has a tender procedure. It takes note of the CTB, but again it had to be governed by the context of the Central Tenders Board Act. So we got to the point of a Green Paper, against that background of all these different styles of procurement, and eventually a White Paper came forward, and the Government policy was now established—a White Paper. The next step was to legislate that.

Then there was a change of mind somewhere along the line, because there was a fundamental issue being raised in some quarters, that we had not sufficiently settled the issue of policy with respect to the new law that we were going to pass, that we were going to craft. Do you know what it was? It was whether you were going to improve the centralization of procurement, that is, upgrade the Central Tenders Board and procure from a central agency, or whether you will have devolution of authority to agencies who in their own right would procure, but procure against legislation that says how procurement should be done. So it was whether it should be centralized procurement modernization or disbursed devolution; that was the issue.

Then the Government changed, and we expected that the continuum and the requirement—as we here are still saying, there is a need to modernize. This Government made it a campaign promise to accelerate—and that is my word—they said they would do it as a matter of urgency. Nobody argued with that, because we all wanted it done. When they came to Parliament, they verily met two versions. There were two versions in the public domain of draft Bills with respect to procurement legislation.

The Government quickly came to the Parliament and constituted in the House a committee to look at procurement legislation. In putting members on that committee, I put myself on the committee, along with my colleague, the Member for Diego Martin North/East, because we thought it was an important piece of legislation requiring the most experienced people in the Parliament, and we expected it to move through very quickly. That was the expectation in 2010.

So we go to committee meetings under the chairmanship of my friend, the Member for Caroni East, expecting to work towards bringing this legislation. Not expecting to hear four years later, the Prime Minister come in here and try to make it a PNM thing, and what PNM did not do and who did not do and who did not do.

We thought by the end of 2010/2011 we would have had legislation in place, because we were here ready to work, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. So we asked

the committee: What is the Government's policy? What are we working against to go forward into making this legislation? I do not know how they conduct their business in the UNC, what I do know are the results of how they conduct their business. But I have been in a number of Cabinets, and I know that any legislation that is crafted, that crafting of the legislation is done against a policy document. That is the PNM Cabinet that I served in many times. You have a policy position and the draft legislation, when it gets to LRC, it is examined at LRC against policy documents or policy statements or policy positions. In other words, the law, as drafted, must fit what you set out to do. I do not know how they function.

When I asked in the committee: What is the Government's policy? They do not have any. I said: How are we going to proceed? Is the Government proceeding along the line of centralization or along the line of distribution and devolution of authority for procurement? We have a huge state enterprise sector; we have a public service. What is your Government's policy?

But you know, anything they have to do—hate as they hate the PNM—they cannot but talk and use the PNM. All they could tell you is about the PNM. I am saying, this is not the PNM, you are the Government. We are in this committee with you as Opposition. We are in the committee as Members of the House; we want to do the work. What is your Government's policy?

If my colleague, the Member for Caroni East, is truthful, and I know he will be truthful, on many occasions we convene to have a meeting, we get nowhere, because the Chairman is not able to tell us what the Government policy is.

Then I took the position: If you cannot tell us what the policy is, go back and ask your people, ask the Government to give you policy guidelines so the committee could go forward. When he came back, he said, "They say we do not have to have any policy, is the committee will determine the policy." [*Laughter*] I said, "What nonsense are you telling me? The committee of which I am a part cannot determine Government policy. I am not part of the Government." I need to take part in this committee, and if the Government is going to improve the law, where we already have in front of us two separate documents—in fact we had public servants on the committee, and they were aghast, because we had two documents with two diametrically opposed positions and no Government policy, and the Chairman is saying, "The Government say that the committee will determine the policy". I said, "You all could not be serious."

This went on for almost a year—a whole year. This went on for a year. So when you hear them getting up here and saying the PNM does not want

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procurement policy, I defy any one of them to get up and say what I am saying here is not true. [*Desk thumping*]

Then while this is going on, the next thing we hear, the Minister is out front waving a flag, calling all and sundry to give away land down at Invaders Bay. We of the Opposition said, “No, no, no”. You went to the electorate and you told the electorate, as a matter of urgency, that you will pass procurement legislation which will govern State assets and its purchase or its distribution, and giving away Invaders Bay lands runs counter to that spirit, and we ask you not to do that. In fact, while you are not going along with getting procurement legislation enacted, you are going to interfere with a billion-dollar distribution of land in Invaders Bay.

Out of protest to how the Minister was proceeding at Invaders Bay—by this time he was now Chairman. This Minister who is piloting this Bill is now Chairman. He replaced the Member for Caroni East, because he served one year, and we spent the whole year asking and talking about policy. He was removed, maybe because he was annoying the Cabinet about policy.

In comes the visiting Member from the other place to Chair it, and in parallel with the no policy we had the attempt to distribute the lands at Invaders Bay. The Opposition took objection; we walked out of the committee. We went public with our position to alert the population as to what is happening, not that we do not want procurement legislation. Not that we did not want to take part in the process; not that we did anything to obstruct the process. It was to awaken the population to the fact that the Minister and his friends were down in Invaders Bay hurting the public interest. That is what he was—[*Interruption*]

Dr. Moonilal: Mr. Speaker, 48(8), alluding to Minister and his friends.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Leader of the Opposition and Member for Diego Martin West, the implication is that you are imputing improper motives to Members of Parliament in the context of your contribution and they have taken objection. I would ask you not to go there and, for the record, withdraw that, please.

Dr. K. Rowley: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw it out of deference to the authority of the Chair, but what I said was that it was our opinion. I do not know that this House can deprive us of an opinion; however, I will continue on this subject because the subject is not *infra dig*.

What I am saying to you, in the context of this debate, and explaining to you why we walked out of the committee at the time, it was to highlight the fact that

something was happening at Invaders Bay that we did not agree with and to draw to the public's attention. I can tell you now that that was not the end of the story. It turned out in the end that the JCC took the Minister to court over Invaders Bay; that is a fact. But it was the PNM, the Opposition, that was first in the forefront saying all is not well with what is happening at Invaders Bay. Then the Government got into a fight with the JCC over this matter, where the Government was saying that they complied with all requirements of laws and regulations, and the JCC was saying, "No, if that is so, show us your documents".

They got into a conversation with the JCC over Invaders Bay that said they got legal advice that what they were doing was right, in the context of the Central Tenders Board Act, the Procurement Act, by which time, because we had made our point, having withdrawn, we returned to the committee.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude the Invaders Bay saga. A judge ruled—I am not imputing anything here; I am quoting a ruling of the court—a judge ruled in the matter between the JCC and the Minister on the Invaders Bay matter with respect to the Central Tenders Board, that the Minister initiated improper action that did not comply with the Central Tenders Board Act.

5.45 p.m.

Then in comes the Opposition again asking the Government, in the face of that ruling of the judge in that language of English, is the Government prepared to continue with the distribution of land at Invaders Bay? The Prime Minister says yes, because the Prime Minister and the Minister are now reinterpreting the judge's ruling telling the population that the ruling is not about whether they comply with the Central Tenders Board Act as the ruling is, but whether there is to be preservation of client/lawyer privilege.

The Government is telling the country, when the judge ruled that the Minister acted improperly when he initiated—the word is initiate—you see, it is there in the ruling, in the context of whether he complied with the Central Tenders Board Act. The ruling said, no, they did not. Up to now they would not produce the legal advice that said they did. That is part of a lawsuit that is going on all now. They are telling us that the issue that they lost in the court is one about whether clients and lawyers should have their privileges preserved. No such thing. It is a scandal of the highest order. [*Desk thumping*]

In fact, in any serious country where a Minister had a ruling like that made against him, he would have taken up his papers and walked or sent out by the Prime Minister—in any serious country. But this is not a serious country

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[*Crosstalk*] under this Government. Because where in God's name can you hear a junior Minister writing the Prime Minister telling the Prime Minister that her senior Minister is interfering with the board during an evaluation process to turn a contract from A to give it to B, and that the Prime Minister comes to the Parliament and says to the Opposition, "I have investigated the matter, and nothing is wrong". Then the junior Minister and the same Minister in the same Ministry to conduct our business. Then the Minister is telling "yuh, me and Stacy tight, man; we still good".

A Minister reports another Minister in that way and this Government would have us believe that all is well. And you know what? To add insult to the injury, "Stacy didn't know all de facts, dah is why she get on so". A Minister of Government writes and reports her boss—and did not know the information she was writing about? That somebody had to go, because somebody crazy. It is either the Minister is unfit as junior Minister for taking that very serious step without proper information or that the senior Minister is being protected by the Prime Minister when the "doo doo hit de fan". That is what is happening.

I simply want to say to this Government that the election campaign is outside. This Bill is in the House, and whether we vote for it or do not vote for it would not depend on what you say about the PNM. It will depend on the quality of the legislation, what is passed. [*Desk thumping*] We will engage you on every political point that you want to raise for the PNM because "de PNM back broad" and we are ready, willing and able. [*Desk thumping*]

But with respect to passing the legislation, our job here is to make good law and to pass good legislation, and if it is not good, you will not get our vote. [*Desk thumping*] It is as simple as that. But of course, in this case they have our votes. They have enough votes to pass it. So what is the problem? [*Crosstalk*] Look how you behave with the run-off. You changed the country's election system in the middle of the night using your powers, your numbers. What "yuh fussing" about this for? Pass it and go! What "yuh" looking at us for? "Yuh" come here every day. This is the fourth or fifth time you come. You could pass it. Pass it and go. "Yuh doh" need us.

But what we are not going to do after section 34, I made a vow to my colleagues here, after section 34, as long as we have any concerns about any legislation, we do not vote for it. Simple as that. [*Desk thumping*] If you convince the population out there, and if you could convince the victims of your irrational actions, and your corrupt practices, that the Opposition is wrong, then more power to you.

On the other hand, we have confidence that the average person in this country is sensible and decent and they know wrongdoing when they see it. [*Desk thumping*] This Minister should not be here at all bringing any Bill. He should have been out of the Cabinet when that judge ruled, and that would have set new standards for this country. But—no. You could go to court, be taken by half of the country—

The JCC is the joint consultative conscience of—all the professional bodies in the country make up the JCC. They carry you to court, and the judge rules that you initiated actions that are not in keeping with good governance in this country. And you are still in the Cabinet, and coming here. And comes in the House with bombast—“I am not accepting any amendment”. Well let me tell him something. I represent the people of Diego Martin West. I do not know who he represents. So when he walks in here, disrespectfully saying, “I am not accepting any amendments”—then vote for it. You vote for it in this House if you can, because we are not going to be so treated. [*Desk thumping*]

They will tell you, Mr. Speaker, that one of the hardest working Members in this House who takes part in researching to pass good law is my colleague from Diego Martin North/East. [*Desk thumping*]

Miss Mc Donald: That is right.

Dr. K. Rowley: We on this side in our caucus, we detail him to put in writing our concerns, and we put those concerns in writing as amendments. And our Prime Minister—and I am saying here, our Prime Minister—said to us across here when they adjourned the House, we will take the amendments into account.

Miss Mc Donald: That is right.

Dr. K. Rowley: The Bill lapsed. We go out, we come back, and the Minister is allowed to come back here with the same Bill with the same bombast—I am taking no amendment. Then you have the gall of the Member for Chaguanas East—wherever he comes from—to come and say, the PNM this and the PNM that and the “balisier brigade”. We are proud to be the “balisier brigade”. It is the only brigade in this country. [*Desk thumping*] What he thinks when he says “balisier brigade”?—“we going to feel ah how”? When he says “balisier brigade, is now we feeling good.” This is 59 years, January it would be 60 years the PNM has been a party in this country. [*Desk thumping*] We have demolished, must be 300 political parties. And somehow by saying the “balisier brigade” will make—No. [*Crosstalk*] No. No. No. We represent the public interest in this country; so do they. But when something is wrong, it is wrong.

Imagine my colleague from Pointe-a-Pierre, he gets up to speak. During his murmurs, hear what he is going to say, and I made a note of it, Mr. Speaker. After he made a point of talking about the PNM Prime Minister allowing the Prime Minister's residence to be built, he gives a long treatise on how the current Prime Minister's residence was built by government to government arrangement. He ended by saying, that is PNM procurement for you, as though well, that is something to damage and destroy your image and your reputation. [*Crosstalk*]

This man, apparently, who acts as Prime Minister of this country, who comes in here and makes a case against government to government procurement in the context of the Prime Minister's residence under Patrick Manning's administration, he is acting Prime Minister in a Cabinet that has billions of dollars of government to government arrangement contracts currently going on. So you ask yourself, is he that thick that he does not understand that if you make an issue of the wrong approach for government to government—how do you explain Couva Children's Hospital? Who is doing that? Who is building the Point Fortin hospital?

Mr. Imbert: Oncology centre.

Dr. K. Rowley: All of these major billion-dollar contracts being done by government to government arrangements, a policy which they wanted no part of when they were in Opposition. At least you may want to understand that because they were in Opposition. But he is in Government now, criticizing the government to government construction in St. Ann's for a house, while he and his Cabinet are having billion-dollar construction taking place through the same government to government approach.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to be uncharitable to him and to his Government, but this has to be a kind of madness or a level of stupidity which defies logic—defies logic. Then of course—[*Interruption*]

Dr. Gopeesingh: 48(4), abusive language. [*Crosstalk*]

Dr. K. Rowley: I want to be guided, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Yeah. I do not think he was saying that the Minister is stupid in that sense, you know. So, I do not think it is—continue, please.

Dr. K. Rowley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And while I am on the contribution of the Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, he made a categorical statement in this House and, Mr. Speaker, I guess you were distracted at the time because I know whatever is said about you, that you do not tolerate this. On the *Hansard*, that Member for Pointe-a-Pierre, well my colleague from Pointe-a-Pierre, said that I as Minister of Housing gave contracts to the wife of the chairman of the PNM.

Mr. Speaker, I know that you would never allow that to go unchallenged if you were not distracted. I want to make it abundantly clear that I had absolutely nothing to do with any award of any contract in the Ministry of Housing and more so at the HDC. If they, under their tenure, have a role for Ministers in awarding contracts, under the PNM when I was a Minister in Housing, I played no role in the award of contracts. And I want my colleague from Pointe-a-Pierre to understand that, and to put it in their pipe and smoke it because I have never gotten involved—the first time I saw anything about any contract involving any company with the wife of the chairman of the PNM is when I was in the Opposition and I read it as one of their “mark that dey bus”; you understand?

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the speaking time of the hon. Leader of the Opposition and Member for Diego Martin West has expired. Would you want to extend?

Dr. K. Rowley: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the question is that the speaking time of the Member for Diego Martin West and Leader of the Opposition be extended by 15 minutes.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: You may continue, hon. Member. [*Desk thumping*]

Dr. K. Rowley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to mention, Mr. Speaker, the context of what he also said. They are praising themselves about something called the FairShare Programme. All governments come up with programmes and they “dress them” up and so on. But the FairShare Programme follows on or is a modification of a PNM policy which again was not under the table, it was on the table. [*Desk thumping*] It was a policy advocated by the Prime Minister of the day: government policy in Trinidad and Tobago that all government contracting, that the managers of those programmes—10 per cent of government contracts be earmarked for small contractors. You call it FairShare, we say what it is; 10 per cent of government contracts.

In the Ministry of Housing we did that—small contractors were given five houses to build, two, seven, and some of them grew, some of them died. But the whole idea, there was a policy that you give the small man an opening, an opportunity. We trained and guided and some of them were successful. So, the FairShare Programme is really nothing new to be beating your chest over. It is a modification of an existing policy within government procurement.

I simply want to say again, Mr. Speaker, I go back to policy. When the Government was digging its heels in that the Government did not have to give us

policy, and we in the committee had to come up with policy, and therefore there was no need for policy, and time passing all the time. In the meantime, they are awarding contracts left, right and centre, millions and billions. Some who were bankrupt became billionaires. Some who were small turned gargantuan. Some who were sardine turned whale. That is what was going on. And in the meantime the committee was there.

They then brought down the Jamaican regulator to speak to our committee. Notice I said our committee because I was back with the committee after the little protest we had by coming off the committee. At the meeting where the Jamaican regulator spoke, he was astounded to find that we were not having any policy guidelines. He made the statement, and if there are minutes of that meeting in the Parliament, you will see that he said, what? No, no, no. You have to have a policy. There has to be a policy against which you would be doing this. That is when the Government relented, you know, and changed its position, and started now to work against some kind of policy guideline, and then the committee progressed. [*Crosstalk*]

It took a Jamaican to come here to tell us that. Not the Opposition, you know. We were talking and asking them, where is your policy? I told them about their behaviour. When the Jamaican regulator said, you do not know, you have to be here. I assumed that you had a policy against which you were working. And we said, no sir. We were asking for it. We are not getting it. Right? That is how it went.

Then, Mr. Speaker, you know, the Prime Minister comes here today and this Prime Minister never fails to disappoint. It sounds so cheap when she comes here and talks about, for the umpteenth time, “ah doh” know when they will give it up. But let me again assist the Prime Minister because she is a senior counsel; SC for her means senior counsel. In other quarters, it means something else—which is unparliamentary.

But I am saying, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the Prime Minister, when she points fingers at me talking about what happened with the Scarborough Hospital, and enquiry, and who get away with technicality, the matter I took to the court, Mr. Speaker, judicial review resulted in the court placing an order on the Integrity Commission by court order to proceed to conduct their enquiry. The Integrity Commission under the court order proceeded to conduct the enquiry of allegations made by them. Do not forget the allegations were made by the UNC in this Parliament, you know. Under a court order, the Integrity Commission ordered—the court ordered the Integrity Commission to proceed under the Integrity in

Public Life Act to conduct their enquiry, and the commission, under a court order, did that.

6.00 p.m.

At the end of, I think it was almost a year, the commission was able to report that we have conducted our enquiry, we have concluded our enquiry and we have come to the conclusion that we have no basis to suspect that you have breached the Act. Yet the Prime Minister of our country will come here today for the umpteenth time talking about who get away on a technicality, and has the Attorney General wasting millions of dollars paying lawyers to pursue a matter where the Integrity Commission under a court order conduct the enquiry and conclude that they have no basis to suspect that I did anything wrong in Tobago.

When will they stop this foolishness? When? Because this Prime Minister is demonstrating—and you know, she made a very interesting statement here today and I wrote it down, and she said, “the best assessment of human behaviour is to look at their past behaviour.” Prime Minister, I agree. [*Laughter*] I agree, because when I ask myself, when I look at her past behaviour in the appointment of Resmi Ramnarine as the head of the security services, what does the future hold for Trinidad and Tobago? [*Desk thumping*]

When a Prime Minister comes into office and appoints the telephone operator as the head of the national security system—past behaviour, and now we are hearing in this law that there will be a regulator and the Minister will set the regulator’s emoluments—you ask yourself, suppose the Prime Minister has a hand in that and she appoints another Resmi Ramnarine with the powers of this regulator, with a seven-year contract, reporting to no one with no tribunal to review their actions, what does that mean for Trinidad and Tobago?

Look at the behaviour of this Prime Minister with respect to the Minister of Sport. I came to this House with a Motion, with documentation that could not be challenged, showing that this Prime Minister was sitting over a Government where \$400 million more was being paid for a contract which involved the Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs, through the NGC, and the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, through the water resources Ministry—and guess what the Prime Minister did? The Prime Minister authorized the Minister of Sport to respond, not the Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs, not the Minister of the Environment and Water Resources. The Prime Minister was there egging on the Minister of Sport to respond to a matter where the NGC is coming out of its—the NGC for the first time is leaving its core business to go and invest \$1 billion and more dollars in water, and the person in the Parliament who is

responding to a challenge from the Opposition is the Minister of Sport with the Prime Minister egging that on. Today, half of the police service is looking for the Minister, and she has the gall to come here and talk about who did what in PNM in 1999. I want to remind her, in 1999 the Government of the day was a UNC Government, and if anything went wrong in 1999 that is where you started and carrying on to this day. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker, she comes here and talks about the Uff Enquiry, giving the impression that her Government was guided by the recommendations of the Uff Enquiry. There were two major findings in that enquiry and recommendations: one is that with respect to the Valsayn housing—go to Valsayn now, the Prime Minister has just authorized a major enquiry into Las Alturas to come and say things on an election campaign, but we have time for that later on. But, the Uff Enquiry which came out just before she came into office said that with respect to the Valsayn housing where there are unutilized buildings now and an incomplete contract involving UDeCoTT and others, that it be examined to see whether in fact there was criminal conduct there.

It is now four and a half years, the only thing the Prime Minister has done on that is that she has appointed the head of the NUGFW as a Government Senator, who sits in that Chair ever so often as Acting President of the Senate, while the Uff Enquiry says that the role of the union that he heads and others at Valsayn require criminal investigation. Because, you know, I do not have time to go into the details, because I was a witness in the enquiry outlining the details of that project, where what UDeCoTT did, and the money was borrowed by the contractor, and so on, and the project is still there half finished.

Nothing as per the expectation of the Uff Enquiry has gone on there. And the same thing with the same Torouba that they are talking about every day, specific recommendations were there about investigating and holding certain persons accountable for what went on there. Nothing has gone on there. The only thing we know gone on there is that they tried to give away Torouba stadium to one of their friends, and the Minister of Finance and the Economy came out publicly and said, I am only going to do that if you give me in writing from a professional that it cannot be used for cricket. They discovered a piece of land in this country which is bad for cricket. This Government, they were about to decertify the Brian Lara Stadium, saying it was not good for cricket, so they could give it away like they gave away half of the Treasury already.

Dr. Moonilal: Mr. Speaker, Standing Order 48(6).

Mr. Speaker: Yes, you cannot say the Government gave away half of the Treasury.

Dr. K. Rowley: Well, two-thirds.

Mr. Speaker: No, no, no. When I say so, you are imputing improper motives to Members of Parliament, you cannot do that. You have to withdraw. [Interruption]

Dr. K. Rowley: You are right, it is. Mr. Speaker, I noticed I was not challenged on the subject, that the only thing they did had to do with trying to decertify the stadium as not being good for cricket. I take careful note that they have not challenged that. You know why? That is a fact. That cannot be challenged. They are arguing about me saying they gave away half the Treasury, I do not know how much they gave away, but I know some giving away took place

So, Mr. Speaker, the impression is being given that this legislation, if passed, and I expect to hear that as we go into the election campaign, will put an end to corrupt practice, nothing is further from the truth. As I speak to you now, even as they are pushing this through the Parliament, shutting out our amendments and preparing for the election campaign, this Prime Minister is insisting that the Invaders Bay project, which attracted court attention, where the Government was embarrassed, and the Minister was humiliated, that it will continue as business as usual, and if there is any law being passed in this country which allows that to happen, then the impotence of that law is demonstrated immediately.

As I speak to you now, in Petrotrin, the system of trying to favour contractors continues. They go out for contracts to rent cars and they have their favoured people who they want to rent the cars to. Once the tender comes in and the favoured person does not appear to have won the tender, you know what they do? They cancel the process. Is there anything in this law to prevent that? And not just Petrotrin and renting cars, you know, it is happening throughout the Government system. In fact, in one case in Petrotrin the favoured contractor did not have the necessary requirement with respect to the tender requirements, that requirement came after the tendering; that did not bother them. It did not bother them. You see, because corruption comes in a variety of ways where contracting is concerned.

There was a document prepared by the World Bank on this whole question of corruption in Government procurement, it starts with conceiving a project to be able to award a contract, then you could have corrupt practice at the stage of inviting tender. You could have inside information being shared, you could have even an RFP. The way you write the RFP, it can be written in such a way to ensure

that only a particular contractor fits that bill. Then, at the evaluation stage you could have interference in the evaluation where you are more favourably disposed to one contractor than the other.

The classic case you have here is the recent one where allegations are being made against a Minister meeting with a board to interfere or to influence an evaluation process and, of course, they will have us believe that the only time the Minister ever met with the board just happens to be the week when an evaluation is being done for a particular tender. I mean, we are not stupid. What we want is law that would bring about accountability where persons know that if they breach these conditions that you can be held accountable in law, and this Government wanted to make sure that that is not the case, so this legislation was never brought during their four and a half years of splurging of contracts, because they do not want to be held accountable in law. And even now as they pass it, as they will, ask them when they intend to proclaim it, and if they can tell us that now, I will be educated.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of Planning and Sustainable Development (Sen. The Hon. Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to start by addressing the issues of the two amendments suggested by the Opposition, because they seem to be carrying the argument that somehow we do not wish to build a consensus with them, and that we do not wish to accommodate something that will add value to the legislation. And therefore, the first amendment has to do with the contractor, the Procurement Regulator, and what the amendment seeks to do, is to weaken the Procurement Regulator.

Mr. Imbert: [*Steups*] Nonsense!

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: Mr. Speaker, I would like to have your protection?

Mr. Speaker: Members, when the Leader of the Opposition was on his legs there was almost total silence in this Chamber, now that the hon. Minister is making his contribution—and I want to say, in a democracy all of us know it is sharp exchanges, and that is the price we pay in a democracy to maintain it and sustain it. So, just as how the Opposition Leader got his right, the hon. Member must have his right, and I would not want Members to be interrupting him and using language that is disrespectful, offensive and insulting, especially the Member for Diego Martin North/East. So, please, please, do not throw words that are insulting to the hon. Minister. Please! Continue, hon. Minister.

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, I know that because of the new rules of the House there are only 30 minutes to respond, and as a result I want to optimize the time.

So, the suggestion is that the amendment is really meant to weaken the Procurement Regulator, and you would remember that the whole argument, the debate, whether in the Joint Select Committee or outside in the public domain, the entire argument was about the independence of the Procurement Regulator, the strength of the Procurement Regulator and the extent to which the Procurement Regulator would be given that independence and autonomy by appointment process and by the manner in which the legislation was organized, but I want to say that—

Mr. Imbert: Would the Minister give way? Would you give way?

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: No. [*Interruption*]

Mr. Speaker: Please! Please!

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue with my contribution until the end, without interruption.

Mr. Imbert: I am asking for you to give way.

Mr. Speaker: Please! Please!

Mr. Imbert: What kind of behaviour is that? I am asking you to give way and that is how you are getting on. This is disgraceful. No manners.

Hon. Member: Go ahead, boy. Go ahead.

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: The Bill speaks to removal of a member who has neglected his duties, who has engaged in conduct that would bring his office into disrepute, and this is broad enough to cover the suggested amendments proposed as 13(b) and 13(c) as circulated by the Opposition.

The other issue is the removal of the regulator. Again, they wish to create a situation in which, basically, the removal of the regulator is made easier, but section 80(1) of the Constitution provides that:

“In the exercise of his functions under this Constitution or any other law, the President shall act in accordance with the advice of Cabinet...”

6.15 p.m.

Remember, one of the issues was that the Procurement Regulator should be appointed by the President in his own discretion, and the committee was wise

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enough after consultation, both in and out, to determine that it must involve consultation with the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition.

So Cabinet has a role in this process under the Constitution. So that the President shall act in accordance with the advice of Cabinet or a Minister acting under the general authority of the Cabinet, except in cases where other provision is made by the Constitution or such other law. But in this Bill, this issue, this constitutional provision does apply.

So in this law, in this procurement law, the President is not acting on his own discretion but rather he is the President acting on the advice of Cabinet. By way of elaboration, clause 13(2)(b) of the Bill provides that the office shall, quote:

“not be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority...”

But it goes on to say:

“...but shall be accountable to the Parliament.”

So that there is no political interference, but there is certainly accountability to the political system through the parliamentary system. So you have a Cabinet voice in this process, and you have a parliamentary capacity to intervene in this process. And therefore, the entire presentation of the amendment and the arguments with it are completely and totally flawed. [*Desk thumping*]

The second issue that they raised is, the review board and the tribunal, and they got it from the Kenyan legislation, where it is imposed as a review process and a review process. And we looked at that provision in some detail. I remember spending an extraordinarily long time with the CPC and the lawyers, going through that particular provision, because we considered it seriously as something that we might include in the Bill. And in the first version of the Bill it was there. But when we started to work out the mechanics of the operations of the Bill, we realized that it would be extremely cumbersome and it would cause a big problem, because we were adding a non-necessary, an additional layer to the resolution process as there is nothing preventing a decision of the proposed review board from being taken for review to the High Court.

And secondly, it is yet another layer of bureaucracy, a tribunal, a review entity, would have been created by the State, especially in the context of some of these entities. I said that at the beginning when I introduced the legislation during this occasion, that basically some of these institutions had not worked.

In the amendment, the rationale for the amendment also ignores the fact that the Bill is intended to be expeditious as a decision of the office is to be given

within 20 working days after receipt of an application. And the process of review by the office in the Bill also contemplates amicable resolution of disputes. One of the functions of the office is, and I quote from the Bill, to:

“13 (1)(r) prepare and maintain a list of pre-qualified mediators”—and contractors—“and experts for the purpose of alternative dispute resolution...”

So there is a certain architecture in the Bill, which is that, first of all, any challenge proceedings that are brought under this Bill are in the public domain. So it means that the process of arbitrating, the challenge of coming out with the resolution is in the public domain. It is not a secret process. And it would be ludicrous to expect that in such an open, democratic and free situation, that the making of a judgment would be so skewed that it would be prejudicial to what is just and right in the system. And therefore the whole assumption behind this review provision is wrong.

The hon. Member for Diego Martin West, in making his contribution, made a big hullabaloo about Invaders Bay, and I will deal with it a little bit, but today is not for Invaders Bay. But, I want to ask the question, you talk about the Central Tenders Board and how we bypass the Central Tenders Board and so on. This Bill is based on UNCITRAL Model Law, which is the United Nations. And in the UNCITRAL Model Law, does procurement or public procurement deal with land? The answer is absolutely no. The public procurement as defined in the UNCITRAL law deals with the acquisition of goods, construction or services by a procuring entity. And the definitions of goods, construction or services make no reference whatsoever and does not include the issue of land.

The other question I want to ask, you know, when they spoke during the course of their contribution they mentioned various countries: Jamaica, Guyana, Belize, Nigeria, et cetera. Does the Jamaican law on procurement have anything to do with land? The answer is no. Does Guyana? No. Does Belize? No. Does Nigeria? No. Does Kenya, the one, the Member for Diego Martin North/East referred to quite a bit in trying to confuse the population? No. The answer is no.

I want to say something about the Central Tenders Board Act, because you see the matter has come up about a newspaper in this country, published an advice by an attorney in the Attorney General's office, and wrote about it as if it basically condemned the Minister and the Ministry for doing something wrong. It then went on to show the contradiction between the advice of the senior attorney,

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senior counsel and the attorney in the Attorney General's office. But there was a reason why these two things emerged in the first place. And I want to tell you why the court case is about privilege between client and attorney.

It is, in fact, because that entire advice, both advice, have been published in the public domain, in the newspaper, first of all, and secondly, we have good reason to believe that they were always in the possession of those bringing it before the courts. And therefore the whole court case, the perspective of those who brought the case was in fact, not to get any information at all which they already had. And I want to show you by Cabinet decision what the Central Tenders Board Act is about.

I have a Minute here, 1412 of June 12, 1997, and this makes a decision about a vacant Government quarters, okay, with regard to the Central Tenders Board. It says:

“Cabinet, in respect of its decision recorded in Minute No. 289 of February”—so and so—“relating to the sale of vacant Government...and those subject to unauthorized tendencies (with certain...) agreed that pursuant to section 4(2) of the Central Tenders Board Ordinance, 1961, the Attorney General cause to be prepared the necessary Order to empower the Central Tenders Board to dispose of real property owned by the Government in such manner as the Government may consider appropriate and desirable.”

So the Government will tell the Central Tenders Board what it wishes the Central Tenders Board to dispose of and that derived out of this, which is Cabinet Note 140, June 5, 1997:

“Cabinet by Minute...”—so and so—“agreed inter-alia that:

with the exception of the properties listed at (a) above, all vacant Government quarters including those that are vandalized as well as those subject to unauthorized tenancies be sold on the open market.

the Central Tenders Board dispose of the properties on behalf of the Government...”

But then the Treasury Solicitor who was asked for advice indicated the following:

“...the current provisions of the Central Tenders Board Ordinance do not permit the Central Tenders Board to dispose of land. However, pursuant to section 4(2) an appropriate Order may be made to so empower the Board, after which the Board may dispose of the properties...”

And remember the properties here are not land. They are Government quarters, okay. And then on the basis of that:

“In light of the advice of the Treasury Solicitor and pursuant to section 4(2) of the Central Tenders Board Ordinance the Minister of Finance recommends and Cabinet is asked to agree that the Attorney General cause to be prepared the necessary Order to empower the Central Tenders Board to dispose of the real property owned by the Government...”—et cetera.

And that is why when the younger attorney made the assessment which was nebulous we asked for advice through the Attorney General’s office from senior counsel. Because the Acting Permanent Secretary at the time indicated that there were reasons to feel that advice did not take everything into account, and on that basis we got it. So that when the Central Tenders Board was amended:

“The functions and duties of the Central Tenders Board are hereby extended to include the authority to act for, in the name and on behalf of the Government to dispose of real property owned by the Government in such manner as the Government may consider appropriate and desirable.”

And what does it say in this Bill, the exact same thing from the Central Tenders Board:

“13 (1)(o)...in the name and on behalf of the State to dispose of real property owned by the Government in such a manner as the Government may consider appropriate and desirable;”

So, that there is really no difference at all in the jurisdiction over property between what the Central Tenders Board Act has and it does not deal with land that is definitive. Secondly, what is in this legislation, therefore, given that it does not exist in UNCITRAL, given that it does not exist in the Jamaican legislation, Guyanese, Kenyan, Nigerian legislation, we chose on the basis of the advice not to include it in this particular legislation.

So what is clear, is that, remember there is a Commissioner for State Lands, and the CTB Act as I said, cannot be interpreted to cover land, and the real property referred to in the legislation more in the lines of perhaps physical structures owned by the Government but not land, and as I indicated, the reference here is to the same things, the very exact same wording of the Central Tenders Board Act.

But you know, I need to say some things because of the statement of the hon. Leader of the Opposition. I want to say to him, first of all, that these amendments

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were duly considered by the caucus of our parliamentarians and there was argument, because when the Member for Diego Martin North/East spoke in the way that he did, raising the issues that he raised, it caused some consternation, and people wanted to be sure of what was happening and whether what he was saying is true.

6.30 p.m.

There was general discussion about it, and we had a full discussion about it, as any democratic government or any democratic party would. [*Desk thumping*]

Hon. Member: That is true.

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: And we are here, not taking the amendments. The hon. Prime Minister gave you the assurance that they would be considered and they were considered. The hon. Leader of the House gave you the assurance that they would be considered, they were considered, but that does not mean we have to take everything that you say.

The second thing I want to tell the Leader of the Opposition, that government to government, which you are complaining so much about as a source of corruption—[*Interruption*]

Dr. Rowley: Me complaining?

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:—is covered in this legislation, and this was heavily opposed by the Member for Diego Martin North/East.

Hon. Member: Ah yeah, true, true.

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: And I want to tell you, hon. Leader of the Opposition, that the entire story that you told here was twisted and far away from the truth, and that the reason the Opposition returned to the JSC is because of public pressure, first of all, and because we [*Desk thumping*] came to Parliament in order to prepare the ground to change the structure of the quorum of the JSC because in the democratic spirit of the hon. Prime Minister and her instructions, all our JSCs started off as having at least one Member of the Opposition in the quorum and one Independent Member as part of the quorum, when the Standing Orders themselves had said that a JSC is simply Members of the two Houses. And when we came here to change that, and to give notice that we were going to change that, that is when you bent.

Hon. Member: “Dah is de truth.”

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: Do not tell me about Invaders Bay! It has nothing to do with Invaders Bay!

Dr. Rowley: “Yuh go lash me.” [*Laughter and crosstalk*]

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: I want to say something about the hon. Member for Diego Martin North/East—

Hon. Members: Ohhh!

Hon. Member: “Wha yuh could say again?” Make it short. Make it short.

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie:—and I hope that he will be honest enough to acknowledge that what I am saying is true.

Mr. Peters: “Not he.”

Mr. Imbert: Insulting! [*Laughter*]

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: We sat in a committee together on the Insurance Bill. It was chaired by the hon. Minister of Finance and the Economy, and the Bill was about to be debated in the Senate. We still had some weeks. The debate had not started yet, and I went, out of courtesy and consideration to the hon. Member for Diego Martin North/East, and I asked him if he had any suggestion for amendments to the Bill that was in the Senate, and he told me the one thing that bothered him was government-to-government arrangements. So I said, “Well, tell me what you think”. I gave him my card that morning. He said he would send me an email. He said he had to travel, but in a week when he comes back he would—he never sent me anything, and the next time he sent an email to me was when the news broke that the private sector civil society group had agreed with the Government that we would include government-to-government arrangements in the Bill. Then he called me immediately to tell me not to do that. [*Laughter*] He sent me an email immediately to tell me not to do that, and he never raised any other issue.

The whole Senate debate—two days of committee, no issue, no advice, nothing. Then he comes here to bring these amendments. But if it is one thing I understand is that the hon. Member for Diego Martin North/East is not stupid. He is a very smart fella. “He too smart for his own good.” [*Laughter*]

The other thing I understand—

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the speaking time of the hon. Minister has expired. Would you like an extension?

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: Yes, I would.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the question is that the speaking time of the hon. Minister be extended by 15 minutes.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: You may continue, hon. Minister.

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am very grateful to hon. Members as well.

So all this time there was no consultation, so when he brought the amendments—the other thing I understand well is PNM strategy. I understand it very well, and this was really a red herring to achieve basically the destruction of the Bill. First of all, they tried to create confusion inside our Government itself. The second thing is that they tried, when they could not do that, to create confusion among the contracting community. There was direct appeal to the contractors in the media to create confusion by manipulating the information in such a way that it seemed that there was something terribly wrong about the Bill, and that it will cause all kinds of havoc; the usual alarmist approach of the Opposition.

But their minimum position was that if they got us to accept the amendments here, then we would have to go into the Senate. I tell you, election would come and go, we would have no procurement Bill. So, basically, that was the plan. And when you ask yourself the question, why would they do that? It is because they feel that in this rounds they might have a chance of being able to operate at governmental level. But I tell you that will never happen [*Desk thumping*] because the Leader of the Opposition is talking about the people, but if it is one person in this country who believes in the people, is me.

I believe in their wisdom, I believe in their capacity for discernment, and I am telling you that this country has watched this Government, this country has watched this Prime Minister, this country has watched us stumble sometimes, this country has watched us make mistakes sometimes, but this country is clearly on the path where they understand that whatever the things that have attended the governance process, there is one thing that is loud and clear: we are committed to Trinidad and Tobago, we are committed to the people. We have delivered more than any other government and we are committed to good governance in Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*]

So I have faith, hon. Speaker, in the discerning capacity of the people of Trinidad and Tobago, and that discerning capacity will come to bear on the body politic of this country, and when they understand what has happened in this

procurement, and when we begin to explain to the country the importance of this procurement Bill to them—because at the end of the day whose money does Government spend? It is taxpayers' money. To whom is the cost of wastage the most? It is the taxpayers of this country. Who does corruption hurt the most? It is the taxpayers of this country, the ordinary citizen. Therefore, the country will understand. They will see how we have persisted with this, how we have gone with this.

I do not want to deal with the issues of policy and all of that. I could go back to the documents, either under the chairmanship of the Member for Caroni East or under my own chairmanship. All the documents are there. They are public documents, and we can tell what is truth and what is fiction, and we can see how truth can be used to create and construct a fictional story.

When the Member for Diego Martin North/East started in his contribution, he talked about *Alice in Wonderland* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, and basically—[*Mr. Imbert leaves his chair*] It is too much for you. [*Laughter and crosstalk*] Thank you, hon. Speaker.

But, basically, we are at the point now where we are about to put this legislation to a vote and I could not close my presentation today without thanking hon. Members on this side. Not only have they had—what can I say—a rollercoaster ride with this piece of legislation because of the various stages and how long it has taken, but they have really shown tremendous fortitude, and many of my colleagues got up here and said very kind things about me and I want to be gracious and thank them for it and acknowledge their contribution. [*Desk thumping*]

I want to thank the hon. Prime Minister for her leadership. [*Desk thumping*] Every time we talk about achievements, the Opposition gets vex. Every time we talk about things we are doing, the Opposition gets vex, and every time we talk positively about our Leader, they go crazy. [*Laughter and desk thumping*] But we have a leader and she sets the tone, the ethos, of how we proceed with this business. She has been persistent—hon. Leader of Government, that is to say, Prime Minister. She has been persistent and consistent in her pursuit of this and the private sector civil society organization never, never, lost faith in her. [*Desk thumping*] This is a very important thing.

Every time they felt that something would go wrong with it outside of our own jurisdiction, the private sector civil society group looked to her to meet her commitment and to honour her word. [*Interruption*] No, the Prime Minister is our leader. We are proud of our leader. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Peters: We can distinguish a good Prime Minister.

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: We know you have three and many more aspiring to the cause, but we have one, and we are committed to that one.

Miss Cox: That is not a requirement.

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: “I doh have to say nutten.” You know that. “Nobody cyar make me say nutten. I doh have tuh say anything.” I say this because it is important to say it today.

Hon. Member: Truth.

Sen. The Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie: But as we close, I want to thank the hon. Prime Minister for her leadership and her persistence in this and for getting us to this point, and also for speaking on the Bill here today. I want to thank all hon. Members for their contribution so far in making this a major success for the People’s Partnership Government of Trinidad and Tobago. [*Desk thumping*]

Thank you very much. I beg to move.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole House.

House in committee.

6.45 p.m.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, the amendments involve the insertion of new clauses and amendments to existing clauses as renumbered. How are we going to treat with these amendments?

Mr. Chairman: We will deal with the existing first and then the new.

Mr. Imbert: I know, but some of the amendments deal with amendments to existing clauses as renumbered. So are you saying we will deal with everything in this list at the end? [*Crosstalk*] I am not asking you. [*Crosstalk*] Yes, you are and please do not. [*Crosstalk*] And you hush, too.

Mr. Chairman: All right. So what we will do is deal with existing clause 24 and existing clause 50 when they arise first, and then we will address the new clauses. That is how we would proceed as we go along.

Mr. Imbert: So after 24, we will then deal with 25 as renumbered and all that sort of thing?

Mr. Chairman: Yes.

Mr. Imbert: Okay, right.

Mr. Chairman: Remember clause 24 is—

Mr. Imbert: Well, 24 becomes 25 as renumbered.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, exactly.

Mr. Imbert: Yes. And we deal with new 13 at the end? Right and so on. Okay.

Mr. Chairman: We have 70 clauses in the Bill, as you are aware, two Schedules and a Preamble. We can proceed with these clauses in parts. Part I, we know has eight clauses and with your approval, we will deal with those eight clauses, then we go to Part II and then Part III, and wherever we have to stop to deal with amendments, we will stop. So rather than take these clauses one at a time, I am suggesting that we do them in parts. Is that agreeable?

Hon. Members: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Okay.

Clauses 1 to 8 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clauses 9 to 23.

Question proposed: That clauses 9 to 23 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. Jeffrey: Mr. Chairman, I have problems with clause 10:

“...no less than eight and no more than eleven members...”

I have a problem with how you arrive—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Chairman: No, I do not know if you are aware—well, you ought to be—we would like to have those amendments in writing—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Jeffrey: Okay, okay.

Mr. Chairman:—so that all Members would be aware of those amendments, and that is why we have those amendments that are before us have been circulated to all Members. So we are not taking amendments as we move, you know.

Question put and agreed to.

Clauses 9 to 23 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 24.

Question proposed: That clause 24 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. Imbert: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, as circulated, there is an amendment that in sub-clause (4) of the renumbered 24 that you add the words:

“and the report shall be referred forthwith to the Public Accounts Committee”

The reason for this is if you look at 24(1), it simply says:

“The Regulator shall submit his reports...to the Speaker...the President of the Senate and the Minister.”

It does not say what is to be done with the reports after that, and that is why I have suggested this because this is consistent with the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee which were laid in the Parliament by the Minister where it was stated that these reports would go to the Public Accounts Committee. The legislation is silent on what will happen to the reports when they are laid.

Mr. Chairman: Any further—?

Mr. Imbert: That is it, I have explained it.

Question put.: That clause 24 be amended as circulated.

Mr. Chairman: I am not hearing you all.

Mr. Imbert: “Alyuh want de report just float around?”

Mr. Chairman: I think the noes—

Hon. Member: It sounded like the ayes.

Mr. Chairman: It is sounding like the noes to me—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Imbert: “So the report will just float around? Just float around?”

Mr. Chairman: Do you want me to put the question again?

Dr. Rowley: No, it is okay.

Mr. Imbert: It is all right, it is all right. If that is how they want to behave, no problem.

Mr. Chairman: All right. I think the noes have it.

Question, on amendment, put and negatived.

Question put and agreed to.

Clauses 24 to 49 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 50.

Question proposed: That clause 50 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. Imbert: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I have proposed an amendment to tidy up this clause because in the existing clause, there is no time limit on the suspension of procurement proceedings and this is simply to make it definite that once a decision is made, the suspension will be lifted. It is circulated.

Question, on amendment, put and negatived.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 50 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clauses 51 to 70 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

7.00 p.m.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, when would the new clause come in, now? Okay.

Mr. Chairman: Now.

New clause 13.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, I propose a new clause 13 which reads as follows:

A. Insert a new clause 13:

13. (1) In addition to the provisions of section 12, the Regulator may be removed from office for –

- (a) inability to discharge the functions of his office; or
- (b) trading with the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago without the prior approval, by resolution, of each House of Parliament.

(2) For the purposes of this section the Regulator trades with the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago if, while holding office, he becomes party to, or is a partner in a firm or a director or manager of a company which to his knowledge becomes a party to any contract with the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for or on behalf of the public service.

- (3) If each House of Parliament by resolution decides that the question of removing the Regulator from office ought to be investigated then -
 - (a) the President shall appoint a tribunal, which shall consist of a chairman and not less than two other members from among persons who hold or have held the office of a Judge of a court having unlimited jurisdiction in civil and criminal matters or a court having jurisdiction in appeals from any such court; and
 - (b) that tribunal shall enquire into the matter and report on the facts thereof to the President and recommend to the President whether the Regulator ought to be removed from office for inability to discharge the functions of his office as aforesaid or for misbehaviour or for trading as aforesaid.
- (4) If the question of the removal from office of the Regulator has been referred to a tribunal appointed under subsection (3) and the tribunal has recommended to the President that the Regulator ought to be removed from office, the President shall remove the Regulator from office.
- (5) The Commissions of Enquiry Act shall apply *mutatis mutandis* in like manner in relation to tribunals appointed under subsection (3) or, as the context may require, to the members thereof, as they apply in relation to the Commissions or Commissioners appointed under that Act.
- (6) Where the question of removing the Regulator from office has been referred to a tribunal the President, after consultation with the Prime Minister and the leader of the Opposition, may suspend the Regulator from performing the functions of his office and any such suspension may at any time be revoked by the President after consultation as aforesaid and shall in any case cease to have effect if the tribunal advises the President that the Regulator ought not to be removed from office.

B. Re-number clauses 13 to 51 as clauses 14 to 52 accordingly

New clause 13 read the first time.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, I wish to propose that we insert a new clause 13 immediately after 12. During the debate, the Minister told us that his interpretation of clause 12 is that the Cabinet can instruct the President to remove the regulator. Mr. Chairman, I certainly do not agree with that interpretation. But even if that is true, that is an entirely unsatisfactory situation, where the Government can remove the regulator by simply sending a letter to the President. What is in this amendment is copied from the Jamaican legislation which allows for the appointment of a tribunal by the President, and this is for the Member for Chaguanas East who has not read these amendments. So I am proposing the appointment of a tribunal by the President that would consist of a Chairman, not less than two other members, including someone who has held the office of a judge and other qualified persons who would enquire into the conduct of the regulator.

The reason I believe this is important is it removes the Government from interfering with the regulator and it brings an independent tribunal into play to deal with matters of misconduct.

Now this regulator, Mr. Chairman, will have control over all procurement by Government, billions of dollars of procurement, and it is naive to believe that all regulators will be completely impartial, neutral, independent and so on. This type of legislation is commonplace. This type of tribunal is commonplace and I think it is absolutely necessary and the amendment is circulated that the regulator can be removed by a tribunal, appointed by the President, headed by a retired judge.

Question proposed: That new clause 13 be read a second time. [*Crosstalk*]

Mr. Chairman: I want to suggest that Members pay attention to what is taking place. [*Crosstalk*] Yes, I know but the Speaker will never do anything to undermine the rights of Members of this honourable House, the minority and the majority at times, no, but more the minority. So I want Members to pay attention. Okay? I am going to put the question again.

Question proposed: That new clause 13 be read a second time.

Mr. Chairman: Member for Diego Martin North East, you have a series of new clauses, I wanted to ask you whether you want to take them individually or you want to take in groups. It is up to you.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, yes. You see, normally I would comply with your request, I would accommodate your request. I would do whatever I can to accept your request, but I think that this procurement legislation is so important

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that it is necessary—I would see if there are some I can group together and some that I can do individually.

Mr. Chairman: No problem. I am guided accordingly.

Mr. Imbert: I could do a group, you know.

Mr. Chairman: Just now.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, having looked at it—[*Interruption*]

Mr. Chairman: Just now. All right. We have not completed that clause 13, please.

Mr. Imbert: We have not?

Mr. Chairman: No, no, no. We have to continue.

Mr. Imbert: Okay.

Question proposed: That new clause 13 be added to the Bill.

Question put and negatived.

Mr. Imbert: Yes, the Government will fire the regulator. Nice.

New clauses 53 to 66.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, I can group clauses 53, 54, 55, 56, 57 and 58, 59, 60, 61, but I will have to speak at some point in some length on all of them. What do you prefer, put them together and speak at length?

Mr. Chairman: Clauses 53, 54, 55, 56—

Mr. Imbert: Clauses 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62—I can go through them one by one, but you can do them together if you want.

Mr. Chairman: All right, go ahead.

Mr. Imbert: Mr. Chairman, I propose new clauses 53 to 66 which read as follows:

New clause 53

Insert a new clause 53:

“53. The Public Procurement Review Board is hereby established.”

New clause 54

Insert a new clause 54:

“54. The Review Board shall consist of –

- (a) a retired judge, who shall be its chairman;
- (b) a registered engineer with at least ten years’ experience in matters relating to procurement;
and
- (c) a chartered accountant or quantity surveyor with at least ten years’ experience in matters relating to procurement.”

New clause 55

Insert a new clause 55:

“The members of the Review Board shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition and shall hold office for three years unless terminated.”

New clause 56

Insert a new clause 56:

“A member of the Review Board may resign his office by letter addressed to the President.”

New clause 57

Insert a new clause 57:

“The President may remove a member of the Review Board from office upon being satisfied that the member –

- (a) is declared to be bankrupt;
- (b) is incapable of performing the duties of a member;
- (c) has neglected his duties or has engaged in conduct that would bring his office into disrepute;

- (d) has been absent, without the leave of the Board, from three consecutive meetings of the Board;
- (e) has been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty;
- (f) has been convicted of an offence under the Integrity in Public Life Act; or
- (g) has been convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment for one year or more or an offence under this Act.”

New clause 58

Insert a new clause 58:

“The staffing, remuneration, funding and other operational matters of the Review Board shall be prescribed in Regulations made under section 77.”

New clause 59

Insert a new clause 59:

“59.(1) The procuring entity and any other person who was entitled to be given an opportunity to make representations under sections 50(1), 52(1) and 70 may request the Review Board to review the order or decision of the Office made under sections 51(4) and 51(10).

(2) A request for a review may only be made within twenty-one days after the order was made.

(3) A request for a review shall be accompanied by the prescribed fee.”

New clause 60

Insert a new clause 60:

“The Review Board may dismiss a request for a review if the Review Board is of the opinion that the request is frivolous or vexatious.”

New clause 61

Insert a new clause 61:

“The Review Board shall meet to conduct a review within twenty-one days after receiving the request for the review.”

New clause 62

Insert a new clause 62:

“The parties to a review are—

- (a) the person who requested the review;
- (b) the procuring entity; and
- (c) such other persons with an interest in the order or decision of the Office as the Review Board may determine.”

New clause 63

Insert a new clause 63:

“The Review Board shall complete its review within twenty-eight days after receiving the request for the review.”

New clause 64

Insert a new clause 64:

“Upon completing a review the Review Board may do any or both of the following—

- (a) confirm, vary or overturn the order or decision of the Office; and
- (b) order the payment of costs as between parties to the review.”

New clause 65

Insert a new clause 65:

“A party to the review may appeal against the decision of the Review Board to the High Court within twenty-eight days after the decision is made.”

New clause 66

Insert a new clause 66:

“The right to request a review under section 59 is in addition to any other legal remedy a person may have.”

Re-number clauses 53 to 70 as clauses 67 to 84 accordingly

New clauses 53 to 66 read the first time.

Question proposed: That new clauses 53 to 66 be read a second time.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Imbert: Okay. All right, let me explain them one by one, Mr. Chairman. I am hearing talk about when they got these. I heard the Minister say he did not hear anything. Mr. Chairman, for the record, these amendments were sent to the Government on July 13, 2014, five months ago. So I do not know if the Minister was sleeping when he said he did not get them. So let us go through now with clauses 53, 54 and so on. These clauses are intended to establish a procurement review board. The new clause 53 establishes the board. Clause 54 outlines the composition of the review board, which will be a retired judge, a registered engineer and a chartered accountant and quantity surveyor with 10 years' experience.

Clause 55 gives the procedure for the appointment of the review board, which will be by the President in consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. Clause 56 is standard that a member can resign by addressing their resignation to the President. Clause 57 goes on to talk about the removal of a member of the review board by the President, and this is completely different to the regulator because the functions of the review board are that of an appellate body.

Clause 58, staffing, remuneration and so on shall be made by regulations. Clause 59 gives the procedure for a person who is aggrieved by a decision of the regulator to ask the review board to review the regulator's decision, give some timelines.

Clause 60, a very important clause, the review board may dismiss a request for a review if the review board is of the opinion the request is frivolous or vexatious. Clause 61 establishes a fixed timeline of 21 days for the completion of the review of the decision of the regulator. Clause 62 identifies the persons who can get involved in the review, which would be the person asking for the review, the procuring entity and any other persons who have an interest in the matter as determined by the board.

Clause 63 speaks about completing the review in 28 days after getting the request and clause 64 gives the review board the power to confirm, vary or overturn a decision of the regulator, order costs and so on. Clause 65 gives the process for an appeal of a decision of the review board to the High Court within 28 days after a decision, and clause 66 preserves other legal remedies.

The whole purpose of this, Mr. Chairman, is to put a review board in as a buffer between the Government and the regulator. So that if the regulator makes a decision that either the Government or a member of the public or a contractor is dissatisfied with, they take that matter to an independent review board, rather than the present legislation where, if the Government is dissatisfied with the decision of the regulator, they have to go to court and sue the regulator.

All of these things are taken from procurement legislation, primarily in Africa, which was a project of the World Bank where they engaged with about 10 African nations to reform their procurement legislation and the insertion of a review and appeal board is critical to distance the Government from direct conflict with the regulator.

So, I move that these amendments be accepted, Mr. Chairman, amendments: New clauses 53 to 66.

Mr. Chairman: Okay, right.

Question proposed: That new clauses 53 to 66 be added to the Bill.

Question put and negatived.

Schedules 1 and 2 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Preamble approved.

Question put and agreed to: That the Bill be reported to the House.

House resumed.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Question put: That the Bill be now read a third time.

7.15 p.m.

Motion made: That the next stage be taken forthwith. [*Hon. Dr. B. Tewarie*]

Mr. Speaker: This Bill requires a special majority; a division is, therefore, needed.

The House voted: Ayes 26

AYES

Moonilal, Hon. Dr. R.

Persad-Bissessar SC, Hon. K.

Mc Leod, Hon. E.

Dookeran, Hon. W.

Ramadhar, Hon. P.

Gopeesingh, Hon. Dr. T.

Peters, Hon. W.

Seepersad-Bachan, Hon. C.

Seemungal, Hon. J.

Rambachan, Hon. Dr. S.

Khan, Mrs. N.

De Coteau, Hon. C.

Cadiz, Hon. S.

Baksh, Hon. N.

Griffith, Hon. Dr. R.

Baker, Hon. Dr. D.

Khan, Hon. Dr. F.

Douglas, Hon. Dr. L.

Samuel, Hon. R.

Indarsingh, Hon. R.

Roopnarine, Hon. S.

Ramdial, Hon. R.

Alleyne-Toppin, Hon. V.

Partap, C.

Sharma, C.

Ramadharsingh, Dr. G.

The following Members abstained: Miss M. Mc Donald, Dr. K. Rowley, Miss D. Cox, N. Hypolite, C. Imbert, F. Jeffrey, Dr. A. Browne, Mrs. J. Thomas, Miss A. Hospedales, Mrs. P. Gopee-Scoon.

Question agreed to.

Bill accordingly read the third time and passed.

[*Continuous desk thumping*]

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made and question proposed: That the House do not adjourn to a date to be fixed. [*Hon. Dr. R. Moonilal*]

Red House Restoration Project (Details of)

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, before putting the question, there are two matters that I would like to raise with hon. Members. First of all, I need to bring hon. Members up to date with what is called the Restoration Project at the Red House, so all Members would be alerted to where we are with that project. And then seeing that we are adjourning to a date to be fixed, Members would want to exchange greetings in this season and period of peace and goodwill toward men and women. So that is the second area that we will address.

Hon. Members, I am sure that you are all aware of the Red House Restoration Project which has been ongoing for some time. I am certain that before the end of this session, you will be provided with an update on the progress of the project by the Joint Select Committee on Parliamentary Accommodation.

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However, in light of certain facts and scientific evidence, the time has come for the Office of the Parliament to officially inform hon. Members, and by extension the national community, of one specific aspect of the project on which there has already been much public speculation following reports in the daily newspapers. I refer specifically to the discovery of human remains and cultural artefacts during the excavation phase of the Red House Restoration Project. Hon. Members, prior to the commencement of the actual restoration works, it was necessary to excavate several inspection units at various locations throughout the Red House. This was essential in order to provide for structural reinforcement inspection works, for the systemic retrofitting of the building.

On March 26, 2013, I received a report that cultural remains which included bones resembling that of humans, were discovered during the excavation of a test pit named CEP 13, in the north Rotunda area of the Red House. Within days a similar discovery was made in another test pit BM 5, located under the north parliamentary Chamber. The Office of the Parliament recognized that there was a great possibility that other historical and cultural material could be discovered if we were to adhere to the design specifications and drawings, submitted by the historical restoration architects.

The designs required excavation to a depth of 1.5 meters along the length of the Red House on the eastern and western sides. The designs also included excavation to a depth of 03 meters in the Rotunda, and the connecting links to the proposed parliamentary complex, for administrative and ancillary services to be located north of the Red House.

As a consequence of what I have outlined, the Office of the Parliament took the following steps:

1. We convened a meeting at the Red House site with stakeholders, which included representatives from the Santa Rosa Carib Community and the late Peter Harris, archaeologist among others;
2. We caused the remains then recovered to be examined by Dr. Valery Alexandrov, forensic pathologist who confirmed that human bones and other skeletal remains were among the remains shown to him;
3. We consulted with the homicide division of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service who visited the scene, and permitted excavation work to continue as they were of the view, that it was not a crime scene;

4. We assembled a team headed by the late Peter Harris, archaeologist to carefully retrieve all human skeletal remains and artefacts discovered in all inspection units;
5. We convened another meeting with stakeholders which included representatives of the National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago, the Red House project consultants and three representative groups of Trinidad and Tobago Amerindian and First Peoples Communities, and finally;
6. We arranged for samples of the human remains already discovered, to be analysed using DNA at the Merriweather Ancient DNA and Forensic Lab, Binghamton University, New York and for radio carbon dating, C 14 testing and N 15, and N 14 testing to be conducted by Beta Analytic Inc. Laboratory, Miami, Florida, USA.

Hon. Members, the initial carbon dating revealed that the samples were, in fact, human bones dating from AD 430 to AD 1820. Results of the DNA test confirmed that the samples of the bones from which results were achieved, belonged to the people living in Trinidad and parts of Central America during the period AD 990 to AD 1400.

Upon the receipt of the results of the radio carbon dating, the Cabinet was informed and a committee named the Red House Historical Cultural Heritage Team was established, to manage all aspects of the historical finds, and to ensure conformity with best practices and international protocols for such material. This committee is chaired by the Speaker of the House, and consists of members of all stakeholder groupings.

Hon. Members, due to the untimely demise of Mr. Peter Harris, the Office of the Parliament secured the services of Dr. Basil Reid, senior lecturer in archaeology at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. Work commenced under Dr. Reid on July 01, 2013 which involved excavation and finds processing of all artefacts and biological remains, in the areas earmarked for excavation.

Over the past year, Dr. Reid has developed a network of specialists in various disciplines to provide assistance when needed. Research partnerships have been established with academics in the USA and Europe. The lead archaeologist in conjunction with Dr. Michael Sutherland and his staff have developed a Red House 3D archaeological geodatabase. All information related to the discoveries are entered into this database.

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The Office of the Parliament has also signed an agreement with the University of Central Florida. This will facilitate a visit by Dr. John Schultz, forensic anthropologist, and an assistant who will visit Trinidad and Tobago for two weeks in early January 2015 to examine and conduct tests on the skeletons and bones found.

At the conclusion of the project, an academic publication will be compiled and published, possibly by the University of the West Indies Press or an alternative publisher, and all information gathered will be passed on to the archaeological subcommittee of the National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago.

Hon. Members, I have been advised that excavation works to a depth of 1.5 metres have been completed and there have been some significant finds. Some of these include:

1. six complete skeletons;
2. 36 incomplete skeletons;
3. a complete skull in a pot;
4. several coins, the most valuable of which is a US \$1 gold lustre coin.

Hon. Members, the Office of the Parliament is cognizant of the fact that the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is a signatory to the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples. To this end, the Cabinet-appointed committee has held four meetings with representatives of the three First Peoples groups. In harmony with their request, the First Peoples have been allowed to hold religious ceremonies on the grounds of the Red House and the Cabinet-appointed committee has agreed, in principle, that all the remains of the First Peoples should be interred on the grounds of the Red House with an appropriate sign indicating the significance of the area. Dialogue with these groups are continuing.

A small group of workers, mainly university students, are currently at the Red House engaged in the final cleaning and cataloguing of the finds. The first phase of the archaeological project is scheduled to be completed by January 31, 2015 and is on time.

Hon. Members, finally, I wish to advise that the Office of the Parliament and UDeCOTT, our project managers for the Red House Restoration Project, have recently arrived at consensus for a communication strategy in respect of the project. This will entail the holding of press conferences and the issuing of periodic bulletins. You will all be advised accordingly.

I wish to thank you for your patience in bringing this information to your attention. [*Interruption*] I cannot tell you the value of the coin, but it is very valuable I understand.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Does the coin have a date?

Mr. Speaker: I think it is around 1846—around that time, 1846.

Christmas Greetings

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, as I said, we are into the period of peace and goodwill toward all men and women as we approach the season.

Mrs. Persad-Bissessar SC: Including the Member for Diego Martin West.

Mr. Speaker: Including all of us. I want to take this opportunity to call on the hon. Prime Minister to really bring greetings on this very important occasion, the birth of Jesus Christ.

The Prime Minister (Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar SC): Thank you very much, hon. Speaker. As we are already into this very special season, very blessed, very holy season of Christmas—advent being last week Sunday—I take this opportunity, on behalf of the Government Members on this side, to wish your good self and your family and to wish the Members on the other side and their families and, indeed, to wish the entire nation and their families, a very blessed and holy Christmas.

We have, each year, tried in our own way to make the lot of our citizens a little more merry, a little brighter, by providing some more support for those most in need, for the most vulnerable, and this year will be no different. We intend to have hamper distributions throughout Trinidad and Tobago. Together with that, this year we are seeking really to have all communities be involved in assisting those in the communities.

Mr. Speaker, you may recall only recently it was published that in a survey done, that Trinidad and Tobago, out of 162 countries falls in the top 10 of the most generous people in the world—162 countries. [*Desk thumping*] I know, as we celebrate the birth of the Christ child, we remember that that Christ child was given to us—“for God so loved the world”. That is why at this time we want to give and we want to be generous. And whilst we will do our part as Members of Parliament and as a government, we call upon all of our citizens to remember their own generosity, to remember that gift that we got so that they can give to others who may be more in need or less able to provide for themselves and their families.

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This year, in addition to providing grants to the churches, the umbrella bodies, Cabinet has taken the decision that we will utilize about \$55 million which will be shared amongst churches in the various constituencies. To that end, a letter has been prepared—I am not sure if Members have got it—but all Members of Parliament should have received or will receive a letter requesting your recommendations with respect to the churches in your constituency and with respect to the persons you would like food hampers to be distributed to.

I think we have given a deadline date of the 11th, which is next week Thursday, and so I urge all Members to participate in this exercise so that throughout every constituency we will be able to help the needy and less fortunate persons.

For the churches, I ask you to fill up the template and identify the churches within your community. If you have not yet, you will get—have you got the one?—you have got the one respecting the hampers, certainly. Today is Friday. I will get my office to ensure that by Monday those letters will be delivered to your constituency offices. In the template, I am sure you will assist by giving the members of each church so that discretion can be utilized in terms of the amounts to be given to each. I look forward to your cooperation in this matter and for it to come to us as early as possible so that we can get the work done.

I know the hon. Member for Diego Martin Central mentioned the letter that was sent about the school supplies. Those disbursements are ready and I do apologize, on behalf of the Ministry, that they were not given to you before. That was partly because we were in the transition from the old fiscal year into the new fiscal year and there was some delay in getting what is known as the release of the funds.

So that has been processed, hon. Member, and I am sure that it will not go to waste. It should have been given as you mentioned earlier, but I think that it is the first time that we have done something like that on a constituency basis. [*Desk thumping*] Perhaps before, people were given grants for school supplies, but we did it equitably across the board where every Member of Parliament would have had input into the process.

Hon. Speaker, this is our contribution and our donation, but I think equally, or just as important, one hon. Member spoke about private procurement and public procurement. So on the private level, the level of the individual citizen, these are the gifts that we will be assisting in having distributed to our citizens. On the public front, I think our gift is today's passage of the public procurement to deal with procurement on the national level. [*Desk thumping*]

Again, hon. Speaker, to your good self and your family and your loved ones, a holy, blessed Christmas season and all the best for the new year. I know that in the new year we will face many challenges, but none will be challenges that we cannot overcome. With prayers and putting God in front, I am sure that it will be a very blessed and very great year.

To Members of the Opposition and their families, a holy and blessed Christmas to you. Next year we will tango. I am sure we all will. We will have some very exciting times and at the end of the day, it will be the will of the Lord that prevails.

So thank you all. To the national community, merry Christmas, blessed Christmas. Keep safe. Be safe and always remember that generosity in giving to those next to you who may not be as fortunate.

I thank you all very much.

Dr. Keith Rowley (*Diego Martin West*): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is not very often that I get an invitation from you to respond to a ministerial statement. I will try my best on this occasion.

It is easy, Mr. Speaker, to join the Prime Minister in this season of the Yuletide, in wishing our colleagues all in this House and particularly on behalf of those of us who worked here during the year—the staff of the Parliament, who has stood by us in bright lights and dark nights to allow us to conduct our business during the year.

One of my favourite tunes from Al Green is a tune that says, “(Ain’t it) Funny How Time Slips Away”. Seems like we only just started in 2010. Already we have finished all the Christmases of this Government’s term and I wonder if that has anything to do with the generosity. But Christmas brings out the best in us, all of us, and who can look a gift horse in the mouth. We should not.

Mr. Speaker, there are some serious aspects to Christmas which we must pay attention to as we enjoy the merriment and we look out for its coming. And that is that the whole spirit of Christmas is telling us to be good, learning from the birth of Christ and the difficulties faced by his parents in bringing him up and the standards he set out for human beings to follow, which led to the creation and observance of one of the world’s great religions.

This call that we do the Christmas things throughout the year and not only at Christmas time is something that we can think about very seriously as

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parliamentarians, and maybe that some of the hubris and some of the rancour that associates itself with our behaviour during the year might be ameliorated, if not eliminated, if we do the Christmas things throughout the year.

On behalf of my colleagues on this side, Mr. Speaker, I want to wish the nation a peaceful, a safe and merry and hopeful Christmas and a bright and prosperous new year. There are things happening in this country that sometimes cause us to wonder why is it happening to us and how could it happen, and at Christmas time we can reflect on how good it could be if our lives were the way we would like it to be because most of our families at Christmas time enjoy the best of the years of their lives.

But there are those small minorities who, at the time of Christmas, looking at what others have and seeing what they do not have, experience depression, hopelessness and loneliness. We hope that all of us would extend to them that brotherly love and that contention that we are all one people and that whether it is at Christmas, Divali, Easter, whatever it is, we strive to be that and that, at Christmas time, the best of us indicate that we can be a better people no matter what we are going through.

So, on behalf of all of us, I wish my colleagues a Merry Christmas. Stay safe, stay happy and I wish you a healthy and prosperous 2015. [*Desk thumping*]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, please allow me to join my own sentiments with those of the hon. Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition on this joyous and inspiring occasion.

As the end of the year approaches, it is my pleasure to bring greetings to you, hon. Members, and to the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago at this last sitting of the House of Representatives for 2014. First of all, permit me to say it has been my honour to serve as the Presiding Officer of this august House over the past year. As Members of our nation's Parliament, we all know that 2014 has been a year overflowing with extensive debate and inquisition in a quest to uphold the pillars of transparency and accountability while performing our key functions to legislate, represent and scrutinize.

Looking back at the year, it is with pride that I note that we have successfully revised and implemented our Standing Orders which marks a great procedural accomplishment for this House.

7.45 p.m.

Furthermore, this year commemorates the first ever publicly broadcasted scrutiny of the estimates of expenditure in the Standing Finance Committee [*Desk thumping*] which was a resounding success.

Apart from the tireless work completed in this House, while sitting in plenary, we have also accomplished a vast amount of work in the committees. Also, as parliamentary delegates, Members have engaged in greatly meaningful inter-parliamentary activity toward the betterment of our operations via the exchange of knowledge with others within the region and the wider international community. All of these accomplishments are owing to the effective implementation of the Parliament's Strategic Plan for 2013—2018. Therefore, looking at the framework laid before us, there should be no limit to what we can achieve in the forthcoming year and beyond.

Members, we all know too well that the Christmas season commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ, and it rekindles the spirit of generosity toward each other. However, beyond that, Christmas is also viewed as a time of reflection, thanksgiving, healing and renewed strength. Therefore, let us renew our strength with the impending multitude of Christmas feast of which we all shall partake. However, after that, I encourage you as MPs to boost your capacity to seek out and assist those who are in need regardless of ethnicity, belief, background or constituency.

On that note, allow me on behalf of the Office of the Parliament and on my own family's behalf to extend season greetings to you and your families. I extend warm season greetings also to the parliamentary staff including: the hardworking Parliamentary Clerks and Attendants, the Information Systems Unit, the Hansard Unit, the Food and Beverage Management and team, Broadcasting and Communication units, the Marshal's Office and officers of the Parliamentary Police Unit. On behalf of all Members of this House, I convey our deepest desire to the citizenry for a warm, holy and joyful Christmas season, and an optimistic, prosperous and peaceful 2015.

Hon. Members, allow me to invite you to join me and the President of the Senate and our senatorial colleagues in the Members' Lounge on Tuesday, December 09, next week Tuesday, as we celebrate together the season of benevolence and peace toward all men and women. So, I want to invite all of you at around six in the evening to join us in the Members' Lounge when Members of the Senate and our Members will congregate and engage.

So, thank you very much.

Christmas Greetings

Friday, December 05, 2014

Question put and agreed to.

House adjourned accordingly.

Adjourned at 7.50 p.m.

WRITTEN ANSWER TO ORAL QUESTION

The following question was asked by Miss Alicia Hospedales (Arouca/Maloney) earlier in the proceedings:

**Ministry of Sport
(Details of Non-Profit Institutions)**

25. Could the hon. Minister of Sport state:

- a. The number of non-profit institutions that received funding from the Ministry of Sport for the period 2010 to present;
- b. The names of the non-profit institutions.

The following reply was circulated to Members of the House:

In reference to part (b) of the question the names of these non-profit institutions are detailed in the table below:

FY 2010 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
1. Trinidad and Tobago Association of Masters Athletes
2. Purple Dragon Karate Association
3. Trinidad and Tobago Karate Union
4. Tennis Association of Trinidad and Tobago
5. Trinidad and Tobago Golf Association
6. Trinidad and Tobago Powerlifting Federation
7. Unified Promoters Boxing Association
8. National Kickboxing Council of Trinidad and Tobago
9. Trincity Cricket League
10. Trinidad and Tobago over 50 Cricket Team
11. Trinidad and Tobago Masters Cricket Team

FY 2010 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
12. Pelican Ext Sports Council
13. Chinapoo Police Sports Club
14. Diamond Community Group
15. Trinidad and Tobago Boxing Board of Control
16. Diego Martin Sports Club
17. Run Chasers Club
18. Dow United Sport and Cultural Club
19. Trinidad and Tobago Association of Senior Athletes
20. Trinidad and Tobago Draughts and Checkers Association
21. Morvant Jets Athletics Club
22. Blu Promotions
23. Technocrats Sports
24. The Waterwheel Foundation
25. The Pentecostal Cathedral
26. Progress
27. Squadron Sports Club
28. North East Coast Youth Academy
29. Terrence Ralph Coaching School
30. Genesis Athletics Club
31. El Socorro Youth Movement
32. Explorers Sports and Cultural Club
33. Positive Youths
34. Curepe Sport Club
35. New Testament Church of God

FY 2010 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
36. Trinidad and Tobago Target Archery Federation
37. Trinidad and Tobago Triathlon Association
38. Trinidad and Tobago Karting Association
39. National Ballroom Dance Association of Trinidad and Tobago
40. Trinidad and Tobago Table Tennis Association
41. Trinidad and Tobago Blind Cricket Association
42. Paralympic Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago
43. Trinidad and Tobago Chess Association
44. Trinidad and Tobago Karate Federation
45. The President's Award of Trinidad and Tobago
46. Trinidad and Tobago Darts Association
47. Trinidad and Tobago Equestrian Association
48. Trinidad and Tobago Contract Bridge Association
49. Trinidad and Tobago Rugby Football Union
50. Mohess Road Sports Club
51. Muslim Social and Sports League
52. Step By Step Football Club
53. Falcon United Sports Club
54. Trinidad and Tobago Secondary Schools Track and Field Association
55. The Islamic Resource Society
56. Southern Bowtech Archery Club
57. Matelot Community School
58. St. Michael Anglican School
59. ASJA Inc.

FY 2010 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
60. Moe South Eastern Education District
61. Southern Games Organizing Committee
62. Trinidad and Tobago Football Federation
63. Phillips Promotion
64. Madras Government Primary School
65. Council of Elders Spiritual Baptist of Trinidad and Tobago
66. Sackie's Coaching School
67. Special Olympics of Trinidad and Tobago
68. Real Unity Sports Club
69. St Andrews Early Childhood Centre
70. Chinapoo Police Youth Club
71. Dalton Grant Academy
72. Trinidad and Tobago Scrabble Association
73. Falcon Games
74. Rotary Club of Port of Spain
75. Shiv Shakty Dance Company
76. The Star Foundation
77. Brooklyn United
78. Full Flight Empowerment Organization
79. Rodney and Friends
80. Fitness Unlimited
81. Kudo Karate Club
82. Trinidad and Tobago Game Fishing Association
83. Trinidad and Tobago Youth Foundation

FY 2010 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
84. Trinidad and Tobago Olympics Committee
85. Camp Able (T&T)
86. Sunrise Sports and Cultural Club
87. South East Port of Spain Cultural Workshop
88. National 4h Leaders Council
89. Manny Ramjohn Games Organising Committee
90. La Brea Police Youth Club
91. Beetham Estate Sports Committee
92. Peyton United Sport and Cultural Club
93. Point Kickboxing Association of Trinidad and Trinidad
94. Trinidad and Tobago Amateur Gymnastics Association
95. Point Fortin Civic Centre
96. The Methodist Church North Trinidad District
97. 1st Holy Saviour Club Scout Pack
98. Lopinot/La Pastora Sports and Cultural Organisation
99. UWI Inter-Campus Games
100. Maple Club
101. South East Port Of Spain Achievement Organisation
102. Trinidad and Tobago Pro League
103. Malabar F.C
104. Holy Saviour Primary School
105. People For Change
106. Lt's Touring Team
107. Black Hawks Martial Arts

FY 2010 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
108. Hampton Games
109. Triumph Sports Club
110. Trinidad and Tobago Council of Parent Teachers Association
111. Mayfair Ladies Bridge Club
112. 1 st Touch Soccer
113. Titans Dragon Boat Team
114. Debe High School
115. Falcon United
116. Princes Town Presbyterian School
117. Ministry of Education - Victoria District Games
118. Johnny's Kindergarden
119. Williamville Primary School
120. La Romaine/Debe Sports Committee
121. Basilon Street Sport and Cultural Committee
122. Trinidad and Tobago Badminton Association
123. St. James Police Youth Club
124. Trinidad and Tobago Squash Association
125. Chaguanas Improvement Committee
126. Dan Kelly Improvement Committee
127. Discipline Sports Club
128. Bon Air Gardens
129. Deliverance Ministries
130. Sparkle and Friends
131. Bible Way Youth Ministry
132. Hardbargain R.C School

FY 2010 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
133. La Romain R.C School
134. Trinidad and Tobago Powerboat Association
135. United Villages Foundation
136. Mothers of Basilon Street Sport and Cultural Club
137. National Basketball Federation of Trinidad and Tobago
138. D'Abadie Table Tennis Club
139. Roxbrough Police Youth Club
140. Beetham Gardens Police Youth Club
141. The Girls Brigade
142. Touch of Christ Catholic Deaf Community
143. St. Barbs Secondary School
144. Crown Street Sport Community
145. Servol Life Centre
146. Electric Breakers
147. San Juan/Aranguez Police Youth Club
148. Point Fortin Civic Centre
149. Custom and Excise Sports Club
150. Chances are Football Club
151. Trinidad and Tobago Judo Association
152. Trinidad and Tobago Surfing Association
153. Trinidad and Tobago Bodybuilding Federation
154. Trinidad and Tobago Cricket Umpire Council
155. El Basan Sports Club
156. The Sir Frank Worrell Memorial Committee

Written Answer to Oral Question

Friday, December 05, 2014

FY 2010 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
157. Eastside Stars
158. The Caribbean Kickboxing Grappling Shu Shon Federation
159. All Sports Promotions
160. Kirton Martial Arts Academy
161. Victoria United Sports Club
162. National Youth Action Committee
163. Misir Village Council
164. Eco Adventures
165. Mootoolands & Sourrounding Association
166. Aranguez Sports Club

FY 2011 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
1. Black Hawks Martial Arts Management Network Association
2. Trinidad and Tobago Boxing Board of Control
3. Trinidad and Tobago Association of Masters Athletes
4. SKHY Football Club
5. Mucurapo Girls' Gymnastic Club
6. St. Michael Anglican School
7. National Youth Action Committee
8. Trinidad and Tobago Blind and Visual Impaired Cricket Assoc.
9. Carenage United Cricket Club
10. 1st Holy Saviour Cub Scout Pack
11. Queen's Knight Draught Club
12. Triumph Sports Club

FY 2011 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
13. Queen’s Park Cricket Club
14. Trinidad and Tobago Draughts and Checkers Assoc.
15. Trinidad and Tobago Automobile Sport Assoc.
16. Point Kickboxing Association of Trinidad and Tobago
17. Autosport Promotions Ltd.
18. TT Proleague
19. Unified Promoters Boxing Association of Trinidad and Tobago
20. Creek Sports and Cultural Club
21. Sunrise Sports and Cultural Club
22. Trinidad and Tobago Amateur Gymnastics Association
23. Trinidad and Tobago Rally Club
24. Trinidad and Tobago Scrabble Association
25. Trinidad and Tobago Squash Association
26. Trinidad and Tobago Paralympic Committee
27. Trinidad and Tobago Rugby Football Union
28. Trinidad and Tobago Powerlifting Federation
29. TNT Crime Prevention 5-A-Side Football Association
30. The Sport Desk
31. Mt. Sinai Spiritual Baptist Church
32. Youth Transformation Project
33. JKA/WFT Trinidad and Tobago
34. Muslim Social and Sport League
35. South Eastern Education District
36. Explorers Sports and Cultural Organisation

FY 2011 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
37. Trinidad and Tobago Table Tennis Association
38. William Webb Memorial Baptist Primary School
39. Trinidad and Tobago Body Builders Federation
40. San Hill Strikers Sports and Cultural Club
41. Abilene Wildcats Athletic Club
42. Bulter Institute of Learning and Labour
43. Don Miguel Sports League
44. Islamic Resource Society
45. Clarke Road United
46. Eddie Hart League for Football
47. Gold Medal Sport Company
48. Trinidad and Tobago Netball Association Inc.
49. Quantum Track and Field Academy
50. Hampton International Games
51. Lilliput Theatre
52. Trinidad and Tobago BMX Freestyle Association
53. Trinidad and Tobago Canoe/Kayak Federation
54. Trinidad and Tobago Judo Association
55. Trinidad and Tobago Windball Cricket Association
56. Model Car Association of Trinidad and Tobago
57. Trinidad and Tobago Target Archery Federation
58. Trinidad and Tobago Chess Association
59. Trinidad and Tobago Defensive Pistol Association
60. National Ballroom Dance Association

FY 2011 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
61. Trinidad and Tobago Equestrian Association
62. Trinidad and Tobago Triathlon Association
63. Malabar F.C
64. Real Maracas Football Club
65. Step by Step Football Academy
66. Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha
67. Biche Sports Foundation
68. Trinidad and Tobago American Youth South Organisation
69. Mafeking United Football Club
70. Maraval Foundation
71. Special Olympics Trinidad and Tobago
72. Exocubs Steel Orchestra
73. Grand Riviere Fishing Development
74. Trendsetters Hawks Football Academy
75. Newtown Boys R.C. School
76. Kirton Martial Arts Academy
77. Olympia Gymnastics Club
78. Quarry Road Community Action Group
79. Memphis Sports Club
80. Rainbow Sports and Cultural Club
81. Dingle Boys Sports and Cultural Club
82. Trinidad and Tobago School Rugby Football Union
83. Mothers of Basilon Street Sports and Cultural Club
84. St. Mary's College

FY 2011 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
85. Brickfield Village Council
86. Kids Chess Academy
87. Roxborough Revival Centre
88. Penguins Women's Water Polo Club
89. Valencia Heats Sports Club
90. Tobago Junior Golf Academy
91. Trinidad and Tobago Marathon Committee
92. Millennium Basketball Academy
93. Caribbean Ultimate Fist Fighting
94. Trinidad and Tobago Police Youth Club
95. Arima Rising Community and Youth Association
96. North East Coast Youth Academy
97. Epic Sports Plus
98. Trinidad and Tobago Powerboats Association
99. Trinidad and Tobago Contract Bridge Association
100. Tots and Tumblers Gymnastic Club
101. San Pedro Sports and Cultural Club
102. Lopinot/La Pastora Sports and Cultural Organisation
103. Lisas Gardens Welfare Council
104. Point Fortin Civic Centre Jets Athletics Club
105. All Sports Promotions
106. Trinidad and Tobago Olympic Committee
107. Ab Tiger Sharks Swim Club
108. Girl Guides Association of Trinidad and Tobago

FY 2011 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
109. President's Award of Trinidad and Tobago
110. The Scout Association
111. Young Women's Christian Association of Trinidad and Tobago
112. Young Men's Christian Association of Trinidad and Tobago
113. Heroes Foundation
114. Trinidad and Tobago Amateur Boxing Association
115. Cosmic Boxing Promotions
116. Surefire Promotions
117. Chickland Cricket Committee
118. T&T National Over 50 Cricket Team
119. Celebrating Life
120. Simeon Touring Team
121. Big Movement Family
122. Southern Games
123. Ghandi United Sports Club
124. Chi Institute of Martial Arts Championship
125. Paradise Hill Women in Action Group
126. Mannie Ramjohn Memorial Games
127. Cocorite Ball Giants
128. Rainbow Sports and Cultural Club
129. Trinidad and Tobago Karate Federation
130. Tiger Club Karate
131. Trinidad and Tobago Dragon Boat Federation
132. Morvant Jets

FY 2011 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
133. Fatima College
134. Trinidad and Tobago Darts Association
135. Success Laventille Secondary School

FY 2012 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
1. Butler Institute of Lifelong Learning
2. Trinidad and Tobago Boxing Board of Control
3. Trinidad and Tobago Squash Association
4. Swaha Inc
5. La Plata Gardens
6. Ask Promotions
7. Trinidad and Tobago Olympic Committee
8. Triumph Sports Club
9. Trinidad and Tobago Amateur Boxing Association
10. Tobago Game Fishing Tournament
11. Cross Sports
12. Squadron Sports Club
13. Golden Hands
14. Mt. Sinai Spiritual Baptist Church
15. Malabar Uplifting Community Group
16. Queen's Park Village Council
17. Reknown Sports Club
18. Don Miguel Sports Club
19. Belmont Dynamos, Colts, Luton Town, Shamrock and Associates

FY 2012 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
20. Eastern Cricket Coaching Academy
21. Unified Promoter's Boxing Association of Trinidad and Tobago
22. Trinidad and Tobago Marathon Committee
23. Love Struck Charity Sport
24. Barataria Ball Players Sports & Cultural Club
25. Combine Forces Ladies Cricket Club
26. Egypt Village Government School
27. Islamic Resource Society
28. Tunapuna Community Council
29. Queen's Park Cricket Club
30. Cedros Anglican Primary School
31. Orange Field Sports Club
32. South East Port of Spain Achievement Organisation
33. Trinidad and Tobago Squash Association
34. Black Hawks Martial Arts Management/ Network Association
35. Mootoo Lands & Surroundings Association
36. Brasso Pedro Village Council
37. Five Rivers Community Council
38. Arima Football League
39. Roxborough Secondary School
40. Maracas Valley Community Council
41. Mohess Road Sports Club
42. Bethel Empowerment & Skills Training Centre
43. Marvin Faustin Soccer Coaching Clinic

FY 2012 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
44. ASJA Inc.
45. Athletics for Higher Learning
46. Big Family Movement
47. Trinidad and Tobago Rally Club
48. SKHY Football Club
49. Bona Fide Trinis
50. Tyro Sports Club
51. Trinidad and Tobago Cycling Federation
52. TT Proleague
53. Lendore Village Sport and Cultural Club
54. Trinidad and Tobago Game Fishing Association
55. Mannie Ramjohn Memorial Games
56. Harlem Youth Sports Club
57. Point Fortin Civic Jets Athletic Club
58. National Association of Amateur Athletes
59. Quantum Track and Field Academy
60. TNT Crime Prevention Inter 5-A-Side Football Association
61. Trinidad and Tobago Combat Sport Association
62. Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha
63. Don Miguel Sports Club
64. Harlem Strikers F.C.
65. Hindu Prachar Kendra
66. Eddie Hart League for Football
67. West Indies Players Association

FY 2012 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
68. Kirton Martial Arts Academy
69. Euge Taekwon-do Academy
70. Friends of Nia Valley
71. D'Abadie Sports and Cultural Organisation
72. La Brea Police Youth Club
73. Ultra Sports Association
74. Tazmanian Bulldogs School of Martial Arts & Kickboxing
75. The Eastern Alliance Football Club
76. Fitness Unlimited Learning Centre
77. Trinidad and Tobago Association of Masters' Athletes
78. Perfect Love
79. Gold Medal Sport Company
80. The Tour of Trinidad and Tobago Organizing Committee
81. Eddie Hart League
82. Nouveau Heats Sports
83. Trinidad and Tobago Card Game Association
84. TnT Sport Elite
85. Trinidad and Tobago Archery Association
86. Valencia Heats Sports Club
87. Trincity Cricket League
88. Peyton United Sports Cultural and Community Club
89. Spartans Sports and Cultural Club
90. Trinidad and Tobago Amateur Boxing Association
91. Trinidad Muslim League Inc.

FY 2012 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
92. Goodwood Initiative Vanguard Empowerment
93. Cunupia Sporting Initiative
94. Trinidad and Tobago Pro League
95. Trinidad and Tobago Table Tennis Association
96. Trinidad and Tobago Powerlifting Federation
97. Trinidad and Tobago Blind and Visually Impaired Cricket Association
98. Trinidad and Tobago Special Olympics
99. Paralympic Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago
100. Trinidad and Tobago Surfing Association
101. Trinidad and Tobago Archery Association
102. Trinidad and Tobago Canoe/Kayak Federation
103. Trinidad and Tobago Windball Association
104. Trinidad and Tobago Draughts and Checkers Association
105. Trinidad and Tobago Judo Association
106. Trinidad and Tobago Karate Union
107. Trinidad and Tobago Squash Association
108. Trinidad and Tobago Cue Sport Foundation
109. National Ballroom Dance Association
110. Equestrian Association of Trinidad and Tobago
111. Trinidad and Tobago Triathlon Association
112. Trinidad and Tobago Darts Association
113. Trinidad and Tobago Scrabble Association
114. Trinidad and Tobago Power Boat Association
115. Southern Games

FY 2012 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY	
116.	Brooklyn United Women's Cricket Club
117.	Point Fortin Civic Centre Old Boyz
118.	Source of Strength
119.	Millennium Basketball Club
120.	Caledonia AIA
121.	Waterloo Institute of Soccer Players
122.	Falcon Games
123.	Tunapuna /Piarco Regional Chairman Fund
124.	Bamboo All Stars Cricket Team
125.	Clint Marcelle Football Academy
126.	Barrackpore East Secondary School
127.	Carapo Police Youth Club
128.	Role Model Collaborated
129.	Malabar Superstars FC
130.	Trinidad & Tobago School's Rugby Football Union
131.	Trinidad and Tobago Football Federation
132.	Nouveau Community Innovators
133.	All Pro Karate
134.	Trini Shotters
135.	Technocrats Sports Club
136.	Rainbow Rugby Club
137.	Spartans Sports and Cultural Club
138.	Bon Air Football Club
139.	Norman's Winball Cricket League

FY 2012 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY	
140.	Peyton United Sports Cultural and Community Club
141.	TRIGEMS
142.	KIDS Chess Academy
143.	Juventus of St. John
144.	Trinidad Muslim League Inc.
145.	Goodwood Initiative Vanguard Empowerment

FY 2013 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY	
1.	Trinidad and Tobago Amateur Boxing Association
2.	Trinidad and Tobago Body Builders Federation
3.	La Plata Gardens Community Group
4.	Cunupia Sporting Initiative
5.	Tazmanian Bulldogs School of Martial Arts Kickboxing
6.	Tobago Regetta Limited
7.	Roller Sporting Association Trinidad and Tobago
8.	Kelly Village St. Helena and Caroni Sport Festival
9.	Arima Football League
10.	Siparia Spurs Football Club
11.	Trinidad and Tobago Marathon Committee
12.	Rico Fab Cricket Academy
13.	Circle of Friends
14.	Eastern Cricket Coaching Academy
15.	Pump Trace Youth Improvement Committee
16.	El Basan Sports Club

FY 2013 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
17. Role Model Collaborated
18. Trinidad and Tobago Special Olympics
19. Nouveau Community Innovators
20. Cunaripo Sports and Cultural Club
21. Ultra Sports Association
22. South East Port of Spain Achievement Organisation
23. Muslim Social and Sports League
24. ASJA Association
25. Port of Spain and Environs Sports Council
26. Celebrating Life
27. Triumph Sports Club
28. Lendore Village Sports and Cultural Club
29. Top Notch Women's Football Academy
30. Youth Transformation Project
31. Combine Forces Ladies Cricket Team
32. Real Maracas Football Club
33. The Memisa Centre
34. BLAST Youth Sport Academy
35. Chinmaya Vidyalaya
36. Sackie Coaching School
37. Islamic Resource Centre
38. Enterprise Community Masjid
39. Trinidad and Tobago Boxing Board of Control
40. Belmont, Dynamos, Colts, Luton Town, Shamrock and Associates

FY 2013 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
41. Secondary Schools Cricket League
42. Ansil Elcock Coaching School
43. Sports Maxx Academy
44. Arkadian Sports Academy
45. Trinidad and Tobago Carnival Relay
46. Southern Games Organizing Committee
47. Trinidad and Tobago Pro League Limited
48. New Arising Sporting Company
49. The Butler Institute of Lifelong Learning
50. Trinidad and Tobago Canoe/Kayak Federation
51. Trinidad and Tobago Game Fishing Association
52. Point Fortin Fortin Civic Centre Jets Athletic Club
53. Trinidad and Tobago Body Builders Federation
54. Trinidad and Tobago Badminton Association
55. Southern Sports
56. Mootoo Lands and Surrounding Areas
57. Tyro Sports Club
58. The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago
59. El Basan Sports Club
60. Jump Rope Federation
61. New Arising Sporting Company
62. Tamana United Womens' Cricket Team
63. Brooklyn United Womens' Cricket Team
64. 1st Trinidad Sea Scouts

FY 2013 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
65. Maracas Valley Community Council
66. Valencia Lions Youth Football Club
67. The Sport Desk
68. Trinidad and Tobago Chess Association
69. Trinidad and Tobago Equestrian Association
70. Trinidad and Tobago Powerlifting Federation
71. Trinidad and Tobago Table Tennis Association
72. Trinidad and Tobago Badminton Association
73. Trinidad and Tobago Model Car Association
74. Point Kickboxing Association of Trinidad and Tobago
75. Trinidad and Tobago Triathlon Association
76. Tobago and Tobago Card Games Association
77. Open Bible High School
78. F.C Maloney
79. Unity Sports Club
80. Jackson Hill Youths
81. Well Road Organizing Committee
82. Carenage Net Shakers
83. Malabar Super Star Football Club
84. Malabar F. C.
85. Maraval United F.C
86. Trinidad and Tobago Rally Club
87. Valencia Heats Sports Club
88. Caribbean Swing Promotions

FY 2013 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
89. Pollytainment
90. Cedros Anglican Primary School
91. OMG Promotions
92. Power Players Sport and Cultural Club
93. Tobago International Game Fishing Tournament
94. Falcon Games International
95. Trinidad and Tobago Blind and Visually Impaired Cricket Association
96. Trinidad and Tobago Surfing Association
97. Trinidad and Tobago Karate Union
98. Trinidad and Tobago Canoe/Kayak Federation
99. Special Olympic Trinidad and Tobago
100. Trinidad and Tobago Target Archery Federation
101. Alcons Soccer Academy
102. Concorde Athletic Club
103. Barataria Ball Players Sports & Cultural Club
104. Akal Road Sports and Cultural Organisation
105. Holy Family Preparatory School
106. Sunbran Company
107. National Association for Amateur Athletes
108. National Ballroom Dance Association of Trinidad and Tobago
109. Trinidad and Tobago Cue Sports Foundation
110. Trinidad and Tobago Paralympic Committee
111. Trinidad and Tobago Scrabble Association
112. Wushu Association of Trinidad and Tobago

FY 2013 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY	
113.	Trinidad and Tobago Windball Cricket Association
114.	National Kickboxing Council of Trinidad and Tobago
115.	Point Fortin Civic Centre Jets Athletic Club
116.	Trinidad and Tobago Taekwondo Association
117.	TNT Elite Sports
118.	Trinidad and Tobago Combat Sport Association
119.	Dragon Boat Federation
120.	Clint Marcelle Football Academy
121.	Diego Martin Regional Corporation
122.	Springside Organising Committee
123.	Role Model Collaborated
124.	Glamorgan Volleyball Club
125.	Kelly Village St. Helena and Caroni Sport Festival
126.	D'Abadie Sport and Cultural Organisation
127.	Trinidad and Tobago Power Boat Association
128.	Trinidad and Tobago Cheer Federation
129.	Tyro Sports Club
130.	Muslim Social & Sports League
131.	Explorers Sports and Cultural Club
132.	Snake Valley Community Action Group
133.	Nazee Limited
134.	Powergen Penal Sports Club
135.	The Trinidad Muslim League Inc
136.	Progressive Sports Club

FY 2013 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
137. Orange Field Sports Club
138. Cricket Lovers
139. Demerara Sport and Youth Club
140. Guiaco Tamana Sports and Cultural Club
141. Orient Sport and Cultural Club
142. San Fernando TML Primary School
143. Trinidad and Tobago Squash Association
144. Trinidad and Tobago Masters' Athletes
145. South Oropouche Development Committee
146. Kanazawa Shotokan Karate-Do International Federation
147. Trinidad and Tobago Schools Basketball Association
148. Morvant Jets Athletic Club
149. Fyzabad Improvement Committee
150. Trinidad and Tobago Hockey Board
151. Kirton Martial Arts Academy
152. Caledonia AIA
153. Malabar Young Stars
154. Harlem Strikers
155. Gloster Lodge Memorial School
156. Newtown Boys' R.C School
157. Grande Riviere Festival Committee
158. Friends of Nia Valley
159. Valsayn Trace Action Committee
160. Community Builders

FY 2013 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY	
161.	Queen’s Park Cricket Club
162.	Tunapuna Sports Movement
163.	Southern Sports
164.	Mohess Road Sports Club
165.	Santa Cruz Football League
166.	Malvern Sports Club
167.	Dingle Boys Sports and Cultural Club
168.	Cross Sports
169.	Black Hawks Martial Arts Management Network Association
170.	Celian Group
171.	Santa Cruz Touring Team
172.	Beetham Gardens Youth
173.	Future Leaders Company Ltd
174.	Trensetters Hawks
175.	TNT Crime Prevention Inter Community 5-A-Side Football Assoc.
176.	Trinidad and Tobago Football Association
177.	Raising the Bar
178.	The Cotton Tree Foundation
179.	I.S.P.S Warriors
180.	Kelly Village Council
181.	Squadron Sports Club
182.	The Organising Committee, The Tour of Trinidad and Tobago
183.	Crown Trace Football Club
184.	The Cotton Tree Foundation

FY 2013 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY	
185.	Alliance Adventure
186.	The Police Rugby Section
187.	Chaguanas West Sports and Cultural Club
188.	Lendore Village Sports and Cultural Club
189.	Draak Fight Promotions
190.	Goshin-Do Karate Dojo
191.	Big Movement Family
192.	Image Seekers
193.	The Premier League All Fours Association of T&T
194.	Trinidad and Tobago Jump Rope Federation
195.	Alescon Comets Sports Club
196.	Net Shakers Club
197.	Beetham Gardens Organising Committee
198.	Enterprise Community Sports Club
199.	The New Calvary Tabernacle
200.	Hardknocks FC Coaching
201.	Norman Windball Cricket League
202.	United Coaching Academy
203.	Biche Sports Foundation
204.	Siparia Youths Sports Club
205.	Trinidad and Tobago Volleyball Federation
206.	Marac Moruga Cricket Team
207.	Marlins Swim Club
208.	St. Joseph Convent

FY 2013 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY	
209.	San Fernando Sporting Academy
210.	Siparia Evangelical Church
211.	Crompton Sports Club
212.	St. Augustine Secondary School
213.	Perfect Love
214.	UWI SPEC
215.	Caledonia AIA
216.	Central Bank Sport
217.	Caribbean Ultimate Fist Fighting
218.	Carenage Blasters Table Tennis Club
219.	Trinidad and Tobago Automobile Sport Association
220.	Step by Step Football Academy
221.	Calabar Foundation
222.	North East Coach Youth Academy
223.	Concorde Athletic Club
224.	Akal Road Sports and Cultural Organisation
225.	Memphis Sports Centre
226.	Trinidad and Tobago Cycling Federation
227.	SW Touring
228.	Trincity Cricket League
229.	Peyton United Sports
230.	Football Club Southend
231.	Ghandi United Sport Club
232.	Clarke Road Football Club

FY 2013 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY	
233.	New Image Ball Players
234.	La Plata Gardens Community Group
235.	Trinidad and Tobago Jump Rope Federation
236.	Trinidad and Tobago Pro League
237.	Royalians Rugby Football Club
238.	OMG Promotions

FY 2014 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY	
1.	Advocate for Youth and Sport Chess Players
2.	St Mary's College Alumni Foundation
3.	Matura Reunited Football Club
4.	Biche Sport Foundation
5.	Dalton Grant Academy
6.	Trinidad and Tobago Automobile Sports Associations
7.	San Souci R.C School
8.	San Pedro Sports and Cultural Club
9.	Belmont, Dynamos Colts, Lutontown, Shamrock Town & Assoc.
10.	Dynamism Sports Association
11.	Full Flight Empowerment Organisation Academy
12.	Caledonia AIA
13.	Big Movement Family
14.	Trinidad and Tobago Boxing Board of Control
15.	Animae Caribe Festival
16.	Trinidad and Tobago Marathon Committee

FY 2014 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
17. D'Abadie Sports and Cultural Organisation
18. Kelly Football Club
19. Trinidad and Tobago Body Builders Federation
20. Women's Inter-Island Windball Cricket
21. Be Heathy Get Fit
22. Cruz Vision Sport Committee
23. Pine Street Sport
24. Pearl and Bunty Lara Foundation
25. Trinidad and Tobago Relay Carnival
26. The Sport Desk
27. T&T Over 50 Cricket Team
28. Perfect Finish All Fours Club
29. Trinidad and Tobago Blind and Visually Impaired Cricket Association
30. Amazon Sports and Recreation Club
31. Marlins Swim Club
32. Eagle Aquatic International
33. Trinidad and Tobago Elite Sport Management
34. Elite Sport Management
35. Arima Invitational Challenge
36. Trinidad and Tobago Netball Association Inc.
37. Concorde Athletic Club
38. Falcon Games International
39. NESS Sporting Academy
40. Sport Life Ltd

FY 2014 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
41. Celebrating Life
42. Mt. Sinai S.B Church
43. Educating Youth Ambitious Successful Youths
44. Siparia Rhythm Posse
45. Motoo Land & Surroundings
46. Pt. Cumana Sports & Cultural Club
47. United Coaching Academy
48. All Inclusive Sports Club
49. Trinidad and Tobago School of Kishi Karate
50. Emerald Football Club
51. Southern Games
52. Hardknocks F.C Coaching
53. Trinidad and Tobago Squash Association
54. Trinidad and Tobago Game Fishing Association
55. Trinidad and Tobago Table Tennis Association
56. Trinidad and Tobago Surfing Association
57. St. Xavier's Private School
58. Caribbean Ultimate Fist Fighting
59. Tobago Regatta Limited
60. Just For Sport Co
61. Trinidad and Tobago Football Association
62. Trinidad and Tobago Volleyball Federation
63. Lendore Village Sports and Cultural Club
64. Carapo Police Youth Club
65. Trinidad and Tobago Jump Rope Federation

FY 2014 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
66. Hampton International Games

FY 2015 – NON PROFIT INSTITUTIONS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE MINISTRY
1. Clint Marcelle Football Academy
2. Trinidad and Tobago Shotokan
3. Tyro Sports Club
4. Muslim Sport and Social Sport League
5. Trinidad and Tobago Squash Association
6. New Grant Sports Club
7. New City Sports
8. Trinidad and Tobago Unified Martial Arts
9. Tunapuna Roman Catholic School

In light of the above, the Minister of Sport recommends and Cabinet is asked to agree to the proposed reply to House of Representatives Question No. 25 of the 2014/2015 Session of Parliament as set out in the Appendix to this Note.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTION

The following question was asked by Mr. Fitzgerald Jeffrey (La Brea) earlier in the proceedings:

Growth Poles (Status Report on)

- 20.** Could the hon. Minister of Planning and Sustainable Development provide a detailed status report on each of the five growth poles identified for opening of new economic spaces, including a listing of the planned construction activities of each growth pole which have commenced?

The following reply was circulated to Members of the House:

The Minister of Planning and Sustainable Development (Sen. The Hon. Dr. Bhoendradatt Tewarie): The Growth Pole strategy has yielded several successes over the past 2 years. At the geographically-defined Growth Pole level,

physical mapping of the Central and North Coast Trinidad has provided important details on land use, land capability, infrastructure, road networks, Public Sector Investment Programme expenditure and population concentrations. Cluster mapping studies have enabled the identification of competitive growth drivers for the 3 regions listed above. For the Central Growth Pole, these include Business Services, Retail & Distribution, Agro Processing, Logistics Services, Energy Services, Cultural & Heritage Tourism and Pottery. In the South West Peninsula, identified growth drivers are Agriculture, Construction, Fishing, Financial Services, Energy Services, Upstream Energy, Education, Wood and Wood Related products, Fabrication, Printing and Publishing, Fashion, Dairy/Livestock, Meat Processing, Port Development and Tourism. In North Coast Trinidad, Fishing, Farming and small-scale Tourism are the main growth drivers.

Executing Agencies to implement high-level action plans have been identified for the three previously mentioned Growth Poles as well as for East Port-of-Spain, and 1 such agency has been formally engaged by the Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development (MPL&SD) for Central. Three Cluster Steering Committees have been established for the Central Growth Pole and have begun working on both identifying projects to further develop the clusters and the removal of constraints to such development. Additionally, the Chaguanas Local Economic Development Steering Committee has been established and charged with the responsibility for project managing Chaguanas' transformation from Borough to City status.

Detailed Competitive Analysis of the South West Peninsula has identified required actions to be undertaken at the sector level, the firm level and the institutional (public sector) level. These are to be co-ordinated by the Growth Pole Agency for the South West Peninsula. In North Coast Trinidad, agricultural commodities with revealed comparative advantage in regional and extra-regional markets and strong export potential have been identified. Other critical pre-requisites for the area's development, (including roads and infrastructure, micro-financing, institutional strengthening, education and training) have also been identified. All initiatives to date have been undertaken through a process of consultations with focus groups, public sector, private sector and civil society representatives.

Over the medium-to-long term, the Economic Development Board (EDB) will continue to coordinate the inputs of economic agents across the public and private sectors to ensure that the complementary investments in infrastructure, targeted

skills development, priority growth drivers and institutional development happen. Such co-ordination is a key success factor for achieving real development. Continued strategy implementation will include initiatives that are geographic-specific as well as those which can be adapted across geographic spaces.

The Role of the Economic Development Board:

The EDB is a Cabinet appointed advisory body to the Minister of the Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development. The EDB was mandated to propose a nationwide diversification strategy and a policy framework to unlock the development potential of the 5 Geographic Growth Poles. The EDB is not an implementation agency nor has any vested powers unless directed by Cabinet to become involved in construction related projects. The Policy Direction for the development of the 4Cs Growth Pole (the pilot area) has been approved¹. Notes for the 4 remaining Growth Poles and a proposed institutional framework will be submitted to Cabinet, and, pending approval, will be incorporated into ACTION 21 to guide the selection and implementation of projects in the specified regions.

The Growth Pole Strategy recognizes that economic growth is a necessary condition for job creation which is reliant upon macroeconomic and investment climate reforms. In the Trinidad and Tobago context, implementers have noted that these reforms, which typically depend on industry specific strategies with majority investment from the public sector, do not usually have the desired impact on job creation. This failure to create jobs is largely attributable to infrastructure bottlenecks, lack of access to finance and technology, administrative barriers to entry, and skills gaps. Effective strategies need to marry the industry efforts with the socio-economic, political and environmental peculiarities of a specified area.

The Economic Development Board is responsible for ensuring that the co-ordination failures of economic agents, particularly those due to information asymmetries do not continue to hinder the growth potential of Trinidad and Tobago. As the third party responsible for identifying and addressing the underlying causes of persistent co-ordination failures among private and public sector agents, the Economic Development Board initiatives will result in complementary investments in infrastructure, targeted skills development, priority growth drivers for targeted investment and the establishment of institutions responsible for effective co-ordination of relevant activities.

Over the past fiscal period the EDB has focused its efforts on understanding the genetic framework of each Growth Pole to enable the development of

evidence based policies to improve the social, environmental and economic state of the regions. The Growth Pole strategy seeks to identify, scope, boost and optimise existing drivers of economic activity with growth potential within each region in a manner that is inclusive, collaborative, targeted and co-ordinated. Regardless of whether the economic drivers are firmly established in any of the selected geographic locations (e.g. agriculture on Trinidad's North Coast, Retail and Distribution in Central), latent (such as the Pottery industry in Central) or nascent (e.g. Fashion in the South West Peninsula), the strategic focus is to align financial, human, technical, infrastructural, institutional and collaborative resources to exploit and stretch the potential of those drivers to generate real returns, as defined by the investors (private and public) and citizens within each Growth Pole. The forging of industry linkages across Growth Poles then facilitates the spreading of real economic and social benefits to the rest of the country. To date, the responsibility to implement interventions based on the Growth Pole Strategies lies with Government ministries, municipalities and private sector agencies.

Although the EDB is not mandated to execute projects, it understands that it has a transitional role to play from planning to execution and therefore, collaborate with public and private sector stakeholders. One such structure has been tested through a Memorandum of Understanding between Community Improvement Services LTD (CISL) and the EDB. The EDB is in the process of formalizing this working relationship given its success over the one-year trial period.

Planned construction projects which the EDB is directly collaborating with public and private stakeholders to execute in each growth pole include:

4Cs

- Store front upgrades along the Chaguanas Main Road (refers to projects that are in pre-construction phases)
- Development of a Potters Creative Hub
- Car park next to the Chaguanas Market
- Extension of the Centre City Mall, Chaguanas
- Park and Ride Facility Chaguanas New Economic Zones Chaguanas – eTeCK

Written Answer to Question

Friday, December 05, 2014

- Temporary and Long term relocation site for the Chaguanas Street Vendors
- Increase in Skills Training Facilities—Chaguanas

North Coast Trinidad

- Development of the Las Cuevas Resort
- Project '5' Zero
- Re-development of Maracas Beach Facility

South Western Peninsula

- Star.tt ICT Access Centre in Buenos Ayres
- Industrial Park – South Western Peninsula
- DME Plant- Mitsubishi
- Port Development Debe Wellington Mall

East Port of Spain

- Creative Hub
- Flood Alleviation
- Port of Spain Market Upgrade
- POS City Gate Upgrade
- Women's City Project

The projects under the Public Sector Investment Programme and Social Sector Investment Programme although not directly under the purview of the Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development, are aligned to the overall development strategy set out for the growth pole. Appendix 1 highlights major construction projects by Growth Pole and Growth Driver being executed by a specified government institution. The proposed development framework set out by the EDB will assist in the prioritization and selection of projects to unlock the development potential of the region.

Written Answer to Question

Friday, December 05, 2014

APPENDIX 1
OVERVIEW OF MAJOR CONSTRUCTION
PROJECTS BY GROWTH POLE

GROWTH DRIVER	PROJECT/ PROGRAMME	SUB-PROJECT	COMMUNITY	RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY AGENCY
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4Cs GROWTH POLE

Business Services	New Economic Zones		Endeavour – Connector Road – Factory Road	eTeCK
Retail and Distribution	Nipdec Car Park		Chaguanas	Ministry of Local Government
Energy Services	NEC – Capital Works Programme Tranche 5	Development of new industrial sites	Pt. Lisas and Urban Industrial Estate	Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs
Cultural and Heritage Tourism Tourism Action Plan	Upgrade Works at Sugar Heritage Village and Museum	Chaguanas	Ministry of Tourism	
	Establishment of a Ramleela Centre	Sevilla	Ministry of Arts and Multiculturalism	
Pottery	Relocation of Potters to a Central Facility		Felicity	Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development
	National Science City		Indian Trail, Couva	The National Institute of Higher Education,

				Research, Science and Technology
Enablers	Construction and Rehabilitation of Public Buildings, T&T	Construction of Office Complex for Commissions and Tribunals	Central Trinidad	Ministry of Justice
	Construction and Rehabilitation of Public Buildings, T&T	Construction of Couva Hospital and Multi- Training Facility	Couva	Ministry of Health
		Substance Abuse Centre	Piparo	Ministry of the People and Social Development
	Establishment of a National Community College - COSTAATT	Construction of COSTAATT Chaguanas campus	Chaguanas	Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training
	Establishment of the UTT	Construction of a hazardous chemical storage facility	Pt. Lisas	Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training

SOUTH WEST PENINSULA

Energy Services	NPMC Infrastructure Upgrade Programme	Above Ground Fuel Tank Installations	Moruga to La Ruffin	National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited
Upstream Energy	NEC – Capital Works Programme	Development of ports to support upstream and downstream industries	Galeota, Savonetta, Pt. Lisas and Brighton	Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs
Education	UWI South Campus	Construction of UWI South Campus		
	Refurbishment of Technical Institutes	Improvement works at ECIAF, John Donaldson and San Fernando Technical Institutes	San Fernando	Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training
Tourism	Tourism Action Programme	Vessigny Beach Facility Upgrade	Vessigny	Ministry of Tourism
		La Brea Pitch Lake Enhancement Project	La Brea	Ministry of Tourism
	Social Services Centre		Penal and Pt. Fortin	Ministry of the People and Social Development

*Written Answer to Question**Friday, December 05, 2014*

Enablers	VMCOTT Capital Works Programme	Construction of Facilities	San Fernando	Ministry of Transport
		Commencement of construction of the new health centre	Palo Seco	Ministry of Health
	Construction of Public Buildings Trinidad	Construction of Immigration Building	San Fernando	Ministry of National Security
		Design and construction of the South Regional Office	San Fernando	Ministry of Works and Infrastructure

NORTH EAST TOBAGO

Fishing	Construction of Jetties, Tobago		Charlotteville	Tobago House of Assembly
Enablers		4 Human Capacity Development Centres		Ministry of Tertiary Education and Skills Training
		UTT Campus		Tobago House of Assembly
		Tobago Youth Development Institute		Tobago House of Assembly

*Written Answer to Question**Friday, December 05, 2014*

	Construction and Upgrading of Community Facilities, Tobago	Continuation of construction and upgrades to community centres	Speyside, Charlotteville (among other locations in Tobago)	Tobago House of Assembly
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NORTH COAST TRINIDAD

Tourism	Tourism Action Programme	Redevelopment of Maracas Bay	Maracas	Ministry of Tourism
		Las Cuevas Beach Enhancement Project	Las Cuevas	Ministry of Tourism
Fishing	Fisheries Development Programme, Trinidad Tranche 5	Project Five Zero	Maracas, Las Cuevas, Blanchisseuse, Matelot and Toco	Ministry of Land and Marine Resources
Enablers		Toco Home for Senior Citizens	Toco	Ministry of the People and Social Development

EAST PORT OF SPAIN

Retail and Distribution	Rehabilitation of Public Buildings, Trinidad and Tobago	Renovations to New City Mall and East Side Plaza	East Port of Spain	POS City Corporation
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*Written Answer to Question**Friday, December 05, 2014*

Enablers	Primary Schools Programme Tranche 5	Construction of over 30 Primary Schools including Lower Morvant, St. Barbara's Spiritual Shouter Baptist	Laventille/Morvant	Ministry of Education
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