

The Attorney General (Sen. The Hon. Anand Ramlogan):

May I join, Madam Vice-President, in echoing the sentiments, and congratulate my learned friend from the Independent Bench, Sen. Dr. Wheeler, on a very enlightening contribution in your maiden address. It is a matter of great honour for me to make my own maiden contribution in this honourable Chamber, on a debate that I think is both timely and welcomed. As a new administration, we have inherited an economy that is burdened by so many deals and transactions within the visible price tags attached to them, that it affects the state of the economy in a way that behooves us to come clean with the nation and tell it as it is. It is about taking stock of where we are and pausing for a moment of detached reflection to analyze the state of the economy, and to share with the nation where we are at this point in time. Madam Vice-President, I have heard my learned friends speak to the issue of whether we are underestimating, whether we are exaggerating, or whether we are overestimating our economic state, and indeed, the state of our political fortunes. The fact of the matter is the economy is not in as good a shape as it could be, or as it should be. That is the reality we face.

Today, I wish to look through a different telescope and proffer one of the main reasons why that is so. One of the main reasons for the present state of our economy, good, bad or ugly has to do with the extent of mismanagement, corruption and waste that took place under the previous administration. Our 148 economy has been burdened by corruption, mismanagement and waste, and I should demonstrate this by reference to facts, figures and deals. It is a case of deal, deal making, deals and more deals. On the management side, I believe my colleagues have done a very good job of highlighting the skewed expenditure priorities; the incomprehensible preference for mega projects; skyscrapers; the Tarouba Stadium, which was meant to be a tsunami shelter at one point in time; summits; and the like. Some say maybe it was a well-intentioned effort to try and raise the standard of living, but instead, when one looks at the *Sunday Express* front page, an HIV positive mother with eight children having to feed her family by living off the dump, I dare say that such a picture reminds us that what we in fact did was to lower the quality and standard of living for so many in our society.

2.15 p.m. Madam President, when corruption is secreted within the power structure of governance, it is very difficult to detect; but when it flows through the blood that runs through the veins of the power structure and the structure of a government and is secreted within the bosom of that government, then it undermines the economy and weakens and reduces it. This Government, this economy is reeling from the impact of corruption that took place under the previous administration. I dare say we are flabbergasted by the sheer magnitude, frequency and scale of the corruption. I promised to provide statistics and empirical data. In just 10 national projects—there were 70—executed and implemented by UDeCott, there was over \$4 billion in cost overruns and the equivalent of over 20 years delay. I want to repeat that: \$4 billion in overruns and over 20 years in delay; that is two decades in delays in delivering those projects. Permit me to cite a few examples: The Chaguanas Corporation Administration Complex; it is over budget by \$10 million, suffering from a delay of 24 months and remains unoccupied; the Chancery Lane Government Complex, \$300 million over budget, 24 months delayed and incomplete, as we speak, with haggling about the outfitting and the cost of the outfitting; the Government Campus, a legal affairs tower, \$300 million over budget, 18 months overdue, status, incomplete; the International Waterfront Project \$1.3 billion over budget; \$1,340 million over budget, six months delayed. Thank God we have started occupying it. I believe some of my learned friends—I see that Sen. Ramnarine has his office there. The Ministry of Education tower, \$300 million over budget, 20 months overdue, unoccupied; the Performing Arts Centre, \$234 million over budget, 12 months overdue; the Performing Arts Centre, I believe in San Fernando, \$238 million over budget, 30 months overdue; status, incomplete.

In San Fernando, just to illustrate the point, we have the Naparima Bowl; it needed upgrading with a seating capacity that could accommodate many people. We have spent all this money to reinvent the wheel and build a performing arts centre in San Fernando that could house, I believe, 600 to 800 persons. Naparima Bowl was in dire need of being upgraded, but it is a complete mystery to us as to why any government would leave Naparima Bowl and construct something new, with a seating capacity that could barely hold a national concert, given our love for arts, entertainment and culture in this country.

It is simply a matter of disgrace. The Beverly Hills housing \$106 million over budget, 65 months overdue, incomplete. The Brian Lara Stadium—I feel sorry for the honourable Brian Lara to have his name associated with a building that would go down in our history books as a monument to corruption and waste; what tarnishing of a legendary cricketer—\$700 million over budget, 41 months overdue; status, incomplete. Not a bat, not a ball bowled, not a single citizen benefiting to date. Of course, not to be outdone, we have the Diplomatic Centre at the Prime Minister's residence, \$700 million over budget, five months overdue; thankfully, it is occupied now by our hon. Prime Minister. It does not end there. If we were to find corruption in one area, you could say that the cancer of corruption did not pervade the entire body of the government and you could say that, perhaps, it was capable of amputation and you could safely say there was an aspect of the government that was immune from corrupt deals and this kind of waste and mismanagement. Unfortunately, we are finding out that everywhere you turn there is a deal; any ministry you go to, any file you open; this is the state that they have reduced Trinidad and Tobago's economy to. Let me illustrate: Housing, Trinity Housing Limited which is owned by—I do not know what his present designation is in the Opposition party—Mr. John Rahael, by the Rahael group of companies, Trinity Housing Limited; Orchard Gardens in Pleasantville, 138 units; the cost overrun is \$50 million—\$50 million is the cost overrun. Corinth Hills, Corinth, 138 units; same company, Trinity Housing Limited, \$128 million cost overrun; East Grove Curepe, not yet finished, 180 units, cost overrun, \$64 million; Bon Air Commercial Centre, the contract was valued at \$13 million, the original contract, I am told, was valued at \$13 million; the cost overrun is \$19 million. Greenvale Development Park, La Horquetta, 230 units; the contract value was originally for \$97 million. I am told that the final price, the cost overrun alone—just the cost overrun—\$156 million. This is the information that has been provided to us.

The accelerated housing programme, facilitated a feeding frenzy at the trough, at the expense of the poor and homeless who were waiting on homes and now that we go into these homes we see the workmanship of the poorest kind; cracked walls, low cost everything from plumbing come back. I wonder: How could we aspire to the much vaunted Vision 2020, when you are building homes for people in 2010 and you are

putting louvre blades in the windows? In the Tarouba housing settlement, every person to whom a unit is allocated, the first thing they have to do is find money to take out the louvre blades and put in a little French window, because the louvre blade by itself provides no security. Even if a louvre blade falls out and breaks, no hardware carries it anymore, because it is so outdated; that is the quality of housing you provide. Madam President, Broadway Properties Limited, Managing Director, Joseph Rahael, contracted to build schools in Trinidad and Tobago. I went to housing, I went to sports with the Brian Lara Stadium; as I said, anywhere you turn, this is the legacy of the former administration and this is why the state of the economy is not what it should have and could have been. The Couva Junior Secondary School—my information is 1.5 years, Education Facilities Company; the cost overrun is \$172 million; that is the Couva Junior Secondary School. Barataria Junior Secondary School, cost overrun, \$149 million; Pleasantville Junior Secondary School, \$150 million overrun. As you would appreciate, even now to get the information as a new administration, it is like pulling teeth out of a man's mouth without using any anaesthetic, because the information is oftentimes secreted. It is concealed and even to get it out of the public service is a challenge. This is the information that has been provided to me. I am sharing it with the population, because it reveals that one group loyal to party—now campaign finance manager for local government election—seems to have been rather well fed.

The Rahael Construction Company in the construction field alone, with overruns, amassed over \$1 billion. Broadway Properties is another private company owned by the same family. They generally did little renovations to the family businesses and so on, but, of course, that was immediately transformed into a major enterprise upon the assumption of office of the political party to which Mr. Rahael belonged. That was how they were awarded the contract mysteriously for the Couva Junior Secondary School, initially for \$172 million. These schools were supposed to be completed, I am told in two years; they are all running into three years and more. They are supposed to be used as disaster relief centres, but the work is of such an extraordinarily poor quality that things have gotten so bad in Pleasantville, I was told by one parent that OSHA has virtually shut down the construction because of safety concerns. Before I am criticized for concentrating too much on land and before they seek refuge in the sea, perhaps I can turn to show you, that

when I say it is everywhere, I mean everywhere. The hon. Minister of Works and Transport pointed out that a vessel was purchased *HSV Su*; the cost of the vessel was US \$4 million, to date not a single trip has been made by that vessel. Why is that so? Persons who had absolutely no expertise in surveying and purchasing second-hand ships, were allowed to purchase a vessel that was almost 12 years old and in need of multiple repairs.

2.30 p.m. Today the cost of the repairs to that vessel exceeds \$65 million. Could you imagine purchasing something that is in such a state of disrepair that it would cost \$65 million to repair it? International experts have since advised that if we repair that vessel and spend that money and we attempt to even sell it, the most we could get is about \$30 million to \$35 million. Such gross mismanagement of funds, a characteristic feature and hallmark of the former administration that has plagued our economy and weakened it. It is not limited to just those areas. Even now that people see a sense of hope in a new administration and a new government, thankfully there are those who are willing to cooperate and highlight some of the more disturbing matters that took place under the previous regime. A letter dated July 14, 2010 has been passed to me and it is a letter addressed to the General Manager of the National Insurance Property Development Company; it is a letter from Mr. Stephen Aboud, the Managing Director of Pharmaco. Mr. Aboud is writing to enquire; he says: "Pharmaco Industries Limited received the award to supply examination gloves shared 50/50 with Sun Crest International Limited. Our price at the time of submission last year was \$17.50, supplying a product made from the higher grade „Malaysian" latex, yet surprisingly, the other 50% was awarded to Sun Crest International Limited at \$27.80." So they bid \$17.50 with a higher grade Malaysian latex but yet still 50 per cent of the contract is given to Sun Crest International and theirs is \$27.80. He says: "Both products (the \$17.50 item and the \$27.80 item) meet exactly the same standards..." And, in fact, if anything the one costing \$17.50 is made from a higher grade of latex. "In the interest of transparency, (says Mr. Stephen Aboud) we wish to ask that you show: 1. The justification for sharing the contract with a supplier whose price is 50% higher. 2. We have recently provided you with evidence that NIPDEC awarded contracts for container load volumes of gloves (priced at \$27.80) paying higher than the adjusted retail market value. In other words, the man on the street has bought

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retail quantities at lower prices than the Ministry of Health pays for container loads.” Everyone knows if you are buying in bulk and you are buying by the container load, the individual unit cost should be less. In this case, Mr. Aboud is saying that the man in the street could buy this for less, retail. With the mark-up cost it is costing less than Nipdec is purchasing it from Sun crest International Limited. To return to the letter: "We insist that the adjudicators who awarded 50% cent of the contract at \$27.80, be banned from participating in future tender evaluations." He says further: "3. To eliminate suspicion that there exists collusion between NIPDEC and a preferred supplier, wherein a supplier of a shared contract who quotes a higher price receives orders preferentially ahead of the other provider at the lower price, we wish to see the historical data of all purchase orders for gloves (examination and surgical) for the past five (5) years." This is not the People's Partnership talking on a platform; this is not the People's Partnership giving information; this is a letter dated July 14, 2010 from Mr. Stephen Aboud, Managing Director of Pharmaco to Nipdec. The corruption continues.

When you thought and you slipped and thought that they would provide some light to citizens, you realize that even the light itself was corrupt. That is why the T&TEC street lighting programme, that project, was riddled with corruption. The findings of an audit report done into the street lighting project which has been presented now to the Ministry of the Attorney General for action revealed that the tendering process was ignored. In one case a contract worth more than \$5 million to supply bolts was awarded. In other contracts, the value was broken up and awarded to various companies owned by one person. It is the oldest trick in the book. If you want to grease the wheels of the bureaucratic process and to avoid the mechanisms for independent audits, checks and balances in the system, what you do is, you break up what is a big contract into several smaller contracts and you make it appear as if you are giving them out to different companies, but in truth and in fact, there is one puppet master and all the corporate strings are attached to his fingers, and that is what was taking place at T&TEC. The report says, and I quote: "In another case, in order to circumvent the need for approval of the overall sum of \$2.7 million, which was the total value of the goods purchased, six purchase orders were generated on the same day..." Six purchase orders generated on the

same day! "in favour of one firm for the supply of these materials." So it is like every hour they realize they need a few more nuts, a few more bolts, so "I take a \$500,000 here; take a \$500,000 there." No big deal. The report says, and I quote: "They would break up the tender into several bits and pieces in order to bypass the need for getting approval for the entire \$2.7 million." Another mechanism they used was to say that they are purchasing materials on the ground that they are needed on an emergency basis. We have had this problem before with merit award contracts. Well, there were several instances of purchasing material on the grounds of urgency so you could bypass the tendering process where really no urgency existed and all of this was done to favour one particular supplier. In fact, there was a case where they purchased nuts and bolts and it just kept escalating; nuts, bolts and washers, to the tune of \$6 million and these were made via direct purchases rather than by competitive bidding. So you avoid the competitive bidding because it is urgent: nuts, bolts and washers.

As if this was not terrible enough, the corruption was aided and abetted by those who turned a blind eye to the rape of the Treasury and the economy. There is actual knowledge in law and there is something called constructive knowledge.

If you did not actually know but a reasonably competent official would or ought to have known, then you are deemed to be fixed with that knowledge. It is virtually incomprehensible that rational thinking minds could have allowed this to happen to the extent that it happened, with the frequency with which it occurred and allowed the cancer of corruption to pervade every nook and cranny of the government structure. That is why, when we saw a former Prime Minister, Minister Manning, in the midst of the Uff Commission of Enquiry—when we see that front page photograph, which I remember; it is indelibly printed in my mind; front page photograph—toasting champagne—His Excellency, the President of our country, the Prime Minister of the country and, of course, Mr. Calder Hart in the middle of a commission of enquiry as it was sitting, almost as if it was designed to telegraph a message to the commissioners that, "Oy, doh really interfere with this man. Look, he toasting champagne with the President of the country and the Prime Minister of the country. Watch it." The attitude and the signal sent from the former government was not one that would inspire confidence in its attempt to deal

with corruption. Before I am criticized for saying that I talk about transportation and land and the sea, perhaps I can move to the Rapid Rail Project. It pervades everywhere. The tentacles of corruption reached and overreached into every nook and cranny and corner of the Government. In August 2007, the Manning administration announced the award of a contract for \$15 billion for the Rapid Rail Project to Trini-Train Consortium led by Bouygues Construction. The contract was signed in April 2008. Bouygues Construction has a history of engaging in corrupt deals. In 2002, Bouygues was charged with bribery in the Lesotho Highlands Water Project in Lesotho. In 2004, Alstom, one of its subsidiary companies, one of its affiliates, was banned for two years from Mexico following a corruption scandal there. In 2005, Hungarian authorities found that Alstom had engaged in cartel activities. If you go on the Internet and you simply type Bouygues and corruption and scandal, you will see what will show up. This is not a revelation; these are facts which would have been known to any child who had passed common entrance and been given a laptop. I wish to highlight some of the numerous proven corruption scandals in which Bouygues, which has been hired time and again by the former administration, was involved. The corporate track record is one of bribery, kickbacks, misuse and abuse of company funds, bid rigging, collusive tendering, illicit political party campaign financing, forgery and cartels. On the home page of UNICORN, which is a body which works with trade unions around the world to combat bribery and corruption, there is an article which I wish to quote. "In 1998...Bouygues (together with two other companies) was the subject of a major investigation by two judges, for a scandal which Le Monde...described as 'an agreed system for misappropriation of public funds'. The companies participated in a corrupt cartel over building work for schools in...France...between 1989 and 1996. Contracts worth (almost US \$500 million) were shared out by the three groups. The system also involved political corruption..."

2.45 p.m. On another website, Freedom For Sale.org, there was another more instructive article which is, perhaps, a little more relevant and closer to home. It is entitled "Behind the surface: A world of Fraud and Corruption" and I quote: "The history of the Bouygues Group is full of investigations and verdicts on fraud, bribery and cartels. In the 1990s Bouygues was accused of malpractice on several occasions. In 1995, the French police

raided the Bouygues" Group headquarters over an investigation on alleged frauds and illegal deposits in a Swiss bank. Bouygues chairman Martin Bouygues later admitted that his company had paid over 300,000 euros... to a slush fund"—which was—"used to fund the re-election campaign of the former mayor of Lyon. Bouygues was later granted a 700 million euro building contract in Lyon...to fund re-election campaign." Madam Vice-President, the fact of the matter is, the timing of payments in a mad rush to service Bouygues in the run-up to the recently concluded general election leads to the irresistible and inescapable inference that Bouygues was in political bed with someone in the Government. Madam Vice-President, may I be permitted to illustrate payments made to UDeCott, May 19, 2010—sorry, firstly on May 14, 2010. On May 14, 2010, Bouygues was paid \$3,643,778.90. This is 10 days before the election; \$3.6 million after Parliament was dissolved. And then, if that was not bad enough, they paid a further \$10 million to Bouygues on May 14, 2010.

On May 19, 2010—you know when the advertising funds were running out, because, as you know, you could not watch TV in the last week before general election, they were advertising day and night, round the clock, and everyone wanted to know where the money was coming from. I do not know the answer, but maybe this might provide a little inkling. On May 19, 2010, days before the general election, given the intensity of the election campaign, a few days before, Bouygues was given another \$5 million and Valdez and Torry was paid \$54,327 for good measure. It seems as though UDeCott wanted to advertise its success record so that the population could have used it as a basis for re-electing the former administration. But, you see, that is not all, because Bouygues seemed to have been the favoured contractor in this country. A contract valued at \$300 million—listen to these figures—to build nine police stations was executed between UDeCott and the French contractor Bouygues. This was executed on March 29, 2010. But, you know, what is strange about it? Madam Vice-President, days before the general election, after the contract was executed, the idea was that UDeCott would clear the site. If there was a structure, you would demolish it; clear the site and then Bouygues would go in to start construction, but UDeCott first has to clear the site. A notice to proceed, which has to be issued under the contract 42 days thereafter—the time had come and

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gone—and the notice to proceed was properly not issued, because UDeCott had not cleared the site for Bouygues to start the construction. As the general election date was coming closer, on May 19, 2010, a notice to proceed to work was issued by Mr. Hayden Paul, Chief Construction Engineer and Mr. Brandon Primus of UDeCott. This is four to five days before the general election. It is almost as if the winds of change were already blowing. They were sensing that change was imminent, but they wanted to rush and shove this underneath the door, to bind the hands of the new administration and to further burden the state of the economy. Madam Vice-President, a mere four days before the general election, a notice to proceed—in circumstances where it is completely unjustified, because UDeCott had not prepared the site—was issued to Bouygues at a time when there was no chief executive officer in place and no board in place. There was no board and no chief executive officer, but they issued a notice to proceed. They well knew that UDeCott did not have the site ready. As a result of the granting of that notice to proceed, that contractor is now entitled to payments of close to \$21 million within 14 days and the delays cost \$145,000 per day.

We have already received letters from Bouygues beating their chest—they fellas brave!—saying that there is a run/wait time and, therefore, you need to actually pay up. Every day that goes by you are incurring a cost and there is a liability to the State. “Not a nail pound into a piece ah board”; not a posthole was dug, but the taxpayers and the economy has to continue to shell it out. The root of the scandal and the corruption tree grows very deep, because to understand its significance, Bouygues was a joint venture business partnership with Home Construction Limited. And, of course, when you hear HCL, you remember Andre Monteil; former Treasurer of the People's National Movement and the \$110 million share in the Home Mortgage Bank exposed by my learned colleague, Sen. the Hon. Panday. I wish to remind this Senate that in the face of continuous support of the then Prime Minister for Mr. Hart, we continued, when we were sitting on the other side to raise objection to this kind of dealing. Why is Bouygues so important that mere days before the election you can see a weekly tranche of payment being made? If the money was being owed to Bouygues all that time, where was the urgency without a board or a CEO to make those payments and rush them? Why was it so

critical to issue the notice to proceed in circumstances where a first year law student would know that you are compromising the State's legal position? We have had through Mr. Calder Hart, the Malaysian connection; today I present the French connection, Bouygues Batiment. Madam Vice-President, the burdening of the economy continues on a daily basis. When people think that we are not acting quickly enough or we are not doing enough it is because we are reeling from the impact, and we are trying to grapple and come to terms with how many leaks there may be on the ship of government. We are trying to plug leaks; we are trying to change direction; and we are trying to navigate rough uncharted waters. When I heard my learned friend from the Independent Bench, Sen. Drayton say that we did not mention Clico and was disappointed that we did not mention Clico, it is a matter of a rather delicate constitution. The whole of that Clico matter, because it was badly handled by the government of the day, has burnt in our coffers and is one that we are still trying to ascertain, to define the parameters of it and to come up with a socio-economic solution that would at least save the innocent persons whose lives depended on those policies. Madam Vice-President, the Minister of Public Administration sent the Broadgate matter to my Ministry. The Broadgate matter is a lease of an office in a building to be constructed at Broadgate's place—

Madam Vice-President: Hon. Senators, the speaking time of the hon. Senator has expired.

Motion made, That the hon. Senator's speaking time be extended by 15 minutes. [**Hon. S. Panday**] *Question put and agreed to.*

Sen. The Hon. A. Ramlogan: I am grateful to you, Madam Vice-President, and to my colleagues. This matter of Broadgate—Transcorp Credit Union owns a piece of land. It is encumbered, because there is US \$20 million owed to the Unit Trust Corporation. A deal was struck whereby they would go to the First Caribbean International Bank, but not Transcorp. They cleverly incorporated a new company called Broadgate. So, Broadgate, a shell company, artificially created, just to facilitate this transaction now goes to borrow money. All they have is the land, and they borrowed money. The money that they borrowed is to pay off the US \$20 million—so they paid off that—and then to finance the

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construction of this multi-storey that the Government would rent a part of. The catch to it though is that the State was providing the guarantee for all of this, and the rental was linked to the cost of the construction of the building, which was not stipulated or defined. So, the irony is, you have a piece of land, and you are owing money on it, I tell you that I will come and pay off the money owing on the land, and I will guarantee the loan you want from the bank to build a building on the land, and I will then also tell you that I will commit to rent the building that I have helped you build—I am not renting the whole building, but you could rent out some to your partners too. To make it sweeter, we are not going to say how much this building is going to cost to put up, but we would simply say that we are guaranteeing the cost of the construction of the building. In that way, when we are constructing the building, we are going to put in a little extra there also. So, it is a tiered approach to corruption. I would not tell you what the rent is. We must not say what the rent is now. We will say that the rent should be linked to whatever it is we have to repay to the bank. If we put the rent now and when we finish that construction, it is going to escalate—double and triple—and the rent will not be able to service that debt obligation. So, the rent was not linked to that, but it was linked to the cost of the construction.

Madam Vice-President, I read briefly from the advice provided by the technical legal officers from my own department and from the Ministry of Public Administration in a letter dated May 19, 2010, again, just before the election. This is from the Ministry of Public Administration. The legal advisor says: “My requests to have this matter renegotiated have fallen on deaf ears particularly that of the hon. Minister who was not pleased with the recommendation to have an expert re-evaluate this project before Cabinet makes a decision on it.”

3.00 p.m. “It appears to me that the wording of the note does not put the issues fully before Cabinet as it appears to give the impression that all is well with this project.” Nothing could be further from the truth and the comments on record contained in the various memoranda from the Chief State Solicitor and the Solicitor General would bear; the legal advisor says: “I cannot sit idly by in good conscience and allow Cabinet of my country to be misled.” I want to repeat that. You know what it takes for a public servant

to put these words to a Government Minister that: "I cannot sit idly by in good conscience and allow Cabinet to be misled and the State to be put at further disadvantage when it is within the power of right-thinking men and women to do otherwise. I am therefore calling upon the hon. Minister of Public Administration, through you, PS, to take all steps to ensure that the note to be presented to Cabinet is balanced and reflective of the realities of this transaction." They were trying to fix that note to create a nice paper trail so Broadgate and those who are benefiting from this will get it through the door. Madam Vice-President, in April, from the Solicitor's General office in my own ministry I am proud to say they stood steadfastly against this project. The lawyers wrote and said: "The consent and the agreement is a seriously flawed document. There are considerable concerns, the main one being that this document has the effect of the Government guaranteeing the loan for Broadgate and being made responsible for settling all Broadgate's indebtedness."

Why is the government guaranteeing Broadgate's indebtedness? Why was the government guaranteeing to settle Broadgate's loans? The exposure on this is over TT \$1 billion. "We pay off the US \$20 million. We pay off that!" But the exposure is over \$1 billion and we now have to find ways to treat with these matters. So when they say the economy is all rosy and when the learned Senator said we should not just paint doom and gloom, the Prime Minister is trying to obviously make a sales pitch to attract foreign investment and they wish to use that against us. They know what they did to the economy and they wish to use the expert marketing of our country to restore some semblance of economic order to reverse our economic misfortunes; they wish to use that against us. How disingenuous. It continues: "It now appears that the very effect that was warned against has now come to pass." There is much more about sanitizing the Note to Cabinet and so forth. In closing I wish to give this honourable Senate the assurance that there will be no case of different strokes for different folks. The cancer of corruption that afflicted the Government and that has burdened our economy and weakened it in this manner is a matter that I shall pursue to the hilt. There will be no stone unturned in the quest for justice on behalf of the people and the state of this country. We should, but for the corruption, waste and mismanagement, have been the Singapore of the Americas. We

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wasted billions on corrupt deals, turned a blind eye to corruption and facilitated it with our lackadaisical, indifferent attitude to the point now that some say it is road rage. Madam Vice-President, do not mistake my passion for rage. When I am outraged and enraged people shall know. But I am passionate about people issues and I am passionate about the rape and plunder of my country's economy by those who held the reins of power for almost close to a decade. I accept the gentle and maternal advice from my colleagues on the Independent Bench. It has not fallen on deaf ears, but I want them to know that my passion is not meant to be mistaken for rage. In closing, I say that this Government will restore law and order and shall pursue a path of economic recovery to take us back on the correct tracks, but we shall do so with the full knowledge that those who are guilty of the corruption that took place should be brought to justice and pay for what they did to the people of this country. Madam Vice-President, I thank you very much. [*Desk thumping*]

Madam Vice-President: Hon. Senators, on the Fourth Sitting of the First Session of the Tenth Parliament I do wish to recognize the maiden contribution of the Attorney General, Sen. The Hon. Anand Ramlogan.