
THE MANIFESTO OF THE ALTERNATIVE SYSTEM

A New Improved Democratic System
a **“No Party System”**
with
Independent “Representatives of the People”

Empowering “The People”
via **E-Voting**
on Community and National Issues

Economic & Social Strategies
for
Trinidad and Tobago.

Global Unification & Spiritual Findings

Inspired writings of
Philip A. Franco

Mostly written in 1987 and 1988, compiled in 1990,
with some additions to present.

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-----PREFACE-----

With this document I hope to reach out to everyone, and I hope to show the urgency of putting our act together, as ‘human beings’ on this planet, and try to show an Alternative – **The Alternative System** – which is a system of government whereby we may really begin to govern ourselves properly. Along with this I share economic, social and spiritual views and proposals. Particular portions refer to Trinidad and Tobago specifically, as I had initially wrote ‘A Plan for the recovery of Trinidad and Tobago’, but now suggest that it be firstly for us (Trinidadians and Tobagonians) to adopt and implement for our benefit, and then used as a model for others countries. When other countries of the World see us ‘in action’ and how well it works, they may consequently follow our lead.

I say that Trinidad and Tobago is a *blessed land* and did not get its name for no reason. Originally named La Trinity after the sighting of the three peaks, standing for the Father (the supreme power), the Son (all human beings), and the Spirit (that part of the life force that dwells within us and throughout the universe).

Let us not for a minute think, or allow ourselves to think, that ‘we’ (Trinidad and Tobago) cannot accomplish something so great, as what is proposed within these writings.

“It is a foolish idea, disproved over and over again in history, to think that a Nation that has once risen, once has been called up by the voice of God to rise, will be stopped by mere physical repression.

Repression is nothing but the hammer of God that is beating us into shape, so that we may be molded into a mighty nation and an instrument for His work in the World.”

Sri Aurobindo

Time...

I left Trinidad in 1987, in what could be considered - the middle of the recession, to look for a ‘better life’, in regards to wanting a higher standard of living and wanting to afford myself the opportunity of such. I ventured down-under to Australia. On my arrival I stayed with my sister who had been there for some twenty years previously. I was able to find myself a job from a newspaper advertisement in less than a week of my arrival. Within six weeks I had secured another job with twice the salary. Shortly after I rented myself a very nice apartment, which cost me only one third of my salary. I mention this so that you can have an idea of the affordability of the situation there. I was just a tradesman at that time (an automotive Spray-painter), but was getting an honest day’s pay for an honest day’s work, and was able to afford a good standard of living. All in all, I was successful in what I had set out to do.

I must take the opportunity here to mention that – I have found that whatever I have wanted in this life, I was able to obtain, once I was patient and persistent. For me this is always good to remember, as it gives me strength for the next task ahead. I know that we all have the power to accomplish any task we set our minds to, for within each and every one of us, the most powerful power exists - God. If we work with God all things are possible.

Even though everything went well for me in Australia, I missed home (Trinidad) very much. Every day I would think of home, longing to be there, and for things to be better there.

At this stage (1988) I had made it known to my father in Trinidad that I was missing Trinidad and was considering returning. Because of this, he began sending me newspaper clippings on what was happening there, in relation to the violent crimes that were plaguing the society, and also of the unjust policies that the government was imposing on the people (probably in their attempt to rectify the economy), which was in fact making the situation even worse.

My father of course did not want me to return, as he could see no future in Trinidad, but the information that he was sending me only served to make me more furious. I wanted the wrongs put right. I wanted to live in Trinidad and to also be able to enjoy the standard of living that I was experiencing in Australia.

I wanted Trinidad To rise up.

A Message...

In the midst of this, while longing to be home and for things to be better there, ideas started coming to me, sometimes at work or whilst lying in bed at night,. These ideas were of - government policy changes and on policies that should be, restructuring of the government and government systems, how we could best tackle the economic problems, the problems of crime, and ideas of things that would be for the betterment of our society.

These thoughts and ideas started to overwhelm me and I decided to record them whenever I could and wherever I was and so I kept pen and paper handy and I make notes as these ideas came to me. There were times at nights that I did not even know what I had written, only to find out later or the next day, when I would read it.

In mid 1989 I had realized that something was being created, and in fact what I had began to realize, was that some sort of plan was emerging. I would ask, “why me?” – This I had no answer for. Nevertheless I saw it clearly as a plan for the recovery of Trinidad and Tobago.

What to do?

An Australian friend of mine suggested I should study, probably, Political Science and Economics, if I wanted to get involved in politics, for I had told her of my writings and plans to return home,

Taking her advice, I made my way to the University of New South Wales where I made enquiries about studying those subjects. Among the information I received was the fact that a degree would take me about five years full time or about seven years part time to complete. I went home and gave it some thought, but to me, time was of the essence, and ‘the people’ at home had been suppressed for many years and there was no time to waste,

and why should I have to study as I already had what I considered to be ‘The Plan’ in my possession. All that I really had to do was to show it. Show it to ‘the people’, the government, and get it accepted and implemented. Implemented by ‘the people’ for ‘the people’ into the existing government, and those with the appropriate expertise would carry out the necessary. I was indeed naïve to think it be so simplistic.

Looking at the reality of the situation – people study Politics, Economics etc., but seldom see beyond what they have been taught. Some visionaries do exist even among the educated, but because of ‘the system’ under which they are forced to operate; their ideas are seldom able to manifest.

We usually put as our leaders –‘politically sound’ persons with good academic learning and with a good history in the political arena, or people who are charismatic or who promise us what they never deliver. What usually is the case is that they are unable to satisfy our real needs and expectations. It is very rare to see a country’s leader ‘move’ *‘the people’* into the future with momentum, for these ‘politically sound’ leaders rarely ever possess the vision necessary to do so.

I most certainly realize that this plan that I am speaking of and have outlined in the contents of these writings is by no means a complete plan, for society must continue to grow and plan its destiny in a never-ending process of evolution and development, where everyone has contributions to make. I believe though that this little plan contains some important ideas and concepts from which a new important framework and foundation can be built upon.

I have kept my writings and its outline simple so that it could be understood by as many as possible. I feel confident that most would be able to understand the contents and be able to envision the same hope for the future and see the same light at the end of the tunnel as I am seeing.

We do certainly need a plan for of country, one with a clear Vision for our people, that we all can work towards.

We are all filled with our own ideas and beliefs of what is real and what is true. Our social environment has instilled these upon us. But sometimes what we believe may not actually be the reality and truth. If we close ourselves up and are completely filled with our beliefs, we will not be able to accept or be influenced by anything new that comes along. If we are full, we leave no room for further learning or change.

The things that I present and propose here are surely going to be hard to accept by those who are full, and by those who are closed to accepting ‘the new’, ‘the different’ and ‘the unknown’.

We must open our hearts and our minds to the possibilities that exist, so that we may understand and utilize them.

-----INTRODUCTION-----

“Together We Aspire, Together We Achieve”, all together, all together with God is the only way. This period of time leading up to the twenty-first century is an important time for the realization amongst men. God, hoping that we at least believe that a supreme power exist, is already sending messages to us in many different forms. We should take note. Strong messages in the form of devastating earthquakes, severe climatic changes, depletion of our ozone layer, Aids, Cancers, warring within and among Nations, are but really a few. These are by no means the start nor the end, as God is always trying to show us the way, to set us back on course. Whether or not we realize this depends on our ability to open up our hearts and minds. God is the most powerful power that exists, and together with God all things are possible.

The time has come...

The time of reckoning has come – where we are faced with the fact, that we and our planet are DOOMED FOR DESTRUCTION, that is, if we continue to behave as irresponsibly as we have been doing for the longest time – Too long! If we don’t change our course and change it fast, it will become - Too late!

What is amazing is that we are obviously aware of this and we have tons of scientific evidence and facts about what is happening and what must be done, but somehow we distance ourselves from it, turn a blind eye to it, and go on merrily with our lives. I suppose some of us think that if it does not directly affect us then it is not worth the trouble, and some may be so busy and preoccupied with their own little lives that they feel that they cannot participate. However what I see as the real problem that keeps us from getting involved, is the feeling that – ‘what difference would little me make?’. When we all feel this inadequacy we become complacent towards mobilizing ourselves. We do nothing, and nothing is done.

Besides this internal psychological resistance, there is also much external resistance to the implementation of necessary changes that would benefit us all in the long run. Why? Can’t we see that we must act fast and act now, as we have very little time to waste?

At this time what is needed, is understanding and co-operation, through communication, using the communication systems that we have created and developed. As we can see, the level of communication technology that we have attained thus far leaves little for the imagination. It is now possible for all peoples of the world to communicate instantaneously in this age of satellite and computer technology.

It is one thing to have these systems at our disposal, for the benefits that can be derived from them are vast, but, if we lack humility and understanding towards one another, we will not be able to co-operate and work together towards our shared ultimate goals, and then, all the technology in the world would be unable to help us.

Let us now co-operate and communicate with our objectives and goals in mind. These objectives and goals being – Liberty, Equality, Order, Justice, Unity, Health, Happiness, Prosperity and the Preservation of Life.

Let us use our resources, achievements in technology, in the organizational systems and skills attained, for the benefit of all.

We are literally on the verge of self-destruction, and time is of the essence. We have a choice, and it is up to each and every one of us to choose to participate, for the Universal Good. We all have to act – to create action and manifest change. We all have the freedom and power to decide our destiny by the things that we do and the actions that we take. It is time for us to open up, to open up our hearts and minds and to share in the understanding of what we the people of this world face if we stay complacent, and also what we can accomplish if we acknowledge the possibilities that exist.

There are some fundamental things that we have to understand and to start agreeing on. I will share these later on, but now I want to explain what the most important of these are. We should agree firstly – that God exist – that it is one God that exists – that God exist within each and every one of us, no matter what color, creed, race, age or gender. This is our common denominator - being the only thing that is exactly the same in all of us. I cannot see that we can have Unity and Peace in this World if we continue to have religious and inter-religious conflict. This is a great obstacle in our path. In this time of urgency, we need more than ever to come together and work together in unity. But the religions are not budging from their pragmatic stance – that their way is ‘the way’, and that their prophet was and/or is the only one.

Please wake up !

Let us put our World in order... Now !

For God’s sake! For our sake !

Religion is supposed to enable man to realize God through an organized means of teaching and learning. The reason that we have different religions today, is simply because different persons (e.g. Jesus, Krishna, Ram, Mohammed, Buddha, etc.) came at different times and to different regions of the World, and so influenced different peoples, at different times. These groups of different peoples, at different times, places and languages, relayed their experiences and the teachings and messages given to them and they each formed organized institutions of religions to promote these. If we look closely at the teachings of these different Masters that came, we will see that there is great similarity. In fact they were all describing and teaching the same messages which are – that God exist and that God exist within each of us, and about ‘The Way’ or ‘The Path’ that we must follow to attain ‘true happiness’.

Today there are many religions with a multitude of differences among them. These differences are due to the vast amount of time that has elapsed since the messages were

delivered and to the multitude of translations and interpretations that has taken place over the years. Let us look at an example in our lives that we know only too well. – We tell something to a friend, and then that friend in turn tells what we said to another person, and they in turn tell another. We might meet this last person (maybe only days later) and they tell us what they heard we said, which turns out to be quite different from what we actually said initially to the first person. The information changed so drastically even though that it was only passed through a few persons during a relatively short space of time. So you can imagine what can happen to information that had to be translated and that has been passed down through thousands of years.

It is essential that the religions come together with this understanding, so that they could work together and play an important role within the World unification process. If we do not have unity at this level – How can we have unity in this World? Religions must take it upon themselves to be the leaders in this process and stop clinging to their selfish beliefs. God is one, and it is the same one God that has given us all life. The time has come for us to all take part, in our respectful roles, and work together.

“Let’s get together and feel alright”

Bob Marley

**We have the technology !
Do we have the will ?**

THE MANIFESTO OF THE ALTERNATIVE SYSTEM

Why do we need an alternative system of governance?

The job of a system is to provide an organized and efficient way to accomplish a particular task, thereby saving time and money, and thus providing us with the required results. Systems provide efficiency and productivity.

The job of a Government is supposed to be to provide, implement and manage systems that will provide us with our necessities. Proper planning, setting up and management of these systems are essential to provide us with the 'best'; **for it is the 'best' that we (all peoples) desire and deserve.**

How do we go about deciding what we need and what systems to put in place? Who decides? Usually what happens is that our elected representatives take it upon themselves to use their own ideas and the ideas of the leaders of the party they belong to. All too often their choices are not what we may have chosen if given the opportunity, and may not be the best possible solution to the particular problem, and not in our best interest.

Importantly also, is the fact that **we are 'kept in the dark' while many decisions are made and implemented.** We are not consulted. **There is no effective system in place for public debate and consultation, - at least none that really works well.**

What must be realized, is that – 'the people' must be involved in bringing forth their views on all matters concerning their Community, Country, and World, as 'normal' people in the society can and do have good and even great ideas, that sometimes the experts fail to come up with, as they may get caught up in only what they have been taught, or may merely lack the vision. We are not short of ideas and solutions here in Trinidad and Tobago, the problem is tapping into these and manifesting them into actions.

Political parties get elected and come into power (in a democratic society) because they convince the people: that they have the answers, the best solutions for the problems that face the particular country, and they are the best people to do the job. They usually make lots of promises, most of which are never kept, and in most cases they fail to deliver to us 'the people' what we really want and need.

Political parties have had their day! And they have failed miserably! It simply is not the best way to provide us with 'the best'. Even though we vote for individual representatives in our communities, we are really voting for his/her affiliated political party. It is ultimately the leader of the party that we help to take control and it is this individual (the leader of the party) that truly has the power.

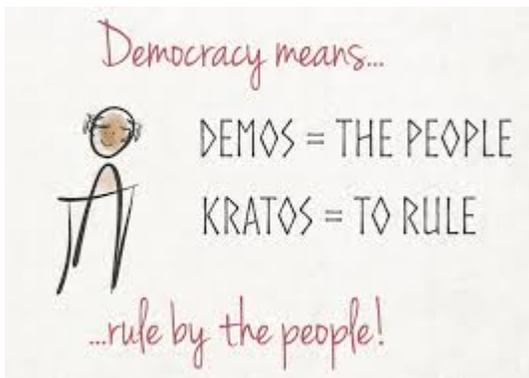
Sometimes we know nothing about the individual that we voted for, but vote for him because he belongs to the party that we like or prefer. It is impossible for two or more persons to have the same views and ideas about all matters that confront them. Within the elected party, the leader (in our case – the Prime Minister) is the ‘Boss’ and calls the shots. If others in the party have their own views, they in most cases have to succumb to the decisions of the PM - they must ‘toe the line’. Disagreement can cause much turbulence and the consequences of such are apparent. So usually they go without opposing the PM and carry out the tasks that he hands to them. I am not saying that a leader of a party, whether in power or not, will not take the advice of his associates, but I am trying to show where the ultimate point of control is. It would be ideal if our leaders were open and ready to listen to the ideas of others. But we see, time and time again, that persons who attain power tend to be controlled by that power, and tend to use it to fulfill their own egos and objectives.

Consider even what the political campaigns have come to, and what they are based upon. The party with the most money will access the best and largest advertising available, thus giving them a greater opportunity of influencing the population. Crazy! What is even more crazy is how they attack the other parties and candidates, digging into their past and personal lives. Appalling! Isn’t it?

The solution lies not in merely changing the government of the day, but in changing - the system of government.

Recognition and Revision of The Democratic System...

We are all witness to the failure and fall of Communism, and other Government systems, and the conversion of countries around the world to the democratic system. We can see that democracy has shown itself to be the most civilized system thus far, and that democratic countries are the ones that are in the best shape socially and financially. But we also see, that democracy works only to a point, and is not perfect. The reason for this is that the democracy we have in place is not true democracy.



Democracy means:-

- Power to the people.
- The people as a body.
- Government by the people for the people.
- A system that empowers the people to decide for themselves – their destiny.

“The equal claim of all to a fair participation in the enactment of the Laws by which they are governed.”

Thomas Jefferson

Can we honestly say that this is what exists in the democracy that we claim to have?

It is simply not good enough to have a say/a vote every four or five years, , to elect a political party into power to form ‘the government’. Then after elections we have no part to

play in the decision making process. **We are forever kept in the dark**, whilst they (the politicians) do whatever they want without our knowledge or consent. This cannot be right! This does not represent true democracy!

What I am about to present, is a way to make democracy work as it is meant to. A system where we ‘the people’ really become empowered, where we have a say in the decisions to solve the problems that concern us and our destiny. Where the best available solutions can be found and **‘implemented by consensus in the shortest space of time’**.

Vision

To see our Citizens Empowered and Fulfilling their Dreams and Goals - in Harmony
with the opportunity to participate in the Governance of their country at some level while seeking each other’s interest and of the environment, where arrogance and corruption have no place within our society and where all law abiding citizens are safe and free to follow their pursuits.

Mission

Working Together, to provide the changes necessary within the structures of Government to accomplish Better Governance, providing Hope and Opportunity to our Citizens to Fulfill their Dreams and Goals.

THE MANIFESTO OF THE ALTERNATIVE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

We must all come together and work towards change and improvement. In fact **we must all work within the governing process.**

Politicians and interested persons must come together and work for nothing at times (without financial remuneration), to produce the desired results. Politicians should really be persons who want to voluntarily give themselves, their time and their services to the aid of Mankind. We all must be Politicians in some way, giving and contributing freely.

The 'No Party System'...

Firstly, a 'No Party System' needs to be adopted. A system where there will be no political parties. Originally, democracy began without parties, and if we look at our constitution, we will find no real reference to Political Parties or even the word Party.

A system where individuals, 'independents' (as they are so called), can be elected by 'the people'/ Communities through an electoral process, as is done presently, except that they will not be put up or come from any Political Party, but instead they would come from within their community.

Instead of us conforming to and electing the candidates that the political parties screen and put to us for our vote, we will now elect from within our community a non-party aligned representative.

New Insert 2017- It has been suggested by an attendee at one of my presentations this year - that our communities should in the first instance, screen and have community elections prior to the next general election for the choosing of their candidate, so that when the next general election comes around, that the community will already have their Independent Candidate that they (the community) would sponsor their candidate for the electoral process. They then will be a contender against the various parties' candidates in the next general election.

Our Elected Representatives – *Independent* Representatives of The People (ROPs)

Our elected representatives, will work together, and in alliance with 'the people', for the freedom, justice and order in society.

Our elected Representatives will be our parliamentary representative (as is the case presently), but their only allegiance is to their community. They will represent the wishes of their communities in parliament, most specifically in relation to the making and amending of the Laws.

A parliament ideally set up with ONLY elected Independent Representatives of The People (ROPs), and they will sit at a Round Table Parliament. There will be no; us against them; no opposition; no time wasted in blaming the other side.

The representatives' job would be that of community representation in and out of parliament, in so far as putting together and changing policies and laws, and that of problem-solving using the Alternative System. They would also be responsible for the setting up of committees for the overseeing of various structures and functions of government.

No more Adversarial House of Representatives



– Instead - 41 Independent Representatives of the People – working together – in a Round Table Parliament – where each ROP will bring the community's issues and consensus on solutions and laws.



No Dual Portfolio for Representatives (RIPs)

These representatives would not hold a dual portfolio, where in the present system they (if they are part of the majority elected of a particular party and therefore part of the government) they are also given Ministerial portfolios and as such are Ministers. The job of “Representative of the People” is in itself a full time job, and we have many laws to amend and new ones to formulate and get enacted, and as such we really need a dedicated team totally focused on that, and who can interact with the people to find out their issues and obtain possible solutions.

Prime Minister >> Prime Representative of the People (PROP)

As an assembly the RIPs in their first sitting of parliament after a general election and from time to time, would elect a PROP from among themselves, who would act as such for a specified period (e.g. 3 months).

No More Kings

No longer will our Representatives become ‘larger than life’ characters, who become like Kings that reign over us. They would be simple representatives of the people, working with the people to enact righteous laws. No longer will they have police protection and large police escorts. No longer would they have exemptions on duties for certain things like personal vehicles. No longer will we have these public servants living in lavish accommodations supplied and paid by the people/ taxpayers of our country. No MORE! No More KINGS!

Managers instead of Ministers

The role of Ministers would cease to exist (as we know it).

One reason that we have mismanagement in our public service is because we never have had suitably qualified persons to manage our ministries and state agencies. As such the general management of these institutions has always failed, and then there was the subsequent lack of accountability, transparency, and performance. So it is no wonder why none of our ministries and state agencies don’t work properly and don’t deliver the levels of service that is required and deserved by the population, and why the state agencies all run at a loss.

Whether we need to have state agencies is a question that needs attention, and whether we need all the ministries that we have or could some of them be smaller and just concentrate on essential core services are all questions that need to be addressed.

See my proposals on this in the section – Economic Strategies

Despite those questions and the debates that must follow, in the meanwhile we need to properly manage what we have.

With the removal of our representatives for ministerial positions, we need to find suitably qualified person to manage these ministries and state agencies.

Permanent Secretaries and Ministers replaced by Managers

At present we have persons with the title ‘permanent secretaries’ in the Ministries who supposedly act as Managers, but they are there due to political appointments and or a system of seniority. There are 3 things wrong with this; 1. the way in which they are selected for the position. 2. their title as permanent secretaries. Why call them ‘permanent’ and why call them ‘secretaries’? 3. where is the evaluation of their performance? And why are none ever fired?

We need suitable qualified Managers for these ministries and agencies which are like huge corporations. Maybe we should change the title of ‘Permanent Secretaries’ to ‘Temporary Managers’, who have to perform...or else.

Our representatives shall appoint a boards of suitably persons to give direction for the running of the Ministries and will oversee the Hiring, Firing and Evaluation of suitably qualified Managers for their Ministries. The Board will engage with Recruitment/ Employment agencies to find the best person for the position of General Manager for the Ministry, and from the selections, the board will submit to the House of Representatives for the final approval.

Government Ministries and Agencies would be run by these Managers who would report to the Boards on a regular basis, and they work will be evaluated. Managers would operate within certain specific rules and guidelines, with agendas and timelines for deliverables. Major decisions and policies for the running of the Ministries and agencies will be made by the board in consultation with the

General Government policies and laws will be decided by the people (I will show how in a moment), and implemented by our RIPs.

The Governor

We shall go back to the term Governor rather than President. This does not mean we are going back to a colonial system, but it is simply the best title for the person who is to oversee the governance system. A Governor would be elected by ‘the people’. Each elected RIP will be able to put up one candidate for Governor, and then the people will vote and elect the Governor who would hold that position for a specific period and can be re-elected. Our Governor would preside over the entire system of governance and country, ensuring that the system is conducted justly and fairly. The Governor ultimately should be someone who is just, fair and spiritual. The Governor has to lead and guide our people into the future by instill good ideals and social values. **The Governor should communicate regularly with ‘the people’ guiding and imparting his/her wisdom unto them.**

‘The people’ ultimately will hold ‘all the power’; for they will be able through suitably devised mechanisms to re-elect and replace their representatives and the Governor at any time. ‘The people’ will also be part of the decision making process, through ‘citizen participation’.

Local Government.

Representatives for Local Government will also be non-aligned to any political party, and their function to represent the peoples’ needs as it pertains to the physical and social infrastructures within the community.

Citizen participation...

Insert 2016 – *In Athens Greece, in 500BC, the citizens voted on legislative bills. That is to say, that the citizens actually voted, for the very laws that were used to govern them.*

Democracy

- citizens vote
- First developed in Athens
- Developed because poorer Athenian citizens began to demand a voice in their government.
- In first democracy every citizen was allowed to vote
- Held large meetings to discuss and vote on important issues
- Pay given to those participating in the government
- Had assembly and juries
- Citizens= men who were at least 18 years old
- Not citizens= women, men under 18, and slaves



Direct Democracy and Representative Democracy

Originally when the citizens in Greece congregating in the city centre center and discussed and voted on laws; that was Direct Democracy. As Democracy developed and to incorporate all the people of a country into the system they devised Representative Democracy whereby communities elected a representative to take they concerns and opinions to the central government or House of parliament as we know it. Then with the formation of Political Parties, these Representatives would actually be more subservient to the party than the community. Today we have an opportunity by using technology, to go back to a system of direct democracy.

Switzerland is a rare example of a country with instruments of direct democracy (at the levels of the municipalities, cantons, and federal state). Citizens have more power than in a representative democracy.

Citizen Participation

For Citizen participation to work, links between our elected parliamentary representatives, our local councilors, the experts and the public need to be set up. This can be accomplished by introduction of the following: -

- 1. Community Councils** - setting up small workable community councils through the land, where we ‘the people’ can go conveniently, and have organized discussions pertaining to the problems and need of our community, our country, and even of our World. *Now we can engage in discussions using social media applications where communities can communicate their issues and ideas.* Problems or concerns that emerge from within these groups can be taken via an elected council leader to the parliamentarian (our representative); who would take it to the Parliament, or Ministry or Agency as required. Solutions may well emerge from within these community groups. When the problems and concerns from communities go to our representatives, they then can be taken back to the public at large (experts included), via conventional media and social media, encouraging input from the entire citizenry, and beyond, in search for solutions. This can be accomplished by the following: -
- 2. Facts’ – Information Media Networking...**A ‘Facts’ Information Media Networking System, where we ‘the people’, can see, hear, and read the facts. Being informed and able to know what the problems and concerns are that confront us, and what the possible solutions proposed are, and what the possible pros and cons surrounding them are (at community, national, and world level). This allows us to make informed decisions concerning these.

In the past, and still at present, the only way that a government can know what the wishes of ‘the people’ are, are by articles written in the newspapers and by protest action in the form of marches and strikes. The former has minimal effect and the latter is an inefficient and counter productive way of finding out what ‘the people’ want and what their wishes are. Recently we have seen various attempts by some governments, the media, and private bodies to find out what ‘the people’ want and what the consensus is, by using ‘phone in’ poll systems. This is in fact a very good attempt and is becoming more and more the trend, but it is not totally accurate, nor is it taken into consideration by our leaders. By using The Alternative System, we can accomplish an effective way of knowing – what the problems are, what ‘the people’ want, and what the consensus is.

- 3. Voting System – Voting on - Solutions to issues and for Laws -**

Archaic Ballot Box

The day of the ballot box and paper has to go. It is very time consuming, labor intensive, and wasteful.



Computerized Voting System...

Now after we 'the people' have had the opportunity to know the facts, the issues, the alternative solutions available, and their relative pros and cons, being totally informed, we can then by the introduction of a revolutionary, hi-tech voting system, be able to vote on any particular matter before us. We can vote **'yes' or 'no'**, or **'a' 'b' 'c' 'd' 'e'** etc. for our choice. In this way we would know exactly what the consensus of the people is.

This system simply involves the use of computerized voting machines. These voting machines, will be very much like the 'easy teller banking machines', and using the same type of personal identification plastic card. These voting machines will need to be strategically located so as to provide us with a system that is convenient, fair, efficient and effective.

There can be voting within communities, for community matters, and of course the entire country can go to the polls (in a flash) for National matters. When the countries of the World adopt this system, the World population can vote on any matter that effects the World and all of us.

Since writing and telling people about this idea, which some have found to be a bit radical, I have had the pleasure of witnessing on a CNN broadcast, a computerized voting machine that has already been made and is being tested in Atlanta. Probably the best idea would be to use the existing 'easy bank teller machines, as they are already strategically placed in convenient locations, and all that will be needed would be some upgrading of them, so that they can accommodate this new function.

They will be both a ‘bank teller machine’ and a ‘voting machine’. And, they are there already and are strategically placed.

It is even possible for us to do this type of voting via the internet on our computers, using security measures.

Whatever the computerized system used – it is of paramount importance (as always) that the system only offers - one vote per citizen. This should not be difficult to accomplish, as we have the technology. Do we have the will? I say we must!

It has in fact already been foretold – that there will be a time when one plastic card will take the place of all our existing cards. One card that will be our – bank card, credit card, I.D. card, drivers license, and voting card, etc.

2016 -Now we have cell phones and we can vote via phone Apps from the comfort of your home or from where ever you are; no need to take time of work and to go line up to vote.



Insert 2015 – Pia Mancini - In 2013 Mancini co-founded the non-profit DemocracyEarth which provides an online platform for decentralised, trans-national and fully transparent decision-making for any sort of organisation – political groups, social movements, sports teams, companies, cities. Based on blockchain technology, DemocracyEarth projects a vision and provides a potential system of governance that transcends the nation state system.

In 2012 Mancini co-founded [DemocracyOS](#), an online app originating in Argentina that allows citizens to understand, discuss and “vote” on new legislation. The platform offers to use modern technology to replace or supplement the use of centuries-old paper ballots, which is almost exclusively still the method used by nation states to monitor and remain accountable to the electorate every two to five years. DemocracyOS has been used internationally to help political parties act more in accordance with the people they represent. Mancini also co-founded Partido de la Red (The [Net Party](#)), an Argentinian political party that pledges its representatives to act in accordance with the popular vote on DemocracyOS.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pia_Mancini



Let us (Trinidad) take the opportunity to become the leader in the world and show - **the way forward.**

**'The Alternative System' is
the 'Governing System' of the future.**

Lets just DO IT !

Economic Strategies (for the T&T)

1. **Policy Changes** (breaking down the barriers)
2. **Dollar Re-valuation *******
3. **Restructuring Government services,**
4. **Revenue and Taxation.**

*(All, to be adopted within a transitional period of approximately six years)

1. Policy changes...

- (a) **No import restrictions**, for both raw materials and finished goods of any type, with the exception of already illegal drugs and other such things that may be directly harmful to the society.

The reasons for removing restrictions, is that we as human beings, we as ‘the people’ of T&T deserve the ‘best’. We have been suppressed for far too long and should not be deprived any longer. We should have the freedom and choice as to whether we want to buy local or foreign goods. Having total access to foreign goods, technology, services and expertise, can only serve as instruments for our betterment and progress.

- (b) **No import duties and taxes, on any goods.** Services charges for using the seaport and airport facilities and for the maintaining the Custom’s personnel and Authority will of course have to exist. These monies must go directly to the respective bodies and not to a central government pool account/ consolidated account. I suggest that an import charge of 5% across the board be charged for all imports to cover the operating cost of the facilities. Bear in mind that we will have to work towards the reducing of the existing charges to a 5 % charge in an incremental approach.

The reason for no import taxes and restrictions – is that all goods coming into the country are for ‘the people’ and they need to be as cheap as possible. The importer, whether buying raw materials or finished goods, will be able to purchase larger quantities with his available capital, as he/she does not have to keep monies aside to pay heavy duties and taxes, and can then even obtain cheaper prices because he/she is purchasing in larger quantities.

- (c) **No foreign exchange control restrictions.** Abolishing the system of restriction and controlling the free movement of ‘the peoples’ money.
New Insert - (*this seems to have come to past*) Newer Insert – 2016 (Now we have a shortage of Foreign Currencies and the Government is restricting access to a select few).It is a shame that we are now in a position where we cannot change our currency and acquire foreign currency.

It is unfair that people should not be allowed to move freely with their own hard-earned money, be it over land or sea, and to spend as they please.

The absence of the ‘red tape’ involved in obtaining licenses for goods and foreign exchange will speed up trade, therefore allowing us to expedite our progress and growth.

Please note:

- *We must also reduce and remove taxes and tariffs in an incremental and staged way through the transitional period.*
- *Some of these suggestions have come to pass. We however have to start moving faster in this direction if we are not only to survive, but also to prosper in a global economy. The saying “the early bird catches the worm” applies here, as if we adopt these changes early and quickly it can have the effect of lifting our economy quickly, but if we fail to do so we may not reap all the benefits that may accrue as if it were one quickly.*
- *About 15 years ago someone said that we were 15 years behind the United States of America in our development. As time passes - if we are moving along at a slower rate of development than they, we become even further behind as time passes.*
- *The country that can predict and anticipate the future and that can plan in light of that anticipation aspire towards such, will be the countries that prosper. Taking the lead, rather than being lead, or lagging behind. When you are taking the lead – you are in front. When being lead –you are behind.*

Summary of Advantages of the above policy changes...

- 1. Freedom of choice.**
- 2. Greater access to materials, goods, technology and expertise.**
- 3. Faster economic growth.**
- 4. Cheaper raw materials for local manufacturers.**
- 5. Cheaper machinery and equipment for all businesses.**
- 6. Cheaper vehicles (for ‘the people’ and for businesses).**
- 7. Cheaper imports and consumer prices.**
- 8. Tourist attracted to cheaper prices.**
- 9. Goods more exportable because of cheaper prices.**
- 10. Attraction of investments, both local and foreign.**

2. Re-valuation of the TT dollar...

The strategies that have been tried, whereby our dollar has been devalued several times, has not worked, here or in any other of the Caribbean countries. De-valuation of a countries currency only creates high inflation and puts more hardship to bear on ‘the people’ of these

countries. It always makes us ‘the people’ poorer and poorer in relation to other countries of the world, and has made life harder and harder within our middle to lower income communities. The action taken to de-value our dollar has been through the dictates of the IMF and the World Bank.

**It is not working and
we must reverse this course of action.**

Since I can remember, these incompetent politicians (sorry) at every budget (and I have heard the late Dr. Eric Williams say this also), tell us ‘the people’ that – *‘these harsh measures that we implement will benefit you later on and you must bear with us’*. Heaven help! Are we going to live our entire lives listening to and accepting this? Many have lived their whole life hearing this and some have died and have not seen these promises bear fruit. Are we going to continue to accept this?

Let us examine our financial situation as individuals here and in contrast to others in the world. Let take an example, - an average worker in T&T (let us use a tradesman as an example) earns an average of TT\$300. per day. An American worker doing the same type of job earns an average of US\$300. per day. Or we could look at the minimum wage, where the minimum hourly wage in T&T is TT\$15. and the minimum wage for NY is to be \$15 in 2018. This means that our worker is in fact earning almost 7 times less than the American worker (our neighbor) is. We must look at ourselves within the world context, for we are part of the World and everything that happens in the World affects us. The American worker will theoretically have a higher standard of living and greater comparable rate of savings and will die 6 times richer than us. It is a fact that the average American can afford to take vacations and travel at least two and three times a year. The average Trinidadian cannot do this.

We may say that our wages need to be increased. But it is not possible for us to bring about a rate of increase in wages even within the next decade or two so that we may have a comparable level of earnings as our American brothers. For, to do that would mean that the salary of TT\$300. per day would have to increase to TT2,100. per day, or the minimum hourly wage here would have to go from \$15 to \$105. This is not realistically possible.

There is no other single course of action that can set us on the course to economic growth as this proposed – Re-Valuation of our TT Dollar.

To bring about the necessary growth for our people and nation – **we must Re-value our currency**. This along with the *laisser-faire policies that I propose, will set us on a path of super growth and prosperity.

*Laisser-faire – the absence of government meddling in business, except to the extent to ensure fair play.

Once we have the ‘go ahead’, basically a consensus from ‘the people’ that we take this course of action, we can move forward and embark on the process of re-valuing our dollar.

The process must not only be accepted by ‘the people’ but the implementation process must be shown to and accepted by ‘the people’. Normally ‘the people’ are kept in the dark and never know when a de-valuation or re-valuation will take place. How would you like it if you got up tomorrow morning to find out that the government has once again de-valued our dollar, and now made it TT\$10. or TT15. to US\$1. I can occur, as in the past that is exactly what happened. One morning we wake up to hear that our dollar is devalued.

With this whole new system and approach, once the people want this system, then - ‘the people’ will be told in advance as to when the re-valuations will take place. In fact they will be informed of all the dates up front from the very inception. Thus giving the exact dates - gives ‘the people’ - ‘us’ - time to prepare. The government’s true role is to work with ‘the people’ and for ‘the people’.

The Transition

Our dollar is pegged to the US dollar and currently a rate of \$6 TT to \$1 US. I suggest that we of course keep it pegged to the US dollar like other currencies, but that we re-value our dollar incrementally making it stronger and of greater value, where at the end of the transition our TT dollar will be worth the equivalent to the US dollar.

This was the originally proposed plan for Re-Valuing our dollar

The process will involve making incremental adjustments carried out within a specified time frame, which would be the transitional period.

I would suggest a period of about 11 years.

During this time, and lets say we take 11 years as the term agreed upon by consensus of ‘the people’, - we will make yearly adjustments to the TT dollar value by specified increments, bringing up the value.

The following example shows proposed yearly adjustments of approx. 15% re-valuation (appreciation) per year for sixteen years, at the end of which the TT dollar will be on par with the US dollar.

Present value of TT Dollar = TT\$6.30 =US \$1.

The first adjustment should be carried out six months after the proposal is accepted. Then the following to be done on the same day on each of the following years.

Start	TT\$ 6.30 = US\$ 1.00
First year	adjusted to TT\$ 5.35
Second year	adjusted to TT\$ 4.55
Third year	adjusted to TT\$ 3.85
Fourth year	adjusted to TT\$ 3.25
Fifth year	adjusted to TT\$ 2.75

Sixth year	adjusted to TT\$ 2.30
Seventh year	adjusted to TT\$ 1.95
Eight year	adjusted to TT\$ 1.65
Ninth year	adjusted to TT\$ 1.40
Tenth year	adjusted to TT\$ 1.15
Eleventh year	adjusted to TT\$ 1.00 = US\$ 1.00

Insert 2017 - *Revised Transition of the Re-Valuation of our dollar (2017)*

A weekly de-valuation of 2 cents. (Similar to how our dollar has been floating downward) If our dollar is presently trading at \$6.80 to one US dollar, at the rate of 2 cents per week, it will take 6 years and 6 months for the TT dollar to become on par with the US dollar.

After we have accomplished this, where our dollar is equal to the US dollar, we may actually cease to retain the use of our national TT dollar. This is actually called “Dollarization”, and in fact there are a number of countries that have done this.

The main reason for these measures is merely for our economic growth (as I will explain), but as well as that blessing, we will also become leaders in showing a practical way to go about the unification of world currencies, creating one WORLD-DOLLAR, which has been and continues to be spoken about by others. What we need now is not words but ACTION...

One day the world will have one currency THE WORLD DOLLAR. With the use of one currency – there will be no foreign exchange problems, but only the problems of balance of payments between countries.

Benefits of Re-valuing the TT dollar...

1. Inflow of Private Capital - Inflow of Foreign exchange

We know that many people here have lots of money banked overseas. The previous foreign exchange restrictions along with both the past and present social and political instability, has lead some/ many of our citizens to bank and invest some of their savings overseas. Many business persons have limited the injection of profits back into their businesses which could have been use for business growth and expansion, but have invested substantially overseas in more stable markets.

Along with this, is the fact that we also have many Trinidadians residing overseas who are there because of many reasons, some of which are – their desire for a better economic and social climate. Many of these persons would like to return home but because of the better conditions abroad they choose to stay put for the time at least. Some of these persons have

taken money with them when they migrated and some have made their fortunes there by now.

If these Trinidadians abroad who would like to return home can see some better future here (in the light of a visionary plan that actually shows hope and future for them and their offspring), they will be encouraged even further by the proposal of re-valuation. In fact, the sooner they bring their money into T&T the better the exchange rate for them and the more TT dollars that they will receive for their foreign currency. The longer they wait is the less they will receive when they convert their foreign currencies.

The same goes for locals that have their money invested abroad. The sooner they bring their investments back into T&T is the better that they will do at the present exchange rate.

It will be to all of our benefit for us to have our locals reinvesting rather than be relying on foreign investments, which only rapes our country. We give tax-free incentives for foreign companies to come here and set up, and at the same time we tax our own little entrepreneurs who are trying to start their businesses. We can still accommodate foreign investments, but not in an unfair way to our locals. Foreign investments must only be allowed if there is clear advantage for us and our country.

2. Business Development / Economic Development and Job Creation

Here too we can see the wide scope now derived from the incentives given to existing businesses (both small and large) and potential entrepreneurs. Another incentive that comes to mind is the presence of the monopoly forum that will be accessible to 'quick starters' who can take advantage of new and different business ventures. It is the private sector that must be propelled into development, and that must be done and encouraged by that re-structuring of national policies so as to provide for such.

Most businesspersons, during the restrictive pre-1985 era, and some even to this day because of being unsure of the political and social climate here, have been reluctant to invest more capital into their businesses. They instead opted to direct their profits into more secure overseas investments. These actions have not propelled their businesses forward as if they were to reinvest their profits and excess capital into them. The input of capital is so important for business growth and to provide the much needed 'job creation'. Businesses need to invest in technology, creating better efficiency and productivity, providing the best quality goods at the cheapest possible prices, and so that their businesses can compete in the global economy.

When the 'transition period' of the re-valuation process is completed, the effect will be that it will cost approximately **7 times less** capital to purchase equipment and machinery, and goods and raw materials from abroad. And...even cheaper as we can add to this is the removal of the heavy import taxes. Imagine... the results!

3. Cheaper Prices

Again- When the ‘transition period’ of the re-valuation process is completed, the effect will be that it will cost approximately 7 times less to purchase any imported product, just due to the increased strength and buying power of our dollar.

4. Increased Earning and Personal Savings

They may well be some delayed consumer spending on non-essential and luxury items as consumers wait for cheaper prices after each yearly re-valuation or as the dollar de-values on a 2 cent per week rate. This can lead to decreased foreign product consumption (a good thing), as well as leading to increased personal savings among the population, especially if we educate our people on the value of saving.

5. Reduction of our National debt.

The national debt that I refer to, is the money that we (the government, the country) owe to our overseas creditors. The World Bank, IMF, etc. If for example we presently owe one billion US dollars, this means that at the present exchange rate, we owe, or have to look for seven billion TT dollars to repay that debt. After the re-valuations process our TT dollar will be on par with the US dollar and we would only have to find one billion TT instead of six billion TT. This reduces our debt by six times.

Summary of - Advantages of Re-valuing our dollar...

1. Obtaining more worth for our dollar
2. Encourages inflow of foreign exchange (by Nationals, here and abroad))
3. Creates incentives for investment (Local & Foreign), due to cheaper plant and machinery.
4. Generates business/ economic development
5. Creation of employment opportunities (from business development and growth)
6. Cheaper prices, across the board
7. Reduced consumption in transitional period.
8. Increased personal savings
9. Reduction of the National dept
10. Becoming a leader in the unification of the monetary system

Trading Blocks

P.S. In recognition of the establishment of global trading blocks, where we have the European union coming together to form a trading block (recently issuing the EURO dollar), Asia and Australia another and the US and Central America etc. At the end of the day all that is accomplished is that the number of players – 180 countries – gets reduced to a handful of trading blocks. There will still be winners and losers. There will still be the problem of balance of payments at the end of the day. We need to trade freely and fairly among all countries in the world, and merge all currencies to form ‘The World Dollar’.

New Insert - *Some countries are already using the US dollar as their currency or alongside their currency. See below -*

Countries using the US dollar exclusively

- [British Virgin Islands](#)
- [Caribbean Netherlands](#) (from 1 January 2011)
- [East Timor](#) (uses [its own coins](#))
- [Ecuador](#) (uses [its own coins](#) in addition to U.S. coins; [Ecuador](#) adopted the US dollar as its [legal tender](#) in 2000.)^[37]
- [El Salvador](#)
- [Marshall Islands](#)
- [Federated States of Micronesia](#) (Micronesia used the US dollar since 1944)^[34]
- [Palau](#) (Palau adopted the US dollar since 1944)^[34]
- [Panama](#) (uses [its own coins](#) in addition to U.S. coins. This country has adopted the US dollar as [legal tender](#) since 1904.)^[38]
- [Turks and Caicos Islands](#)

Countries using the US dollar alongside other currencies

- [Bahamas](#)
- [Barbados](#) ([Barbadian dollar](#) pegged at 2:1 but USD is accepted)
- [Belize](#) (Belizean dollar pegged at 2:1 but USD is accepted)
- [Bermuda](#) ([Bermudian dollar](#) pegged at 1:1 but USD is accepted)
- [Uruguay](#)^[39]
- [Iraq](#)
- [Cambodia](#) (uses the [Cambodian riel](#) for many official transactions but most businesses deal exclusively in dollars for all but the cheapest items. Change is often given in a combination of US dollars and Cambodian riel. ATMs yield US dollars rather than Cambodian riel.)^{[40][41]}
- [Costa Rica](#)
- [Haiti](#) (uses the U.S dollar alongside its domestic currency, the [gourde](#))
- [Honduras](#) (used alongside the [Honduran lempira](#))^[42]
- [Lebanon](#) (along with the [Lebanese pound](#))
- [Liberia](#) (exclusively used the US dollar until 1982, when the National Bank of Liberia began issuing five dollar coins;^[43] US dollar still in common usage alongside the [Liberian dollar](#))
- [North Korea](#) (along with the [Chinese yuan](#), [euro](#), and [North Korean won](#))^[35]
- [Somalia](#) (along with the [Somali shilling](#))
- [Zimbabwe](#) since 2009 (alongside [South African rand](#), [British pound](#), [Botswana pula](#), [Chinese yuan](#), and several other currencies)

Government Services, Revenue and Taxation.

Government must be reduced to the role of ‘facilitator’ and ‘mediator’, and privatization of some of our government enterprises and utilities must be done, or at least parts of them. Some will argue that government should control the essential services. But just look at how the private sector almost completely controls the manufacture, importation, distribution and sale of food, which is an essential commodity, and we seem to have no problem with that service, except when government intervenes. For instance, when they subject importers to lengthy delays in our ports because of custom’s inefficiencies.

Privatization will lead to better management, increased productivity, and a competitive environment, thereby improving the level of service and reducing rates and prices, which of course benefits us – the consumers.

Government should really only be involved with the market place to the extent of securing fair play within it.

By the adoption of a ‘Laisser-Faire system, many government agencies and ministries will be reduced substantially. Others will no longer need to exist. This will therefore immediately reduce the amount of government revenue needed to maintain and subsidize some of these. There are however some government services that need to be in place, and it takes money to run these.

T&T Budget

Insert 2015 – T&T budget is extraordinary high. This is the result of many years of “easy oil money” that we mismanaged and squandered, with the affording of government officials taking bribes, giving friends and family jobs of which they need not have performed in and the giving of contracts to same with no accountability and enormous cost overruns, and to a mismanaged public service again with no accountability. In 2015 I thought that our budget seemed very high and I wanted to know what other Caribbean countries budgets were. My Google search revealed the following for 2013:-

Comparison Budgets in 2013

Country	US dollars	Population	Land Mass	
	Billions	Millions	Sq Miles	
Trinidad & Tobago	9.26	1.3	1864	
Jamaica	4	2.7	4320	
Haiti	2.4	11.2	10,710	
Antigua & Barbuda 2012	0.248	0.89	108	
Dominica (537 Mil ECD)	.199	0.71	290	
St. Kitts & Nevis aprox 2016	.185	.046	101	
St. Vincent & Grenadines	0.185	0.11	133	
St. Lucia	0.222	0.17	238	
Grenada	0.192	0.10	120	
Barbados	1.45	0.28	167	
	US\$9.081			
Puerto Rico	9.1	3.7	3,435	

The budget of T&T is over ½ a billion US dollars more than the combined budgets of the 7 Caribbean countries identified above. This is unacceptable, and now without the petrochemical dollars we have to curb this runaway expenditure.

Why is Our Budget so Huge?

- We had Oil – Money No Problem
- We did not have to account – no accountability
- Nepotism – no performance required
- Poorly run Public Services – Poor Service
- Corruption – Order of the day
- No productivity – all costs increase
- Government is largest employer – no productivity required

Government services should be self-sufficient and the inefficiencies within them eliminated, so that they may become productive and serve ‘the people’ in a real way. With the restructuring of government’s role, and by the improvement of its operations by using suitable qualified managers, government can become more manageable and effective in providing and facilitating us with our needs.

Services and utilities can be put into two categories, - Metered and Un-Metered. The metered are the ones that can be measured in relation to how much one uses. The un-metered are the ones that cannot be measured in relation to what one uses.

Income tax in its present form is unfair. It is unfair for one person to pay more tax than another because one income is greater than another's. The benefits received from the un-metered government services are both theoretically equal. The reasons that some people earn more than others is because they have aspired to achieve such, by either their dedication to studies, hard work or both.

A new tax system must be implemented. We must develop and implement a fair and effective tax system. All taxes though, must be categorized and appropriately allocated to the particular service, so that we can see what we are paying for.

At present there are services that are not metered and that can be, and should be. An example of this is our water supply. We must insist that each home and business be fitted with a water meter, so that the water into each property can be metered and persons will then be charged according to what they use. Not only will this encourage people to be conservative with their use of it, eliminating wastage, but is the only fair way to accurately assess user charges. The more one uses – the more one pays. The system that we use now is unfair and inefficient. Many countries in the world use water meters presently. This is not new. We are just way behind in implementing successful systems!

We must look at the best possible solutions and systems to solve our problems.

Self-sufficiency of the metered services should be an easy task, if managed properly and once the cost of supplying a unit of a commodity is known, then a realistic rate of charging per unit can be applied.

Monies collected by individual Utilities, Authorities and Agencies must be kept within them and not pooled together with other government incomes. Each must be run independently and the need to apply for funds will not occur, as they will have their own resources.

Let us look at the Ministry of Transportation and the Transport Authority for example. Monies collected from the various fee charges, (e.g. driver's license fees, motor vehicle taxes etc) should stay within the Authority and be used directly by the Authority to sustain the management, operations, and maintenance of the Authority and its Ministry, and for the building and maintenance of roads, bridges etc.

The police service is another example of a service that can be self-sufficient financially, by the proper enforcement of our laws. The monies collected from fines and penalties can go directly towards the management and maintenance of the service. There is not only the great potential revenue that can be derived by the proper running of both our police service and also the Judicial system, but the added bonus of bringing this country to a place where the law is observed and upheld, leading to a curb in the crime situation, traffic violations, and even the white collar crime.

The gasoline tax implemented, whereby the monies collected go towards the maintenance of roads, is a good idea, for it stands to reason that the amount of gas one uses and purchases reflects one's road use. Although a vehicle's fuel efficiency will alter this to some extent, as well as the type of fuel used, some of this can be factored in and different rates for different fuels could be worked out and applied accordingly.

Assessment of the services that cannot be measured, and theoretically benefit us equally is essential. They too must be managed efficiently, so as not to waste time and money (our money). Some tax structure for these have to be worked out and implemented. If we benefit equally, it is within reason that we should pay equally, with the exception of our children, our aged, our handicapped and unemployed.

Wouldn't it be great if we could do away with the word TAX ? Well, whether we can or whether we can't, or we do or we don't, would not change the reality of the situation, which is that there are services, government services that have no individual revenue or revenue capabilities, but still need to be in place and maintained. Somehow monies have to be found for these. What has to be done is to link these services with others that they are respectively helping and are associated with that have income.

I feel and suggest that we look for a way where Insurance companies could contribute towards the running of the Fire services, the Police service and the Health services, as they will directly benefit from the proper functioning of these. As with less theft, fires, and the better health of our citizens would equate to less insurance claims.

We should strive towards:

- Self-sufficiency in our Government services
- Privatization of some services
- Reduction of some services
- Removal of Government enterprises, meaning: - removal of government from doing business, other than providing and most importantly facilitating essential services, and acting as 'Mediator' ensuring that Freedom, Justice and order are preserved.
- Removal of import Taxes
- Organizing, implementing and managing an effective Taxation system.

Taxation – Simplifying Tax System

The Present Tax System and its Flaws

Our archaic taxation system is flawed and much too labor intensive. It does not have to be this way; there are alternatives.

Presently we are taxed 25% on our income over \$5,000. Then we pay the Value Added Tax (VAT) of 15% for almost everything we purchase. We are taxed with import duty (20%) on

most imported items, and with some being 40%. Import duties and VAT are also charged on the cost of freight.

While import duties serve to protect our local manufacturers, it also increases the cost to our consumers and does nothing to foster productivity in our manufacturing sector. We need lower prices for our people regardless of origin of goods and local manufacturers need to work on areas in which they can truly be competitive.

We pay tax when we purchase our homes. The stamp duty on a home for one million dollars is \$55,000 and the tax for a two million dollar home is \$155,000. We pay tax on our new vehicles and we pay tax from \$100 to \$7,000 dollars, depending on the age of the vehicle when we transfer them. Why? Why are we paying a tax when we buy a secondhand vehicle, Import taxes have already been paid. Why are we paying Tax to transfer a property. These transfers need only accrue an administrative fee for the administrative work that needs to be done either with the Legal Affairs department for the property transfer or the for the vehicle at the Transport department.

Removal of the Stamp Duty on property sale and transfers will create a surge in the construction industry, as persons can now engage in property purchases for renovation/restoration projects, or what is terms “flipping”, which is not viable at present with the burden of this Stamp duty tax, as the purchaser will have to add that to the cost when it purchased and then Stamp duty will be placed on the buying price when being sold.

Flaws in the income tax system

- Many, if not most, self-employed persons and persons receiving undeclared salaries do not pay income taxes. Taxi drivers do not pay tax, tradesmen who work for themselves do not pay tax.
- Companies hire smart accountants who help them avoid paying excess corporation tax.
- Higher income earners get their employers to reduce their tax burden by lessening their actual salary but then increasing their allowances, like providing a company vehicle or housing allowances etc
- It is mainly the legitimate small and mid level salary earner who has to pay his tax. That includes all government workers.

Problem with VAT

While the value added Tax system is a good way to make everyone pay, it too has its drawbacks.

1. The main problem with VAT is that it is far too labor intensive. Within businesses (both large and small) it takes many man-hours to work out VAT returns every 2 months. These man-hours are totally unproductive and this has to be done in every business and every store across the nation. Besides this, an entire VAT department employs many persons to track and tally all these VAT returns. Again, this is all unproductive work.
2. Another problem with VAT is evasion. People may sell products without invoices and not charge and/ or submit VAT collected. And smaller businesses are not vatable.

Suggestions:

- Remove all income and corporate taxes altogether
- Remove VAT from all good and services
- Remove import duties on all items
- Remove all Taxes on transferring properties and vehicles.

Then introduce: –

- A **‘pay as you use system’** for utilities and agencies.
- **Remove all subsidies from gasoline** (and diesel), Electricity and Water.
- **Introduce a ‘VAT on GAS’** (gasoline and diesel and CNG) and Electricity.

Pay as you use system

TAX should not be focused on ‘the more you earn the more you pay’, but rather on ‘the more you use the more you pay’. The pay as you use system would make utilities and government agencies self-sufficient to some extent.

For example, fees for driver’s licenses and for vehicle registration and transfer should be sufficient to provide for the proper running of the Transport department, and nothing else. What is the cost of the paper work within the department to transfer a vehicle? Certainly not thousands of dollars as is presently charged.

Moneys collected from the ticketing of driving offences should go towards the running of the highway patrol police department and the part of the judicial/court system, which collects these fines. Our water should be metered so that we pay as we use. Property owners should be paying a council tax that goes towards the garbage collection service as well as street cleaning etc. Certainly there are many services that the government provides that cannot be quantified for separate collection and as such these would assume funding from the ‘VAT on GAS’ collection revenue pool.

‘VAT on GAS’

Firstly the subsidies on gas have to be removed, and this like most other measure that are prescribed herein are to be done on a transitional basis over a number of years. The ‘VAT on GAS’ would not be 15%, but might be more like 100% or 500%. This would have to be studied and evaluated so that the revenue collected with this tax would equate with that presently collected from all the other taxes combined, in order that there be no deficit or shortfall between what is collected presently to what would be collected by ‘VAT on GAS’, so as to meet all our budgetary needs. That said, we must reduce our budgetary needs as they are much too high. And this is to be done by eliminating the mismanagement of Ministries and State enterprises, and by the reduction of some and the privatization of some.

What this would do is: –

- Removal of corporate Tax would Free up businesses so that they can focus their time and resources on doing business, rather than having to do unproductive work, like keeping books for the purpose of paying income tax and VAT.
- All tax would be collected at ‘the pump’. The only businesses that would have to keep their books in order for the purpose of paying the ‘VAT on GAS’ would be the gas stations. In fact their VAT would be easily calculated and there can be no ‘cheating’ as the record of the gasoline that is delivered to the gas station is ‘known’.
- The income tax department would cease to exist, freeing up the employees to become engaged in productive work.
- The VAT office requirements would be greatly reduced as they would only have to now track and tally the ‘VAT on GAS’ from a greatly smaller number of collection points, namely the gas stations. In fact one person can do this job. He or she will be the Inland Revenue person.
- Customs and excise would be almost dismantled, except for security checks to be carried out on incoming ports of entry ensuring that no illegal drugs or ammunition enter, greatly reducing the time it takes to clear imports.
- Imported items would cost in excess of 35% less with no import duty or VAT.
- Present local Vat-able items would cost 15% less.
- Encourage more frugal driving practices and the use of alternative transportation (as one pays more at the pump). Both these are needed as traffic congestion is now a serious problem that impairs our productivity. (The alternative transportation would be proper Public Transportation system...at the cheapest possible fares or even FREE Public Transport could be considered, because if we can reduce the unproductive time spent in traffic, it will have a huge economic benefit)

Insert 2017 – Someone suggested that while we need to remove the subsidy on of Electricity supply we can also place a tax on the electricity as a form of property tax (so to speak), used to go towards the areas of garbage collection, and other local government maintenance items, and maybe even towards community schools.

Argument

One may argue that if gas prices go up that everything will increase, and this is true if it went up in isolation to other factors, however with the removal of all the other taxes (above) this would not occur. Most imported goods would cost in excess of 35% less, and while the cost of gas alone might increase by 100% or 500% more, that increase will only reflect a modest increase in all goods and services, as fuel is only one part of the cost of transport (others being - cost of vehicle or loan payments, depreciation, maintenance and insurance, etc.), and ground transport is only one part of the cost of the delivery of goods and services.

The real net effect of adopting the above measures is that it will drive our economy forward with productivity, business growth and development.

If we want to move forward as a country we must find innovative ways that foster 'productivity' - the key to sustainable prosperity. Systems that burden us and hinder our productivity like our archaic tax system need to be replaced.

Planning

A Nation without a Vision or a Plan cannot focus its resources, especially its people in a particular direction or destination and there is no unison or team work.

We must come together and plan what we are going to do, and start acting in a unified way, to carry out the wants and needs of 'the people' so that we can accomplish our goals. Proper assessment and planning is important for both our short and long term goals and benefits.

We need to come up with a plan for our social, economic and physical infrastructure. We should start with an internal geographic assessment of our two islands, and by proper planning we can make the best use of the different regions, by the allocation and re-allocation of our needs onto them. For example: Where are the best places to place our housings developments, our schools, our commercial centers, industrial centers, roads and so on?

It's important that we 'the people' are involved in this planning process and know what our plans are.

We must be very mindful of the environmental impact of these, and weigh this against our social and economic benefits in each case.

Management

We have always been a rich country. We (the government) have always had the money to buy and build anything, but unfortunately where our problems lie is in the proper management of what we buy and build. We buy a new boat for the Trinidad to Tobago

ferry service but we don't maintain it adequately. We receive a new fleet of police vehicles, which without proper maintenance deteriorates in a short space of time. We need to develop and implement proper management systems within our government services.

No wonder we were unable to manage our Ministries and State agencies, as we simply place the elected representatives to manage them without the necessary qualifications or experience. Just like any large corporation we need the best people to fill the required positions starting with the general manager. And we need to utilize Recruitment/employment agencies to find their suitable persons.

Roads

Our roads are terrible! Where are the road engineers? Do we have any in Trinidad and Tobago? Do we have road inspectors that check our roadways on a continual basis to identify issues that require repair? Do they check when a repair job is done to see if the job is done satisfactorily? Roads play an important role in facilitating the effective, efficient and comfortable transportation for our citizens and for our goods and services. Reliable and sufficient roadways are primary to our productivity as a nation.

Roads in bad condition not only make our journeys uncomfortable, but make it unsafe when we have to meander around potholes and when we have to try and avoid our wheels slipping into the roadside drains. I really don't know how we accept this poor level of service from our government.

Bad roads wreck our vehicles at an alarming rate. These vehicles that we have to pay so much money for are being destroyed. Tires, shocks, ball joints, steering ends and tie rods, and all suspension parts wear out much faster than when these vehicles are run on proper roads. This makes our vehicles rapidly unsafe and in need of repair, thus making us spend unnecessary money. The overall national impact is that we as a Nation spend millions if not billions annually on importing vehicle parts (both used and new). This is a serious National expenditure and National burden, and a burden on each and every one of us.

These bad and insufficient roadways seriously reduce our productivity. Firstly, when it takes twice as long to get from point A to point B, it means that the delivery of goods and services will take longer. Salespersons, delivery drivers, taxi drivers etc are much hindered by bad and insufficient roadways. Besides the loss of productivity caused by the slower movement of goods, services and civilians, we also have a great loss of productivity because of the down time for vehicle repairs. Some people can't work when their vehicle is down and therefore they cannot produce for themselves and cannot also add to the productivity of our nation. Let us look one step further, and look at the repairer who is repairing the vehicle. They are in a semi non-productive role, as they are really repairing what we ourselves have caused (because we don't have our roads in order). Should our roads be in good order, then probably three quarters of the vehicle repairers could be involved in some other productive work that takes us forward instead of work that is just propping us up.

Realize too, that we have to resort to using used parts to replace on our vehicles, and that we are so impoverished that we also have to import used cars because we cannot afford to buy new ones. To add fuel to fire the government imposes an import tax on foreign used vehicles of more than the landed cost of these vehicles. Ridiculous!

Why can't we fix our roads properly? The way it is done now where pitch is just thrown on the old surface is not the correct way. What needs to be done, firstly, is that all the old surface pitch needs to be removed, then the underlay or foundation and side gutters needs to be examined and repaired if necessary. Manholes need to be adjusted as necessary. Then a new surface layer of pitch applied at the appropriate thickness. Let's fix our roads properly!

Really, we should plan way ahead and build and repair our roads with a view for it to be sufficient for the next 50 years. This along with planning for our electricity, cable and telecommunications facilities. That is, totally dig up the existing roads and lay 6 to 8 foot diameter concrete pipes where the utilities will be run underground (under the roads) and have access/service doors at reasonable intervals.

We also need to increase the number of roads and the size of some (by increasing the amount of lanes).

Traffic

We need to fix the traffic situation, which is pretty bad. Actually nowhere in Trinidad is far, but it just takes too long to get from A to B, because of the traffic. We need to plan now for some quick short-term remedies and also make a road and transport plan that will take us well into the future.

Traffic causes a serious decrease in productivity.

The causes of Traffic in Trinidad are:

- Lack of adequate, efficient and comfortable Public Transportation
- Taxis stopping indiscriminately in the road lane to pick up and drop off passengers
- Parking along main roadways, sometimes on both sides
- Backing out from businesses places onto major roads
- Inadequate roadways
- Poor quality of roads
- Inadequate parking for businesses along main roads
- Schools not community based

Monorail

We need to revise the public transport system and really get a good system in place. I suggest the use of the mono-rail above ground system. This system is easy to set up and assemble and does not block road traffic as it passes overhead, so no under or overpasses need to be made. The entire system is above ground.

We can have one that is routed in and around the cities of POS and San Fernando. One from POS to Arima, and one from POS to San Fernando with stops along the way. Taxis can take commuters from these stops to other destinations.



Taxi Stop Points

Taxis need to be given specific pick up and drop off spots along their routes, where they can pull aside into these, instead of stopping in the middle of the road way and causing traffic. And it needs to be law that no one can receive or discharge a passenger while within a road lane, and proper traffic police need to be enforcing the laws.

Police / Crime

It is important to note that: The first and most important job of a Government is to ensure the safety of their citizens. This is done through 3 important arms, the Parliament, for the making and amending of the laws, the Police, and the Judicial arm with the courts.

We must preserve order in our society. Crime is a consequence of a number of things (basically the ills in the society), and a number of measures (both long and short-term) need to be taken to deal with crime. However, initially we must put in place measures to prevent crime and apprehend the criminals.

Improving and expanding the police service

We need to continue improving the Police service in the following areas: -

1. Technology and communication systems
2. Police with real-time access to Citizen and Vehicular information
3. Management training
4. Officer training
5. Specialization training
6. Increasing manpower by incorporating the Army
7. Community policing with social interaction
8. APB info to Media and APP
9. Bounty Hunter Legislation
10. Mandatory carrying of ID cards

Attacking Crime - The way forward

Immediately:-

- Adopt and implement modern mechanisms and systems of law enforcement that are used successfully in other countries, together with adequately trained and experienced foreign personnel to assist in hands on training at all levels throughout the system..
- Increase response capabilities and backup capabilities – radio and computerized communications.
- Introduce real-time information systems within police stations and on mobile units and vehicles where information on vehicles and persons can be readily accessed.
- Introduce an APB system whereby when a crime is committed and is reported, even via phone call to a station, that in addition to sending out an all points bulletin to squad cars, that an APB be sent out to all Radio stations which must be broadcasted immediately. This gives the information to the entire driving public who can act as additional eyes on the roadways, and on sighting the perpetrators or vehicles in question, they can call into a specified Police info receiving center, and the info can be relayed back to the police as they may act on the info.
It will also give citizens the knowledge of where some crime is occurring or just has occurred and so they may want to avoid that area and take the necessary steps.
- Increase Police ground surveillance
- Allocate patrol cars and motorbikes to communities with 24 hr. patrolling.
- Use smaller motorbikes that are more agile within communities and within towns and cities, which can get through traffic more easily, easily mount pavements, or move off-road into tracks and fields as needed.
- Allocate Police Posts to major cross roads throughout the country.
- Increase apprehension of perpetrators of criminal activities, reward Police officers when their arrests lead to convictions.
- Partner with security companies or duly trained persons who can participate as ‘bounty hunters’ to arrest persons with outstanding warrants.
- Partner with communities who can inform and apprehend (citizen’s arrest).
- Publicize all outstanding ‘wanted persons’ in the newspapers and on TV on a daily basis. When crimes are committed, besides having an ‘all points bulletin’ for the armed forces, include it on all radio stations and TV stations so the public is instantly notified, allowing their additional eyes and ears to work for the protective services.
- Additionally - maintain a separate TV channel that shows the faces of these criminals 24/7 until they are apprehended.
- Increase firearm accessibility for the general law abiding public who have a clean police record and pass a Psychological evaluation (in particular – property owners and legitimate business owners who have registered business).
- Increase convictions by training officers with clear guidelines on arresting procedures.

- Introduce – “3 strikes and you are out”, where repeat offenders receive serious additional prison time.
- Provide proper and sufficient prisoner and offender rehabilitation.
- Increase prisons capacity by creating prison yards/farms, properly fenced and managed and with tents with cheap bedding like hammocks. We need not have concrete structures as prisons, as our weather would permit otherwise. Here prisoners can engage in farming and outdoor activities which are more beneficial to the mind than being locked indoors.
- Create similar yards/ farms for vagrants.
- Implement a proper parole system, with microchip implantation into parolees so their whereabouts can be tracked, and where they must report to police stations on a weekly basis.
- Create safety for witnesses by:- immediately introducing one-way glass for ID parades, and change courtroom arrangements where testifying witnesses can testify without the presence or knowledge of the accused.
- Hold parents of youth offenders accountable if they have not previously sought assistance (from Police or Social services) with dealing with delinquent children.
- Introduce a law where people must keep their TT ID on them. Therefore when the police stop someone they will also have the benefit of viewing their ID, and if the database is available in real-time, the officer can see right away if this person is wanted for any prior offences.

Drastic times need drastic measures, but more importantly the situation deserves and demands the immediate and full attention of the Government and all our law abiding citizens. What we need is public pressure and political will. We must take our responsibility very seriously now and take appropriate ACTION, before we lose this nation or before this nation loses us.

Police Posts

Partially uniting the police service with the army is one way to increase the much-needed manpower for this exercise. I would suggest that we set up Police Posts at all of our major Intersections Island wide. Actually building ‘guard huts’ large enough to be comfortable and with facilities of bathroom for the officers convenience and fitted with a communication system connected to police headquarters and to all mobile units. These are to be manned around the clock. Here, these officers can easily pull aside, on a regular basis, vehicles that seem unfit for the road and issue tickets, they can look for suspect looking persons and either stop them or forward the information on, so that appropriate manpower can be mobilized to pursue them. They will be there for when robberies or other crimes are committed and the criminals are trying to flee areas. Officers in the Posts will then be informed through the communication system that a robbery or crime is taking place or has taken place. They will then be on the look-out for the suspects. Upon sighting of the suspects they may either try to stop and apprehend or may just radio in that the suspects were sighted and give descriptions and direction of where the suspects were heading.

The implementation and proper management of this exercise (Police Posts) will probably be the most effective short term measure that we can implement to curb the crime situation at this time. This will be invaluable in the fight against crime. It really is a short-term measure, which will probably be in place for a long time, until we can make the changes necessary in society to eliminate the causes that create these criminals and crime.

Some of these Police Posts can have mobile units assigned to them.

Motor cycles

The police should make use of motor cycles in and around city area as these can maneuver through and around traffic more easily. The police use motorcycles in Caracas and are very effective. They can respond quickly to robberies within the city, and can easily follow and catch criminals. They cost less than cars to purchase and maintain. While we presently use large motorbikes to perform certain duties, police escorts etc, what I refer to are the smaller more agile motorbikes that can mount pavements and enter into off-road quickly and easily.

Community designated mobiles

There should be mobile units (Police vehicles) specifically designated to individual communities, where they can patrol these, either around the clock if necessary, or at certain times only, like at nighttime. We should not have to pay private guards and have our own guarded compounds for our safety. The government should provide us with a safe environment to live in. **It is one of their most important jobs.**

Highway Patrol

We need to re-establish a proper Highway Patrol System, where offenders of traffic offences are pulled over and appropriately fined. We need to keep vehicles in their lanes, obey the speed limits, take off the roads – un-roadworthy vehicles, and make sure everyone on the roads are licensed and insured. We need to increase the fines imposed on offenders.

Parking Wardens

Develop a Parking Wardens division where Parking Wardens can walk the major city streets to issue parking tickets, rather than have Police to do this job. Also, increase the parking fines to \$500.

Public involvement

We also need to engage the public to be part of the fight against crime. The public needs to be encouraged to report on suspect activity, whether or not it directly concerns or affects them. We need to report on our neighbors and on our children and family if they are involved in criminal activity. We can even offer incentives (monetary) for persons that make reports that lead to the apprehension and conviction of criminals.

We need to make T&T safe – first for ourselves and then to encourage more trade and tourism here.

Media involvement - APB

Once a 999 report is made, let's say for a stolen vehicle, this should then be immediately transmitted as an APB to all stations and police vehicles, including the Army and Coast Guard and simultaneously transmitted to all radio stations. What this would do is to increase the number of people (driving mostly) who are on the roads that can observe the movements of the stolen vehicle. They then can call in (with their cell phone) to the 999 and give the particulars (location and direction) of the vehicle. If this were to be introduced then there is absolutely no way that persons can get away with the stealing of vehicles in this small country. This will also be beneficial for kidnapping, hit and runs, robberies (where the bandits are fleeing).

We should also set up TV media channel which is totally dedicated to crime, where pictures of person with warrants are posted on a regular basis. With programs similar to "America's Most Wanted" program, and it can be called "Trinidad's Most Wanted".

Corruption

We need to understand that we as a society is made corrupt by the ineffective and inefficient government systems that are in place. These systems make things very difficult for us, and also allows for unethical and sometimes illegal activities. Corruption is almost a way of life for some, and an occasional occurrence for many others. This is 'the white collar crime' that plagues our society. If we are going to lock up people, we will have to lock up plenty people. The effort involved to go back to find and convict persons is not worth it. We need to go forward. What we need to do is to give an amnesty, where we say that - what was done is done, but from now on we will take seriously all matters of corruption, and implement and enforce proper laws which will govern this.

Tourism

We need to encourage and welcome tourist here to T&T. **WE must change some of our attitudes and become more friendly and hospitable towards them.** We have a lot here in our twin island paradise to offer, and we should not waste this opportunity.

We need to find our niche. I believe that we are "a fun loving *party people*", and I feel that we could do well by promoting ourselves as "The Party Capital of The World", where we develop and enhance our night life entertainment venues in a very methodical way. We will need to have proper law enforcement being carried out to provide a safe environment as well as ensuring that drinking and driving is not tolerated as well as maintaining safe driving practices. Parting does not have to mean total madness. It can be quite civil. In fact dancing is one of the oldest tribal traditions, used for celebrations, and for the freeing of the sprit, and dancing is one of the best stress relievers.

Shift System

We should again utilize the nighttime more, by working 'round the clock' shift systems into some businesses, and industries especially. This will provide greater employment, increased productivity levels and profits, (and less daytime traffic). Our nights are cooler and more conducive to working conditions and we should take advantage of this.

Manufacturing

Our manufacturing industry and our export trading capabilities need to be examined and accessed. If we can continue to manufacture goods here and be competitive in our local market, we should continue, and market forces will dictate this and our private enterprise will respond accordingly. If we can also compete in overseas markets then, we should. For those things that we cannot compete with we must surrender. We must produce and focus on the things that we can be competitive with and always try to produce and promote things that are unique to us. With the revaluation of our dollar, manufactures will find themselves more able to expand and compete in the overseas markets, in many instances.

I must mention the sugar industry in Trinidad. Basically the reason why it fails to be profitable is because of the reluctance to go forward and mechanize some of the processes, especially in the harvesting. Barbados as I understand has mechanized a long time ago and the industry there is profitable. The reason that we have not mechanized our harvesting process is because we did not want to displace the workers (harvesters). What we need to do is to retrain these workers so that they may become otherwise employable, and in fact more productive to the Nation. At the moment (by no fault of their own) they are a burden on our economy, and we need to make changes to move forward.

Job Opportunities

We need jobs, as there are not enough jobs and the situation is getting worse as thousands leave school each year and cannot find jobs. As I have outlined previously, economic expansion will create jobs. It is a question of supply and demand.

We need proper career information, for our people, especially for our young people, so that they may know what the various job opportunities are, so that they may plan their career knowing what is needed and where they may best be utilized, and what path they must follow to achieve their goals.

We need to foster good employee attitudes, and equip employees with high levels of education and job training, so that they may be productive employees. We need to improve our level of productivity, especially in this new global economy.

Agriculture

Everyday each of us needs food, and so it is perhaps the most importing thing that we should ensure that we have a good steady supply, and by being self sufficient we safeguard ourselves for any global crisis that might affect supplies to us.

Agriculture can provide us with fresher food, as it is grown here, and we can better be able to control the way we grow and how we grow it, without pesticides if we use organic or permaculture principles. And it should be cheaper as it is grown here and does not have to be transported from overseas.

Agriculture is much more than tilling the soil, sowing and reaping, and there are many jobs that can be created in and around agriculture.

There is a huge role of Information Technology within the field of agriculture as Farmers or prospective farmers will benefit from knowing –

- the growing requirement of specific crops
- the specific soil types they have
- how to manipulate soil health
- irrigation
- what is the earning potential for different crops and requirements

There is a huge role for collection and distribution. Farmers should farm and not have to take their produce to market and leave their farms unattended. Other companies could collect and distribute, and even export.

There is a role for farming machinery sales and repairs

We can also develop home farming, where there is encouragement and training for people to grow food at home in their yards. Cuba is doing this extremely successfully. There is a role for people and companies to provide training and support to a home farming sector.

We need to incorporate housing to facilitate workers on these lands. I suggest that high-rise apartment building be constructed in the vicinity of farm lands so that workers have nice modern places to live, these can be equipped with a pool, and games room, and a restaurant. Young people would strive to like there, and they have to be taught at WORK is not a 4 letter bad work, and that WORK is in fact a privilege, and it is what we are on the planet to do...Productive Work, working together for the evolution of mankind.

Health

The Health Care System here and most of the ones that I know of abroad I usually refer to as – ‘Sick Care Systems’. And that speaks for itself, as they are geared to tend to the sick in our society. There needs to be more focus on Preventative Health Care and helping persons take better care of themselves.

We must realize, as individuals that we must take our health into our own hands. For the reasons that many of us are ailing is because of our own doing. It is because of how we treat and abuse ourselves (our bodies), and our environment that causes us to be ill. If we eat and drink healthily and do the right things, we would be healthy and strong in most cases.

Is it really the government role to provide Healthcare to the population – for free. But it is not for free, because we pay Health Surcharge. However, apparently the Health surcharge collected only covers a minute part of the overall cost of healthcare. Why? Should not our contributions cover for the entire cost? Just like the utilities of electricity and water. Yes I know they are subsidized and our fees do not cover these also, but they should, and may soon have to.

Maybe the Public Health Care system should only cover certain healthcare needs, like emergency, infections and accidents. Maybe the chronic diseases created by poor lifestyle choices may not be able to be covered as it is too expensive.

We need to look around and see what systems are working in other countries and adopt and try ones that work and that may suit us. We could also look to ourselves for new ideas. This goes not only for the Health system.

If we look at China when under the rule of the Mao Tse Tung, when he found his country in a health crisis, when Mao recognized the value of both the Traditional Chinese Medicine system and also of the Western Medicine System, and he quickly brought the two together. Since then every doctor trained in China to this day is trained in both systems of medicine. Imagine, 75% of patients with acute appendicitis arriving at hospitals in Beijing are treated with herbs and sent home, whereas both here and in the west 100% are surgically removed. This goes for many conditions and illnesses also. There is one hospital in Beijing that receives 10 tons of medicinal herbs each night for the making of prescriptions for their patients.

The west is only now opening up to the effectiveness of natural medicine. We must move more swiftly in the direction of bringing both Medicine models together to work in unison.

Our bodies are our temples of God. Care, protect and keep them clean, and the benefits will be far greater than having the best hospitals and medical facilities at our disposal. 'Prevention is better than Cure'.

The Environment

If we don't **RECYCLE** now – one day we will be going back to the dump yards to try and salvage materials, for the raw material on the planet is limited and running out. We must put together a recycling system that starts with the proper and timely collection of sorted citizen's garbage which should then go directly to appropriate recycling plants. The technology is here and available for this and many countries have their act together in this regard.

When I returned here two years ago I was appalled at the amount of vehicles that were letting vast amounts of smoke out from their exhaust. I went to the EMA and they said that we were bringing in some emission analyzers so that we can check these vehicle emissions and then charge the drivers. We don't need these instruments to see the vehicles that are smoking badly, what we need is proper legislation and some proper law enforcement. I know of one person that was charged because his vehicle was smoking, but the fine was a mere \$60. This is not nearly enough. The first fine should be at least a few hundred dollars, and to add to this the person should be required to get their vehicle off the road within twenty-four hours, or else face a much greater fine, and only after their vehicle is repaired

and inspected should it be returned for use on the road. The pollution from these vehicles is toxic and this is a national disgrace.

Adequate environmental legislation concerning re-cycling and pollution needs to be made and most importantly enforced. We in T&T are way behind and need to get our act together.

We are running out of - trees

We are running out of – **oil**

We are running out of – **minerals**

We are running out of – **land**

We are running out of – **clean air**

We are running out of – **oxygen**

We are running out of – **ozone protection**

We are running out of – **clean water**

We are running out of - **animals**

We are running out of – **TIME**

Education

Education facilitates the improvement of a culture as it eliminates ignorance and allows people to become more aware and able to change. If we want to improve our society we need to increase our level of education. Our education system is very poor and now is reflecting the effects of neglect. Crime is rampant in schools and our children seem to be rebelling against us. Maybe they sense the neglect from their teachers, from the system. Where is the discipline that was so apparent in schools long ago? Our teachers have the ideas but the resources need to be made available. Education is a priority for through this all areas of society will improve; with education we will have a decrease in crime, an increase in productivity and a nation that can propel itself forward.

Education is the transfer of knowledge, and the acquiring of knowledge. Education is very important. Everyone tells us this, and society almost dictates that we must be educated in order to survive. In today's world, in order to obtain almost any job one must be educated to some degree, and the more educated one becomes, the more one is able to attain – a better job, more money, and therefore obtain a more comfortable existence. But no matter how much of this education we attain – we cannot survive in a world that can no longer sustain our existence Education itself, both the lack of it and the miss-use of it has a lot to do with where we, Mankind, have found ourselves today.

DOOMED FOR DESTRUCTION. This route for destruction is no singular feeling, but the feeling of many. As well as this being my feeling, it is also my feeling that we are also on another route – that of Uniting and Blossoming into a Utopian Civilization. So basically the World is on two different courses, and the stronger will prevail. We must work together to ensure that we go towards the most rewarding path.

Education has propelled man to create many things that are harmful and destructive. Our environment is being destroyed by the very things that man has created. People are directly and indirectly killing each other with things that man has created. WHY?

Academic education is one type of education, and is very important. But, what is even more important is the lack of a certain type of education. The most important education is the one that we lack. It is the fundamental education that society lacks.

The fundamental and most important education is the education and learning about our Creator, the life that we have been given and what is required of us, and of how to be, how to treat ourselves, our neighbors and our planet.

Within this fundamental education lies the secrets to attaining true Harmony, Liberty, Equality, Order, Unity, Health, and Happiness. We must pursue this education for ourselves and for our children, if we want to go forward.

Re-education

Lack of the fundamental education has caused all the ills in our society and in the world. We must now hasten to re-educate ourselves before it is too late.

There are people that are so screwed up that they cannot co-exist within our communities, without causing serious problems for the rest of us. We must take it upon ourselves to help them. Most of the times, we remove them out of the society and lock them up in prisons and mental institutions. All 'criminals' are 'mental cases' to certain and varying degrees, and in most cases their disorders and their problems are caused by society and by what they learned and did not learn. In fact they were not 'educated properly', and have psychological mental disorders of varying degrees. There are some with physical mental disorders whose problems stem from another source but with similar effects. We must try and help all these persons in need.

Prisons must be re-habilitation centers. Confinement facilities must have mental health facilities, re-education facilities, and facilitate access to all learning, that of academic, trade and technical. We must help these persons and give them a chance at returning to society, where there were meant to be. These facilities may well become self-sufficient if inmates are allowed to work and be productive, both with programs within the centers and programs outside the centers, depending upon the individual and their level of disorder and ability.

Let us help these people, as they are only subjects of circumstance.

We are all subjects of circumstance and it is we, all of us, that must come together in order to change our circumstances that are before us, for it is ourselves and our predecessors that have created the circumstances that we are in. It is therefore only WE that can change and bring about change. Not only by words, but by our ACTIONS. It is TIME FOR ACTION!

Attitudes

One of the most important and fundamental changes that we require is changes in Attitude, for when we change we change attitude we will change behavior.

We need leadership that will foster new and better attitudes among our people. One of understanding, love, tolerance, patience, etc

Without this change we cannot work in unison towards a common vision.

UNIVERSAL AGREEMENTS

There are numerous things all of us have to start understanding and agreeing upon, in this world. The first and foremost - is that we must accept that there is one GOD. Religions must unite under one GOD. We as individuals must understand that we are all children of GOD. We must see, recognize and treat each other as brothers and sisters of that one GOD.

Then, we must understand that it is 'we' that have created the mess that we are in, and that it is only 'we' that have the power to change things. We can start by changing ourselves and change the way we view our surroundings and how we interact and add to it.

We must agree that law and order must be upheld within society, agreeing also that the man-made laws are imperfect and must be continually revised and altered, and we must work towards God's laws. Even though we have so many laws, crime is still rampant because we fail to enforce these laws properly. Too many law books with a lot of rubbish. If we can have a system where judges can really be fair observers and judge each person and case holistically taking the individual and his circumstances into account and the individual circumstance itself into account, and if these judges could do what is most productive for each case before them, without the use of 'The LAW' that is - The ASS'. If we use a system where we govern our system by one overriding law which is –

'You can do whatever you want. ...

As long as you do no harm to anyone, any creature or the environment'.

By this we should govern our self and our societies.

We must provide humanitarian institutions and facilities to all those that need help –our poor, our aged, our ill and handicapped, our children in need, and our criminals.

We must agree to abolish capital punishment, and all other forms of punishment. Thou shall not kill. Even if one has killed it does not give us the right to kill that person. What we must do is provide these persons with the appropriate help and at the same time protect society from them if a threat still exists. "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth", does not mean that we have the right to inflict similar acts on those that have offended and inflicted harm on others. It means that "for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction", and that through GOD and Nature we will be rewarded or punished appropriately in the future. We cannot take it upon ourselves to inflict punishment, harm or death on others (only of course in cases of self-defense).

We must agree to the free movement of people throughout the world. To eradicate the ‘man made’ boundaries in the world. People must be able to travel, visit and live in any country that they desire, for GOD has put us here without these boundaries and left us free to move around as we please. Presently most people are restricted to the country of their birth. They are discriminated against, being only able to migrate and live in other countries only if they meet certain requirements, such as – having family already living in that country that they wish to live in, or they may need to possess certain skills that are in demand in the country, or if they have a substantial amount of money to take with them. These political man made boundaries that restrict our free movement must be removed to some extent, as it is not fair and certainly not God’s will. It is we who have built up these boundaries and it is we who have to carefully remove them. Definitely we will and must keep the identity of countries through the existence of geographical boundaries, and thus still be able to call Spain – Spain and France – France. For those who wish to maintain cultural activities and the like must do so and be free to do so.

We must agree that our leaders must bear humility, be open and ready to listen, and must realize that they alone cannot produce all the answers to the problems that surround us. They must not dictate to the people that they represent, but allow a true democracy to prevail.

We must agree that the earth’s natural resources (e.g. oil, natural gas, gold, copper, silver...etc) should be managed by a unified World body (organization), so that, some nations don’t prosper over others simply because these natural resources lie within their boundaries. People, Governments and Nations should prosper by their labor, and not by the exploitation of the existing natural resources of their land. The job creation alone within these nations with natural resources is enough of a benefit. But for those nations to get revenue from the profits of the natural resources is not fair, while the less fortunate nations without natural resources struggle beneath them. A united world organization should oversee and manage all of the world’s resources and the profits should be appropriately divided among all nations equally in proportion to their population numbers.

When we need to make decisions we must always invoke the question ‘What is FAIR? And let this influence our decision.

FUNDAMENTALS

GOD, LIFE and The Laws of Nature

Doomed or not

Some say the world is coming to an end. Surely it will if we continue to take the path of self-destruction. We have the choice. We have the most powerful power that exists right within us, and we can do anything we desire. We have no more time to waste. The more time that is wasted the more severe the problems will be, the more lives that will be lost and the more unnecessary suffering that we will bring upon ourselves. What do you want? What do you choose?

Why fight these wars amongst ourselves and with our selves?

Let us start to acknowledge our creator, our potential, and work together to do his will. We will be rewarded with many gifts. We will not have to seek out pleasures, for they will rain upon us while on 'the path'.

We Human Beings, the Crown of Creation, the most intelligent of the species that exist, with the ability and power to do anything, are in fact the most disorganized and most destructive species on the planet, totally out of sync with nature, destroying it and ourselves as we go.

We did not create our-selves. Something has created us. Something sustains us. That something is God. There exist many different views as to what God is. It is assumed that God cannot be seen. It is true that with these eyes we cannot physically see God, or rather the invisible part of God. Because of this we assume that we cannot see God. But God lives within each and every one of us, and it is possible to see God, not with these eyes but with the third eye. We can see, recognize and connect with God.

We have all been searching for God in all that we do. We are all looking for happiness, and we, only seeing with these eyes, keep looking for happiness in the outside world. We try to achieve happiness with material things, and we may get some temporary happiness from these, as it never lasts. From one thing to another we go. When we are no longer being satisfied with one thing we go to another in search of fulfillment.

Life is full of ups and downs. The downs are sometimes more important than the ups, for when we are happy and everything is going our way, we tend to take things for granted, but when we are going through hard times and when we are sad and experiencing pain we think a lot more. We can appreciate the better times that we may have taken for granted while they lasted. Pain and suffering are experiences that are for us to learn from. I have learned more in my life in the times of sadness and pain, both physically and mentally, than from the time when I was happy and engrossed in the feelings of happiness.

I have learned to use my feelings of sadness and pain, for my betterment and growth. Usually we just want the pain to go away and for us to feel good again. Pain of both the body and mind should be endured by us so as to mold us into the instrument that we are meant to become. We are instruments of God.

Karma

We should understand the law of Karma, which is – for everything that we do, there is a consequence or corresponding effect, either positive or negative, depending on what we did. Karma is also described in the Bible as – “as you sow, so shall you reap”. In Chinese philosophy it is described as “Yin and Yang”. In science this law is expressed as “For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction”. With this information all around us there should be no reason why we don't understand and follow these laws.

People, searching through all things are looking for the answers. The answers to their questions of –What makes us tick? What keeps us alive? Who and what is God? What is the purpose of life? Does God really exist?

So close to the answers, but yet, we are still so far. We must be open, and not assume that what we believe is correct and that there is no more to know.

God

In the Catholic religion God is described as having no beginning and having no end. They say he was always there and will always be there. In science one theory about energy is – “energy cannot be created or destroyed”. Religion says that God lives in us and science says that we have energy within our bodies. We can see here that both science and religion has described something that has always been and that always will be. One calls it God and one calls it energy. They say too that God leaves our bodies when we die, and it is known that the presence of energy is no longer in a dead body. Again both God and energy are described as invisible and cannot be seen. Isn't it amazing how we have taken so long to connect the two, and understand that it is the one and same thing that is being spoken about.

Yes, God is energy.

They say that we cannot see God in this life but if we are good when we die we will go to a place called heaven and we will see God then. Science is trying to probe deep into the living cells of life to try to see the energy (the life force), but will never see it as with these eyes we cannot see it.

God is – that perfect and pure energy that has always been and that always will be. God is – the generator, operator and destroyer of all things. God is – love. God is invisible and cannot be seen with these eyes. God is – everywhere. God is – within us and within each and every living cell. God is- our conscience.

The experience

Jesus and all the Prophets, Masters and Teachers came to teach us not only of ‘the way’ but to also show us how to focus and go inside of ourselves and experience the energy - life-force – God. After we experience this one does not have to believe anymore, as one now ‘knows’. Confirmation is the Catholic term for this. This was when one was shown the techniques to go inside and have the experience of the life force within. Before this, there were the teachings, where the people would learn about the God and Heaven etc. At this stage they could believe or not. When they were ready and chosen they were then revealed the “great secret of life’ “the God within”. It was only then that they had the knowledge of the life force, - The knowledge of all knowledge.

Pentecostal day was the day when Jesus took some of his devotees into a room and revealed something to them. It is said that they saw a burning flame above their heads. It is also said that they came out of the room, and spoke in tongues. Well all this sounds very nice but do we understand what really happened? First of all what is the sense of having fire burning on their heads, as this would have only burned them. Why have them speak in tongues or foreign languages that no one could understand. In my interpretation, what really happened

was that they were revealed the God within and this was seen (not with these eyes) as a great beautiful light within. When they went outside they tried to tell others of their experience, but because the others had never heard or experienced anything like this themselves, they therefore could not understand what was being spoken about. It was new and foreign to them.

Understanding – comes with learning.

Belief - is accepting what one understands to be true.

Knowledge – is when one experiences something and knows it to be true.

There are many books that try to tell us about God and there will be many more, but no amount of words, and no amount of reading can give the experience of God. It is wonderful to read of the experiences of the past devotees and their teachers, but that will never give us the experience they are describing and what we are searching for. However our potential is the same as theirs. Look to have your own experiences with the Divine Creator.

We are all children of God, and God lives in us. Whatever that is done in this World is done by our actions individually and collectively.

Heaven and hell are not even places as interpreted, but rather ‘states of being’. The state of being in true happiness, peace and contentment, is Heaven. The state of being in discord with oneself and being unhappy, is Hell. The Karmic laws of nature ensure that our actions will decide our ‘state of being’. When we do nothing, that is – nothing good nor bad we are in a state of limbo. Limbo is the state we are in when there is no experience of happiness or unhappiness. Everything that we do has the effect of putting us in one of these states for a time. Heaven is of course the ultimate state of being, and to achieve this state of being we must constantly, through effort and action, pursue and do good deeds.

People always ask the questions – Why are we here? What is the purpose of our existence? My feeling is that we are here on this physical plane as part of an evolution. We each as individuals evolve into maturity and wisdom and so do we collectively evolve as communities and nations and the world as a whole evolves. Each one of us is part of this collective evolution. Our purpose is to be part of the evolution and growth of the universe. Our purpose must be realized, so that we can focus on it and contribute to it. It is in giving and contributing to this evolution that we really work as instruments of God. The greatest feeling of fulfillment and happiness is to contribute positively to this process.

When we live knowing, loving and serving God, we then become powerful instruments, doing his work in this World. The more instruments he has the more that can be accomplished. He wants us to work together. It is only then that we can rectify our problems.

Happiness

True happiness is in self-fulfillment. Self-fulfillment is the fulling and filling of one's soul – the happiness enjoyed by one's self without the use of physical things to make us feel good. To have true happiness we must be on 'the path'. All scriptures speak about 'the path'. The religions are sending mixed messages about 'the path' as they have themselves gotten so confused over the years. There is only one path and there is only one way to achieve true happiness, and it is easy. In fact it is easier than not being on 'the path'.

'The path' is the easiest, most pleasurable and by far the most rewarding way. One does not have to be a certain way, of which we think we should be, but a certain way indeed we have to be. To understand the way of 'the path' we must be open and able to hear our conscience. Our conscience is God trying to communicate with us and guide us, but whether we can hear it depends on our level of understanding of the fundamentals – God and the Laws of Nature. If we lived knowing and respecting the laws of nature, we would be living in Harmony with the rest of creation. All scriptures speak about the laws of nature.

The way of the path involves service to mankind. There is no greater feeling than the feeling that one gets from giving to society and helping make this place a better one. I feel sorry for those who have lived and have left without experiencing that feeling, the feeling of fulfillment.

Give and be part of God's plan and enjoy life like you never have before.

After word

I wish to thank my friends and all persons that gave their support in one way or another. I thank you for the extra drive and encouragement you gave me. For those that were critical

and negative, well, I thank you also, as this made me aware of some of the realities that exist, and this also served to make me stronger.

Completing this paper/book was not at all easy for me, but it was a mostly pleasurable experience. I could not put these writings away and go about as if it did not exist. Completing this work was not for monetary reward. All I wish is that we can understand its content and hope that it can influence the changes that are necessary so that we and our offspring can enjoy a better future.

I could have taken more time on it, adding and expanding on some points, but I feel that time is of the essence and we must hasten to come together and work together to rectify our problems and situation.

I am sure that no one feels that the situation is good, as we experience (at different levels and in varying degrees) and bear witness to the ill around us. We are all affected by these, and it is time that we come together for change and action.

I am sure that there will be much controversy and criticism about myself and the contents of this paper/book. I hope that we can go beyond our pettiness and enter into the realization, that we can and must change whatever it is that hinders us from accomplishing our goals.

We do need a revolution - A peaceful one of course. We need to change course, so that we can hasten our evolution.

If a better plan can be found, (and you be the judge) I will rejoice for my land and my people.

We should come together and implement The Alternative System (with the proposed voting machines) as soon as possible so that we can get on with governing ourselves.

If we agree to use the Alternative System, and as the system is geared to facilitate the bringing forth of ideas and contributions from everyone, we will then be able to have the opportunity to contribute, and the task in fact would have just begun, and much effort and dedication will be needed by all.

Let us be able to recognize and cease the opportunities that come before us and take advantage of them.

Let us work together to find the solutions, implement and manage them.

Together we aspire together we achieve; all together with God is the only way forward.

Let us now form The Coalition for The Alternative System.

You need it, and it needs your support.

Let's move forward.

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**I dedicate this inspiration to my Father and Mother who gave me what was necessary;
to one of my favorite uncles who had an ironic love for this land and its' people, and to
'the people' of Trinidad and Tobago.**
