

Speaking Notes of
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**Political Leader of the United National Congress and
Leader of the Opposition of Trinidad and Tobago**

The UNC's Monday Night Forum – February 11 2019

La Horquetta/Talparo

Kamla: “Until all races see each other as brothers and sisters and not competitors or enemies, Trinidad and Tobago is not going to move forward. The status quo will remain and one small group of unscrupulous persons will possess the majority of our nation's wealth. As a people we need to stop this constant hate and fear against each other. This is how the PNM friends and financiers maintain control, by creating chronic fear against each other and manipulating you into dehumanizing each other.”

Good evening! UNC Family! Thank you!

It is good to be here with you in La Horquetta/Talparo!

It's good to be back in Brazil.

You know we built this school back in 2000, I saw the plaque as we walked in.

Back then it was called Brazil High School.

When the government changed, they changed the name; but what's in a name, a rose by any other name is still a rose!

The UNC has always been focused on education. I always say education is the passport out of poverty.

How many of you here tonight went to school here?

That's really wonderful to see.

Welcome to the first Monday Night Forum for 2019! We started the year with a bang, holding our hugely successful National Assembly just over two weeks ago.

At that Assembly, we saw the energy, the vibrancy of our great party, which continues to grow by leaps and bounds.

We saw many new faces, young people ready to get our country moving forward in the right direction, under the United National Congress.

Tonight, I see the same energy, the same vibrancy and I know you are ready to move forward. I want to thank Jearlean and the other party officials for making space for the people of La Horquetta/Talparo to sit here next to the stage and I thank you all for coming out tonight!

One week ago, on Monday 4th February, the party opened nominations for elections - we need to be ready, the way this government is going, an election could be called any day now.

The response has been amazing! Hundreds have already come forward, interested in developing our country.

People are interested in the future of our great nation.

People are interested in the direction of the country. People want a stake in their country!

People are getting involved!

People are ready for a change!

Stand up, step up, join us and, Let's get Trinidad and Tobago working again!

The UNC has been working hard on the ground, ensuring that we meet with you and hear your concerns, and your ideas for our country.

We've been developing our plans to take Trinidad and Tobago forward - some of these you are already aware of - and we welcome ideas from you.

Now is the time to step up, step forward, make your voice heard, claim your space. Don't wait, we have so much work to do and we need your help. Trinidad & Tobago needs your help.

We have had people joining our campaign teams in numbers. Co-ordinators have been calling all week with the most exciting ideas, plans and a vision for the future of the Trinidad & Tobago.

They are excited! They are working!

As you may remember we started our door to door listening tour back in 2016 right after the internal election. Some of the things we have heard are being developed into party policy for the next manifesto.

The United National Congress has never been more united and focused in our cause than we are today!

The UNC is growing, changing and adapting to the needs of the 21st century. And so it must.

We are a party that looks to the future.

I know that there are those who find change difficult. There are those who want the comfort and security of doing things like we have always done them. But I'm sorry to say, they are living in the past.

As leader of our great party I must chart the course that takes the UNC into the future!

Because the future of Trinidad and Tobago depends on you and the United National Congress!

The choice: Dark days under the PNM vs Brighter Future under the UNC

The people of Trinidad and Tobago continue to suffer at the hands of this incompetent PNM Government.

Never before in the history of T&T have we seen a government that so incapable of doing their job.

Never before have we seen a Prime Minister who is more interested in playing Golf than leading the country.

Never before have we seen the senseless destruction of every part of the Government Services We are entering the fifth month of the fourth year of this Rowley-led Government and nothing is working in Trinidad and Tobago.

National security - in shambles.

Health care system - a disaster.

Our economy - collapsed. Our education system - failing our children.

Flood relief - collapsed.

Maintenance of our water courses - abandoned - nothing done.

Our roads - in disrepair.

The only Ministry that working in Trinidad and Tobago is the Ministry of Blame Kamla..

That is the hardest working Ministry in Government- That Ministry working 24 hours a day!

They Blame Kamla for this. They Blame Kamla for that!

Over the past few months I have seen the PNM reverting to the Use of race to campaign. I want to spend a few minutes now and tackle this issue head on

Recently a police officer made some derogatory remarks about Indo Trinidadians.

Then some Indo Trinidadians made derogatory remarks against the officer.

This tit for tat must stop.

People who do these things speak only for themselves not everyone of their race.

As a people we need to stop this constant hate and fear against each other.

This is how the PNM friends and financiers maintain control, by creating chronic fear against each other and manipulating you into dehumanizing each other.

We must forgive and love each other.

I want to give you all a short history lesson about how for almost 200 years discrimination has been used in our country to encourage racism and division.

When indentureship ended, Indians were given a piece of land somewhere in the murky lagoons in Central or South or passage back to India.

Many took the lands.

When slavery ended Africans were not given any such lands. The powers of the day needed cheap labour for their factories and businesses. Had they given freed African slaves land they would not have this cheap labour.

What they did is that they refused to provide lands for free slaves thus forcing them into low paying jobs at their businesses which was just as bad as slavery.

Freed slaves having nowhere to live or property of their own were forced by the powers that be into poor/rented living accommodation around the business and manufacturing areas.

These living areas often owned by said business owners were purposely run down into what they called slums.

The placing of freed slaves into slums was a deliberate act to keep them into a forced type of slavery by trapping them in a vicious cycle of low wages, poor living conditions and no property ownership rights.

This is a problem we will still face today where young Afro Trinidadians have difficulty in obtaining property ownership because of wicked decisions of the colonial elite.

The Indians who got a 5-acre kept sub dividing their lands and giving a portion to each child and so on and thus got an advantaged start over the Africans.

Over the years the policies of these elites created a divide between Africans and Indians in terms of property ownership which was then propogandized to create hate and fear between them which manifests itself as racism.

So what we have now is that a large number of people cannot afford lands and property and are trapped in a vicious cycle of rentals and low wages.

Until as a country we face these realities and relevant truths, we will not be able to move forward.

The indo Trinidadians must acknowledge that the Afro Trinidadians were wronged by these acts and while it is also difficult for many Indo Trinidadians to also obtain land and ownership now it is a more difficult task for others because of historical discrimination.

I recognized this problem years ago and when I entered government, I resolved to fix it.

The UNC has always led the charge for land and home ownership.

They keep saying that Kamla and the UNC encouraging squatting and lawlessness.

I am not saying go and squat because many people work really hard and buy a property which is the correct thing to do. I am saying as a government we have a responsibility to make land and home ownership affordable.

Everyone wants a home.

This is why I had introduced:

- Land for the landless
- Squatter regularization
- Increase grants for home repairs and construction
- Sale of HDC homes for one dollar
- Certificates of comfort
- Development of roads, drainage and utilities in many squatting areas.

This PNM government turned their back on poor people.

They demolished homes in Valencia last year.

They demolished homes in Palo Seco.

I saw they seized a poor man's whole trolley of bodi last week in San Fernando.

Why they could not just tell the guy pack up and move?

Why did they have to take all his produce and throw it like garbage in the back of their van.

The only way for us to reduce the crime rate and build our economy is to have a society where wealth, prosperity and property ownership is distributed to all the population and not just a selected few.

I am going to reintroduce all these land and home owing programmes and incentives when the UNC returns to Office and keep righting the wrongs of the past.

Until all races see each other as brothers and sisters and not competitors or enemies Trinidad and Tobago is not going to move forward.

The status quo will remain and one small group of unscrupulous persons will possess the majority of our nation's wealth.

They create this false race bogey that the UNC is anti-African and paints UNC as a threat to the survival and prosperity of Afro Trinidadians.

They have already restarted that narrative for upcoming elections.

You see it in the writings of their paid columnists and their trolls on social media.

You see it on their political platforms and the songs they promote as they have no achievement to talk about so they talk about race.

You see this abject failure as national security Minister Stuart Young playing the race card in Parliament to mask his utter incompetence and non-performance as a Minister.

You see in Rowley mounting the platform and race baiting.

You see it with their hired guns in State enterprises race baiting.

These friends and financiers of the PNM have no care for any poor people in this country no matter what your race or religion is.

This government is the most oppressive government of the poor in the history of this country.

So, the pnm friends and financiers want to push racism so let's talk about race.

The PNM friends and financiers have, for too long used propaganda to divide our population to serve their own selfish interests.

"It is when power is wedded to chronic fear that it becomes formidable." (Eric Hoffer, The Passionate State of Mind)

The Power to Create "The Enemy"

The powerful don't usually do the dirtiest work themselves, just as Mafia dons leave the "whackings" to underlings.

Systems creates hierarchies of dominance with influence and communication going down-rarely up-the line.

When a power elite wants to destroy an enemy nation, it turns to propaganda experts to fashion a program of hate.

What does it take for the citizens of one society to hate the citizens of another society to the degree that they want to segregate them, torment them, even kill them?

It requires a 'hostile imagination', a psychological construction embedded deeply in their minds by propaganda that transforms those others into 'The Enemy'.

That image is a soldier's most important powerful motive, one that loads his rifle with ammunition of hate and fear.

The image of a dreaded enemy threatening one's personal well-being and the society's national security emboldens mothers and fathers to send sons to war and empowers governments to rearrange priorities to turn plowshares into swords of destruction.

It is all done with words and images.

To modify an old adage: Sticks and stones may break your bones, but names can sometimes kill you.

The process begins with creating stereotyped conceptions of the other, dehumanized perceptions of the other, the other as worthless, the other as all-powerful, the other as

demonic, the other as an abstract monster, the other as a fundamental threat to our cherished values and beliefs.

With public fear notched up and the enemy threat imminent, reasonable people act irrationally, independent people act in mindless conformity, and peaceful people act as warriors.

Dramatic visual images of the enemy on posters, television, magazine covers, movies, and the Internet imprint on the recesses of the limbic system, the primitive brain, with the powerful emotions of fear and hate.” {Phillip Zimbardo}

That is what the Rowley PNM does and is doing.

This is what the friends and financiers of the PNM have done to maintain their elite status.

Through sheer stereotyping and lies they have caused invisible hate and mistrust between the races in our country.

A small group comprised of all ethnicities control the wealth of the country

Don't be fooled by thinking it's one type of people. All, All, All ethnicities are represented in this group.

I want to give one example of how they use their propaganda to divide us

UWI South Campus Debe

The PNM propaganda machine has painted this project as the placement of this campus in Debe as some racist conspiracy to disenfranchise young afro Trinidadian from North.

Total Garbage.

I was faced with two major problems:

1. Lack of available space at the UWI St. Augustine for more students from the Corridor.
2. High cost of transport and accommodation for students coming from South.

By building the campus at Debe, we planned to create 3,000 spaces there over time for students from South and thus free up 3,000 spaces in St. Augustine for students from the Corridor, for students right here in La Horquetta.

In effect this was achieving two outcomes with one solution. Yet everyone conveniently chooses to ignore that we would have created 3000 spaces at UWI for youths from the corridor.

But lies and push propaganda to create a false narrative of discrimination.

Self-proclaimed elites now say to the population that we hear you and we will not be silent anymore. We will come bearing compassionate gestures like messiahs to save you from yourselves.

You see just because someone is poor it doesn't mean they want a handout. I have always said the UNC gives you a hand up and not a handout.

Many of my programs were to help people access education, grants and services from the state to assist them in improving their lives.

They were to be used to help people achieve sustainability

It hurts me to see citizens having to stand by the mall entrances with a sheet of paper trying to get donations to save their children's lives.

That's why I introduced the children's life funds.

It hurt me to see people struggling to send their children to school. why we increased meals, transport, books, laptops built new schools.

I may have made mistakes but I always tried to put less fortunate people first and give them a hand up because I know all persons have dignity and should be afforded love and respect.

The PNM friends, financiers and elite have over the past 3 ½ years systematically stripped our UNC people centered programmes from government.

Now they want to come with compassionate gestures.

They use these compassionate gestures for a nefarious purpose they wouldn't admit.

They use it to confirm their feelings of superiority, gratifying themselves with the certainty that those who receive their help are below them.

It is about humiliating less fortunate persons to remind you to know your place.

It is a means to maintain control over the masses by saying look the state is not taking care of you but look we care, so hold that small change and buy some food.

All the while it is these same elite friends and financiers of the PNM systematically pillaging the state resources and dismantling the systems put in place by the UNC to give a hand up to the poor.

They don't want you to be self-sustaining and independent.

They want to dehumanize you and repeat repeat repeat that you come from slaves and indentured labourers.

The truth is our ancestors came from great kingdoms in Africa and India, China and the middle east (Syria, Lebanon).

We are all descended from great civilizations whose history was erased from record by colonial powers.

When we get back into office, I am going to change that and I am going to ensure that the true history of our peoples from wherever we came is taught in our schools.

They want to control you and make you always return cap in hand to them.

My government fought them and will continue fighting these oppressive people.

This is why I am saying if you think you are underrepresented, come and join the UNC party and put your name forward.

Come to the decision-making table.

I see many young Afro Trinidadians here.

You must step forward and increase the African voice in the United National Congress by joining in the decision-making process.

Don't let others make decisions for you and chart your future.

Step up and take leadership roles in the party while I am here.

I am moving this party forward no matter who may kick and scream to maintain relevance.

The UNC gave many persons opportunities before and now the UNC is calling for new persons to come forward to fight the wicked PNM elite friends and financiers.

They will keep trying to push their propaganda, they will try to sow seeds of division, but they do not know how strong you are - how strong this party is!

But don't worry.

I want him to call the General Elections! Because Kamla going to send him packing and he can Blame Kamla whole day then!

If they had put in an ounce of effort in building the country instead of trying to tear it down, in uniting people instead of dividing us, we'd be in a much better place.

But they have no intention of doing so. They are happy to let you suffer while they enjoy themselves, take care of their friends and financiers.

UNC Family, Enough is enough!

I am fed up. I am totally fed up with this Rowley government.

Are you fed up?

I am saddened and disappointed with the state of our beloved T&T.

But I ask you to keep hope alive.

Stand with the UNC and we will rescue our country and bring back sanity and peace.

We will bring back good governance, development and growth.

Tonight, we speak to you, the residents of the La Horquetta/Talparo constituency - a community that has been all but abandoned by the current government.

The lack of representation is clear, and you, the citizens of this community are suffering.

This constituency, like so many others across Trinidad, is facing rising crime, inadequate healthcare services, poor infrastructure and a lack of opportunities for young people.

The Government I led worked for you, as we worked for citizens throughout the country, to build better recreation grounds and community centres for you and your families to enjoy, schools in which your children could learn, we ensured that neighborhoods were patrolled by law enforcement, we built new roads and paved others, we installed water lines - some communities received running water for the first time.

And all along the East-West corridor, and all over Trinidad and Tobago, development was taking place.

The government I led was one of work, delivery and compassion.

Let me show you some of our achievements when we were in Government and some of our plans for the future:

The following major projects have been done under the PP Government in The East West Corridor:

1. COSTAATT Campus - SANGRE GRANDE
2. New Arima Hospital (under construction) - ARIMA
3. Completed the Churchill-Roosevelt Highway Extension - ARIMA
4. New Arima Police Station - ARIMA
5. Arima ECCE
6. Jacob Hill ECCE - ARIMA
7. Arouca Pine Haven ECCE
8. Valencia bypass Road - VALENCIA
9. New Walkover - OROPUNE
10. New Walkover - MALONEY
11. St. Barbara's Spiritual Shouter Baptist Primary School - MALABAR
12. Nursing Academy - EL DORADO
13. Tunapuna Promenade - TUNAPUNA
14. Upgraded Tunapuna Market - TUNAPUNA
15. National Tennis Complex (now National Racquet Centre) - TACARIGUA
16. Churchill Roosevelt Highway/Uriah Butler Highway Interchange - GRAND BAZAAR
17. Completion of the Aranguez Overpass - ARANGUEZ
18. National Oncology Centre (stalled) - MT. HOPE
19. Mango Rose Homework Centre - EAST PORT OF SPAIN

20. Upgrade of the Blanchisseuse Police Station
21. New D'Abadie Bridge (B1/23) - D'ABADIE
22. New bridge B1/14 Churchill Roosevelt Highway - TRINCITY
23. Creation of three lanes out of Port of Spain by building a third lane on Bridge at Sea Lots
24. Construction of Roundabout at Lok Jack School of Business
25. Repairs to the Blanchisseuse Road improving connection to Asa Wright Nature Center
26. St Joseph River Bridge being reconstructed
27. Valencia Stretch repaved along with several sections of Eastern Main Road as well as widening of CR Highway into three lanes going East
28. Upgrades to Hollis Main for an improved water supply along corridor
29. Water projects to expand pipe borne supply 24/7for all.
30. Wastewater treatment plants in Matura, Arima, POS
31. The reconstructed bridge 2/10 Toco Main Road
32. New Bridge 1/47 Paria Main Road, Matelot
33. State of the art Carenage Health Centre
34. New Maloney Police Station
35. New Bridge Valencia Main Road, Valencia
36. THE VALENCIA VISITOR CENTRE
37. Arima West Government Primary School
38. Febeau Primary School
39. Arima New Government Primary School
40. Morvant ECCE School
41. Morvant pavilion upgrade
42. Public Access Learning Systems (PALS) at Sea Lots
43. Sea Lots Community Centre
44. St Augustine South Government ECCE Centre
45. El Socorro South Government ECCE Centre
46. Santa Rosa Government ECCE Centre
47. Sangre Grande Government ECCE Centre
48. La Puerta Government ECCE Centre
49. Valsayn Government ECCE Centre
50. Petit Valley Government ECCE Centre
51. Tacarigua Government ECCE Centre

52. El Socorro North Government ECCE Centre
53. Salybia Government ECCE Centre
54. Lopinot/La Pastora ECCE Centre
55. Maraj Hill (Toco/Sangre Grande) ECCE Centre
56. Lower Cumuto ECCE Centre (Cumuto/Manzanilla)
57. Lower Cumuto Government Primary School
58. Maloney Government ECCE Centre
59. Valencia Government ECCE Centre
60. St Augustine ECCE Centre
61. Maraval ECCE Centre
62. Oropune Gardens ECCE Centre
63. Caura Royal Road ECCE Centre
64. Bon Air West ECCE Centre
65. Malabar ECCE Centre
66. La Horquetta ECCE Centre
67. St. Ann's ECCE Centre
68. Aranguez Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)
69. Mt Hope Government ECCE Centre
70. Manzanilla/Nariva Government Primary School
71. BICHE PRESBYTERIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL
72. ARANGUEZ NORTH SECONDARY SCHOOL
- Freeman Rd, Community Centre rebuilt
73. Tunapuna Community Centre rebuilt
74. Tunapuna Gov't school rebuilt
75. Upgrade of Knowles Street, Rec Ground car park
76. Refurbishment of the Tunapuna Community Centre
77. Construction of ECCE School Completed, Jattan Street, Bamboo No.2
78. Construction of a sporting complex in Bassie Street, Spring Village (for over 25 years residents asked for this facility)
79. Upgrade to San Juan market
80. Built Febeau Primary School
81. Built Barataria Community Centre
82. Built Barataria ECCE

83. Construction of El Socorro South Activity Centre

We have a plan to continue delivery in all areas, and to get our country working again.

A UNC Government will continue its focus on investing in people.

Today, many young people in this constituency and across Trinidad and Tobago cannot find an entry level job that pays them a living wage.

Every day the PNM remains in government brings additional hardships and a further deterioration of their prospects because they cannot afford to get the education that they want.

In addition, many under-employed workers cannot access the training they need to move forward and build the future they dream of.

The UNC, in government, will focus on lifelong education for all, using the GATE program to focus not only on university education but also on skills development.

The real opportunity lies in enhancing our capability and capacity in the global economy, particularly in the Digital Economy to take advantage of the fourth industrial revolution.

Your UNC government will make investments in the technology sector to grow our economy.

The UNC will place technology firmly at the forefront of our education drive.

Do you know that studies suggest that 65 per cent of children entering primary school today will have jobs that do not yet exist?

It is imperative that we prepare our children for the digital age.

We will encourage a culture of retraining and retooling our citizens while ensuring that from the Primary School level, science and technology become key to their education.

We can no longer wait until Secondary or University to what has become basic skills in the rest of the world. Science and Technology today are as essential as Maths and English.

When a child comes out of primary school and enters our secondary education system, already understanding the basics of science and technology, we will add as core subjects of study, skills of decision making, critical thinking and complex problem-solving.

When we combine these skills, it will not only help in the develop young minds but also create a type of thinking that reduces the possibility of them one day entering a life of crime and illegal behaviour.

A UNC government will also ensure that our education system keeps up with the future needs of the global economy. The world is changing and we must keep up with those changes.

We as a nation must give the economy what it needs to grow by using and training our greatest resource - the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

We will lower taxes for young entrepreneurs to create jobs in electronics, e-waste recycling and manufacturing. We can manufacture medical, office and school furniture.

In the private sector, we will offer tax breaks to companies who are willing to pay the cost of employees' higher education goals, within the industry that would also benefit the employer.

Our entrepreneurs need support and not oppressive taxation. It is our small and medium size manufacturers who will create jobs, jump-start our economy and move Trinidad and Tobago forward.

The Way Forward Under UNC

My friends, as I said at the start, the United National Congress is ready to work to return our country to stability and growth.

The current government does not have the best interests of the people of Trinidad and Tobago at heart.

They have done nothing to create a safer environment, to ensure that your health is taken care of, that you have a stable, well-paying job, and so able to take care of your loved ones.

We saw the way they handled recent flooding disasters. The response was woefully inadequate.

I want to make a pledge here tonight to the people of Greenvale and the other flood-prone areas - we will not abandon you like the PNM did.

In the UNC we feel your pain. We understand your fears, your uncertainty. As your brother's keeper, we abide by the principle of 'do unto others'. We know what love is.

You saw our representatives, activists and supporters spring into action when the floods came last year. Even though we do not have much, as we are not in government, we did everything we could to assist people in their time of need.

Imagine what the response would have been if we had been in Government.

It is absolutely unacceptable that four months after the devastating floods of last October, there are still families who have not received any kind of assistance from the Government

In one newspaper over the weekend, a resident of Back Street, Caroni Village said the situation has become very stressful and costly.

The man, who didn't want to be identified said, "I am a single father of two young boys and it is very tiring to be going up and down to these people who promise they would help us."

I will not let this kind of thing happen.

We will not let people be turned away from health care centres because the facility was about to close. We will return to extended hours at primary health care facilities so that the lives of children, the sick, the elderly, are not put at risk.

We will ensure that each child will have access to education, and be given the tools they need to learn and grow into productive citizens of our land.

So I say here today, you can trust the UNC to always safeguard you. We work for people.

The UNC is a party for all of Trinidad and Tobago. Just our national Anthem says; ‘here every creed and race find an equal place’. So too in the UNC Every creed and race has an equal place!

The principles that guide us - the safety and security of our families and the nation, opportunities for all, empowerment through education and skills development, integrity and good governance - these principles inspire our people to work together to help build a better future for our country.

Our country is evolving, and our people are crying out for effective leadership.

Not the “do as I say or else” attitude the current Prime Minister thinks is leadership.

He thinks being a leader is being strong when you are wrong!

But real leadership - leadership that remembers it is the Government who is servant and the people are its master! Not the other way around! That is the kind of leadership we need.

The UNC worked hard to improve the lives of all citizens, and we remain committed to doing this when we return to Government.

The UNC is a party with a vision and a clear plan to lead Trinidad and Tobago towards a better future and ensuring that we build an economy of the future that works for every community.

I have never wavered in my focus on people-centred development, and this is why my team was working to ensure that young people were able to access numerous opportunities which enabled them to go as far as their efforts and abilities will take them.

This is why we were working to diversify the economy, equip citizens with the skills to enter the digital age, create sustainable well-paying jobs, and bring in new investments and much-needed foreign exchange.

I am committed to our party’s original vision, which has always been to create a better future for all citizens. And I am ready, willing and able to take on once again the mantle of leadership necessary to move our country forward.

If you believe in that vision, I ask you to join me and stand with the United National Congress!

Let's come together, all citizens; one people, to work to make our country safer, for ourselves and our children.

Are you ready to move with us?

Are you ready to rescue Trinidad and Tobago from this incompetent Rowley government ?

Well lets UNDO THIS !

Let us work together to return our beloved nation to greatness.

God bless and thank you all.