



OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

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CORRECTED VERSION

STATE OPENING OF THE FIRST PARLIAMENT OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Speech from the Throne read by H.R.H.
the Princess Royal

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, Honourable Members, Senators:

By virtue of the Trinidad and Tobago Independence Act, to which I assented on 1st August, my Government of Trinidad and Tobago has today assumed responsibility as a sovereign independent nation within the Commonwealth of Nations. My Government in the United Kingdom no longer has any responsibility for this country. Both my Governments in the United Kingdom and in Trinidad and Tobago wish to maintain and strengthen those bonds of friendship which have existed for over 150 years and which have made it possible for Trinidad and Tobago to proceed peacefully and happily to independence.

My Government takes this opportunity, the formal opening of the first Parliament of the Independent Nation of Trinidad and Tobago, to give a firm and unequivocal pledge: to strive always to promote and maintain and develop democracy in this country, My Government will respect and defend the powers and privileges of Parliament. My Government will maintain the independence of the Judiciary. My Government guarantees to every citizen without exception freedom of worship, equality before the law, equality of opportunity in public employment, and my Government will use all its influence to eliminate discrimination in private employment.

My Government dedicates itself to the service and welfare of the nation. My Government will seek to raise even further the material standards of my people and to ensure a better distribution of the national product. My Government will, on its own initiative as well as in collaboration with the Churches and voluntary organisations, endeavour to inculcate new ideals and values especially among the youth of the Nation. My Government will not permit disrespect from any quarter of the Nation's institutions and the national symbols.

My Government will not swerve, in its relations with other countries, from its determination to secure respect for the rights and dignity of the Nation. As

/a member

a member of the international family my Government will always give its vote for peace as against war , for national independence for human emancipation.

My Government in Trinidad and Tobago wishes to express to the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth its sincere appreciation for the acceptance of Trinidad and Tobago as a member of the Commonwealth. My Government will constantly seek to develop its ties with the Commonwealth still further.

My Government places in the forefront of its international obligations its relations with its Caribbean neighbours and the metropolitan countries with which they are connected. My Government will strive at all times to achieve the closest possible association, political and economic, cultural and intellectual, with the countries of the Caribbean and the countries on the South American mainland which have traditionally formed part of the Caribbean economy.

My Government undertakes to govern the country in the spirit which marked the Independence Conference in London. It will seek the cooperation and invite the participation of all groups in the country in its approach to National questions.

On the occasion of opening of the first Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago, I offer to you and all the people of this country my warm personal congratulations on the achievement of your aspirations. Small in numbers though the population may be it constitutes with its many faiths and its racial origins, a microcosm of the larger world community. I invoke the blessing of Almighty God to give you the strength and the wisdom to make a living reality, for the inspiration of the world, of the stirring words of the National Anthem:

" Here ev'ry creed and race
Find an equal place".