

FORWARD

CWU

COMMUNICATION WORKERS' UNION



PRESS STATEMENT

The Communication Workers' Union would like to publicly express its grave concerns with respect to the recent pronouncement by the Chief Financial Officer of Cable and Wireless Communications, Tim Pennington, pertaining to Cable and Wireless wanting full control of the operations at the Telecommunication Services of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (TSTT).

The union views this public disclosure of intent as a direct affront and spews disrespect to the sovereignty of Trinidad and Tobago. We question the tactic of Cable and Wireless to make such a public pronouncement in the comfort of their motherland, England, reminiscent of the days when the Monarchy reigned supreme over the natives.

The Communication Workers' Union would like to advise the Cable and Wireless Chief Financial Officer that we have long gotten rid of the Monarchy and certainly London Bridge was dismantled by a resilient Caribbean people a long time ago. We will not dance to the ancient strings of the British Colonial Masters; we will not give up our hard earned sovereignty and freedoms for a few pieces of silver; we will not allow the future economical and social direction of our Independent Nation to be directed from behind the walls of Buckingham Palace. We have fought long and hard for ownership of our own destiny and we are prepared to fight harder and smarter to ensure that we retain and build on the legacy of our great national pioneers. We will not succumb like the other Caribbean islands and allow Cable and Wireless to have a monopoly over regional Telecommunications. Trinidad and Tobago, through the CWU will remain the last bastion of resistance against this hegemony and will certainly be the staging point for the exit strategy of Cable and Wireless and other foreign agents from within the Telecom and ICT Sector in the region.

The CWU has signalled its intention to engage in a relentless struggle to ensure that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago retain control of TSTT, which we see as a significant factor in the country's thrust towards developed nation status. The Telecommunication/Information Communication Technology Sector is too much of a critical sector for our beloved country for it to be placed in the hands of foreign capital, in particular, Cable and Wireless, who have not done anything of significance towards the development of the workers of TSTT. We have repeatedly called on the Government to outline to us the future vision and plan for a State Owned TSTT, as a key driver of the lofty ideals that were enunciated by the Government with respect to the development of the Telecommunication/Information Technology Infrastructure of our country.

In the circumstances, the CWU wishes to commend the Minister of Finance and the Economy for stating quite clearly to the Union in a recent meeting, that the Government will not be relinquishing any of its shareholding in TSTT and will retain its 51% Shareholdings in the Company at this time. We believe that this is the platform from which we can engage in meaningful discussions to ensure that we finally see the backs of Cable and Wireless. We wish to restate our intentions to see TSTT as a fully owned State Entity, structured and organised as a viable and sustainable organisation working for the interest of its employees, the shareholder and the citizens of our twin island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Respectfully

John Julien
Secretary General

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