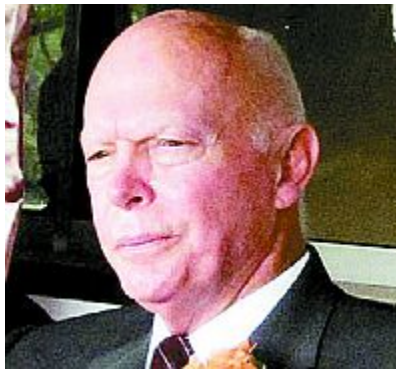


De Speville: Support Govt to clean up T&T's corruption

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British anti-corruption consultant Bertrand de Speville.

British anti-corruption consultant Bertrand de Speville has said that the private sector is also part of the problem of corruption in T&T. "They are part of the problem. Another thing we found in experiences around the world is that private sector corruption is just as harmful as public sector corruption. By that I mean where both sides of the transaction are on the private sector side," he said. He told the Guardian this yesterday in an interview at the Hilton Hotel and Conference Centre, St Ann's.

De Speville is a former Commissioner of the Independent Commission Against Corruption of Hong Kong (ICAC) and adviser to the Council of Europe's Multidisciplinary Group on Corruption. In 2003 he was brought to T&T by the then Government with assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to assist in the development of an anti-corruption strategy. Today at the Hilton Hotel and Conference Centre where De Speville will be a speaker, the Trinidad and Tobago Transparency International (TTTI) will be hosting a conference on the role of the Integrity Commission and whistle blowing Legislation in combating corruption.

De Speville advised T&T businessmen to support the Government in its attempts to clean up corruption in the country. "They need to recognise the perils of corruption. Support the Government's efforts to fight corruption. Businessmen understand the bottomline is profits and when they realise it is better for their business not to be undermined by their own employees

behind their back then they come on,” he said. He also warned citizens of T&T to look at the dire consequences, if corruption continues unabated.

“Look around the world. You could get a population so fed up they take to the streets as is happening in many Arab countries. That could happen. But if you guys are just resigned to corruption, what’s going to happen? A basket case? A failed state? A state run by gangs? Right now there is a curfew in T&T,” he said. He added that the laws in T&T penalises acts of corruption and what is needed to be done is for it to be enforced. “In your law, it states that bribery is wrong and it is a criminal offence. You all need to get to it, it is not that difficult,” he said.

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