



DEXTER BERNARD, double tenor player of National Panorama champ Amoco Renegades, carries in-hand the National Flag of Trinidad and Tobago. This was at one of the band's performances in the French town of La Rochelle, France, during the band's tour of Europe earlier this year. Here the audience follows the member of Renegades dancing to Nigel Lewis' road march hit song "Movin".

Pan in Japan

TA 9610 11 P-17

ML1040

By SEAN NERO

PAN IN the Land of the Rising Sun is earning many new Japanese fans.

For the fourth time in five years, National Panorama Champion Amoco Renegades recently performed throughout Japan keeping the TT flag flying high.

The 22 member band included George A Duncan, captain/tour manager; Bertrand Kellman tuner and Jit Samaroo, arranger.

Also present were Conversation Company Ltd representatives, Yoko Fukunaga and Jonko Kondo. Based in Japan, they chaperoned the ensemble during its 21-day jaunt which ended last month.

"It is no longer a challenge having toured Japan previously. It was up to us, the members who are accustomed to such extensive travels abroad, to guide our fellow musicians through the various stages, as

some of them were making their Japanese tour debut.

"The enticing concert performances, our music, and our discipline has strengthened the working relationship between the band and our Japanese employers Conversation Company Ltd.

"But," says John, an

John says that on the trip, the band was exposed to the six new cities of Imadate, Wakasa, Obama-shi and Yaiza-shi in Japan. The band had performed in Okayama previously.

In the seven cities where they appeared, they conducted a series of seven concert perfor-

There is certainly a place for pan in Japan. This is in no way hidden by the Japanese, who with much success have formed their very own National Steel Orchestra, Suki-yaki, in the Toyama Perfecter.

"Many of the promoters in cities where the band has performed over the years, have made requests to have the steel orchestra return to perform in their respective towns," said John.

Renegades' first CD titled *Pan Man Vibrations* was launched in Japan in August 1995. It featured original music compositions for the pan by veteran arranger Jit Samaroo, plus other types of music including calypso, reggae and latin.

The CD was produced in Europe through the band's agent based in Poitiers France, Run Production.

Renegades have opted out of participating in this year's bi-annual Pan Is Beautiful Series.

Seven concerts and six pan workshops were conducted in Japan.

ace tenor pan player of the band for the past 23 years, "there is always room for improvement with regards to the band performances."

"Although I believe the players have excelled in showmanship, we need to put our heads together to examine how we as performers can elevate our shows and be consistent."

mances and six pan workshops which attracted considerable interest..

In the town of Obama-shi, one such workshop with a group of senior citizens was so successful, says John, that they performed that famous Japanese hit song "Suki-yaki" to an enthusiastic response.