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Steelband history + culture

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NOW PANMEN MOVE TO END EXPLOITATION

THE ASSOCIATION of Trinidad and Tobago Steelbandsmen is making a strong bid to end once and for all the exploitation of panmen and other local entertainers by foreign impresarios.

The Association has sent Mr. Dave La Barrie, Vice-President, North, on a two-month assignment to New York and Chicago.

He will hold discussions with the American Federation of Musicians on annual exploitation of Trinidad performers.

According to Mr. George Goddard, the Association's President, who was at Piarco to see Mr. La Barrie off yesterday: "We believe that because of the stupidity in some and selfishness in others, it is impossible to stop our steelbandsmen from being exploited, unless some sound arrangement can be worked out between the two Associations.

"We are trying to save our present crop of artistes from what their predecessors went through."

Mr. La Barrie is to outline to the American Federation what Trinidad and Tobago wants for its artistes.

He will try to get the Federation to approve performances arranged by foreign impresarios before steelbands from Trinidad are permitted to accept offers to appear in the U.S. and Canada.

Mr. La Barrie will also try to arrange contracts for local artistes.

Recording studio

A member of the J. T. Johnson Play Boys steelband, Mr. La Barrie toured Europe in 1965 with this country's cultural team to the Commonwealth Festival.

He also represented Trinidad and Tobago as a senior member of the steelband team to Expo '67 in Montreal.

With plans afoot to set up a recording studio of its own, the panmen's Association will look to the United States for assistance, according to Mr. La Barrie.

He is to investigate along what lines U.S. recording companies operate.

He is also to explore the market for the possible sale of steelband instruments and records and hold talks with the Board of Education in Chicago regarding a proposed visit by steelbands to perform at high schools and colleges.