

A better deal for calypsonians, panmen in US

TRINIDAD and Tobago steelbandmen, calypsonians and other artistes are in for a better deal in show business.

This was indicated yesterday by Mr. Tony Dennis and Mr. Clifford Alexis of International Artiste Limited and Seymour Heller and Associates, who have arrived from the United States to recruit steelbands and other performing artistes for engagements in the U.S.

"This will be done through the Steelbands' Association of Trinidad and Tobago," Mr. George Goddard, President of the Association said.

Mr. Goddard, Mr. Dennis and Mr. Alexis are to hold discussions with Senator Overand Padmore, Minister of Industry and Commerce, at the Ministry on Monday at 10 a.m.

Similar talks will also be held with the Minister of Education and Culture, Senator Carlton Gomes, at his office on Tuesday, at 2.30 p.m., as well as with Mr. George Chambers, Minister of State in the Minis-

try of Planning, Finance, Development and National Security on a day and time convenient to him.

Discussions will also centre on finding ways and means without which it would be almost impossible for steelbands to leave Trinidad and Tobago to fulfill engagements in the U.S. and Canada.

"The fulfilment of such engagements must first be approved by the Association," Mr. Goddard said.

He explained that numerous complaints were received about steelbands going to the United States and not fulfilling contracts.

Other points to be discussed are refusal of some panmen to leave the U.S. on termination of the contract; misbehaviour by panmen and exploitation of a number of steelbandmen by agents and impressarios in Trinidad and Tobago and the U.S.

Mr. Dennis yesterday morning held discussions with the Archbishop of Port-of-Spain, the Most Rev. Anthony Pantin, and is to interview steelbands and other artistes on the advice of the Association.

Efforts will also be made for Mr. Dennis and Mr. Alexis to hold discussions if possible with officials of the Calypsonians' Association, the Tourist Board and the Industrial Development Corporation.

Mr. Alexis, a Trinidadian residing in the U.S., is a former senior member of the now defunct National Steelband.

He is here with Mr. Dennis because of his experience with the Steelbands Association, and will be liaison officer between the Association and the Moral Re-orientation Organisation (U.S.) to which Mr. Dennis is also attached.

This is Mr. Dennis' second visit to Trinidad. He was here in September last year.

International Artistes Limited is mainly responsible for the success of the Trinidad Tripoli Steelband in the United States.

Mr. Dennis said yesterday that Tripoli has just completed a contract with Liberace.