

# Steel pans made in Japan? don't be surprised!

By WILLIAM DOYLE-MARSHALL, New York

"OUR cultural traits are draining away and we eh doing nothing to make them stay; Tobago goat race, crab race, bongo limbo and stickfighting draining out slow. Why not put in every school a steelbandsman to train children to beat pan? That is what I call brain drain."

No Trinidadian resident at home since 1968 can forget these words. They were sung by Calypsonian Chalkdust, who is also a school teacher, in his song "Brain Drain."

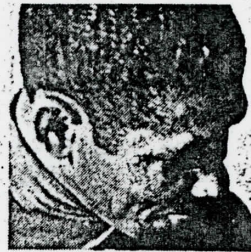
It was indeed an educational and informative editorial which he released to his people, but unfortunately it fell on deaf ears.

Since then our steelband movement has been plagued consistently with an "overseas attraction." The best tuners of steelband instruments are now residing outside of the country, the majority in the United States of America. Is the country aware of this?

And what is being done to remedy the sorry situation? Nothing worthwhile!

## PRODUCT

The director of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Band, Superintendent Anthony [redacted], last month, [redacted] for the establishment of a



ELLIE MANNETTE, TRINIDAD'S BEST KNOWN PAN PIONEER: "IF THE CITY OF NEW YORK CAN OFFER ME AN OPPORTUNITY TO TEACH IN THE SCHOOLS, I DON'T SEE WHY THE GOVERNMENT OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO SHOULD WAIT SO LONG TO PUT IT (STEELBAND) IN THE COLLEGES"

wait so long to put it (steelband) in the colleges."

Ellie is still conscious of the stigma which affects the movement consequently he added: "Obviously when the college boys graduate they won't be called pan men and underprivileged boys. They will be considered musicians."

Take it or leave it Ellie Mannette is quite correct. Evidence of this is seen at Carnival time when lawyers, teachers and civil servants play these same instruments on the two-day festivities, when you hear remarks like:

government to do something.

But what about the people themselves?

It is useless to be complacent and throw the buck around. I has the steelband association

ever approached businessmen and the many influential organisations in a position to help? Steelband is ours and we must make the best of it at all times.

Our Jaycees colleagues

have been boasting, over the years, of developing leadership, but how many are active members of our steelbands? If any, are they influential enough to assist the movement?

Let's put the Jaycees

to this test. The president of the West Indies Jaycees, Steve Touzalin, was quoted in Montserrat as saying: that it was not the objective of his organisation to overthrow the existing political order in the region, but rather to provide leadership.

"The Jaycees are not prepared to accept anything bad, but when we criticise, our goal is to do so constructively and to offer alternatives."

## CHANGE

Now the steelband movement can examine the depth of the statement by the Jaycees official. You are seeking change. It is not change for change's sake, but one which will be beneficial to your social and economical standing in the world.