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Conflict that led to split in All Stars

By SANDRA CHOUTH PERCEPTIONS of power and one band member's intention to lend out some of Trinidad All Stars' steel pans a day before the Panorama preliminaries were the two main issues of contention which led to the resignation of the six members and withdrawal of the band's sponsor.

This statement came from Clive Telemaque, the band's 30-year-old vice-captain on Friday night last as band members turned up to rehearse for two performances that weekend.

The steelband, which has its headquarters at 46 Duke Street, received six resignations dated March 11 from musical director Jerry Jemmott, arranger Leon "Smooth" Edwards, assistant secre-

tary Earl Welles, captain John "Poison" Douglas, Anthony Guy and secretary Barbara Critchlow-Shaw, on March 14.

Telemaque said the six members resigned because they felt the general membership was forming a "hate campaign" against them, and that, in effect, affected the musical performance of the musical director, "Uncle Jem" and arranger, "Poison."

The band's vice-captain said the six persons felt that the Old Boys' Association which was formed two years ago and has over 40 members, wanted to take over the band and was also exercising some influence over the committee.

Members in the committee are Telemaque, present captain Beresford Hunte, Keith Matthews, secretary treasurer, Keith Fields, Chris Haynes, Deryck Nurse and Barnabas Grant. Of the six ex-members, only Guy and Welles were committee members. Douglas sat in at committee meetings as its home arranger.

"There was also a misunderstanding between Welles and

Hunte around Panorama time. It concerned some instruments belonging to us, which Welles wanted to borrow and also recruit about 10 All Stars players to play for T&TEC Motown Steel Orchestra at the South Panorama preliminaries. Welles wanted the pans to improve Motown's tonal quality at the competition, but a decision was taken by myself and the captain that this should not be," said Telemaque.

Welles, the band member added, insisted otherwise and that "created a problem." Douglas was also arranging for Motown at the time. Telemaque added that Welles attempted to remove the pans from the yard in the absence of the captain, but was restrained from doing so by other members.

Telemaque said that the six persons went to the sponsor, Catelli Primo Limited, and told them of the "recent developments." The company indicated to the band that it wanted to hear the other side of the story.

"All three parties got together at the company's premises around 7 p.m. on March 11, where the six persons said they wanted out. That

was when the sponsor indicated that they too wanted out. Three days later, we received the letters of resignation," said Telemaque.

Telemaque said the situation could have been handled in a much better way if earlier efforts were made to talk about the problems.

He said that although he would not wish upon another band what happened to Trinidad All Stars, all six persons contributed greatly to the development of the band. Should they join other steel orchestras, the latter will benefit from their expertise and talent.

Despite what may appear to be a bleak outlook for All Stars, Telemaque said that the band has dedicated members who have sacrificed greatly and they

would continue to do so, despite the odds.

"We intend to give a good account of ourselves at this year's Music Festival and next year's Panorama, and win, because we feel we have something to prove to this country and the entire steelband movement. We feel no one person is bigger than this organisation," said Telemaque.

Band member Keith Matthews said on Friday evening that the band held a meeting earlier on the same day.



Earl Welles



L "Smooth" Edwards



Clive Telemaque



Jerry Jemmott

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