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Standardisation of pan styles urged

PAN TRINBAGO — official body of the steelbandmen — is being asked to convene a conference of all tuners, leading arrangers and representatives of leaders and players to discuss improvements to the steelband instrument.

These improvements will include reviewing of existing designs and placement of notes, as well as range, so that they may be able to recommend the adoption of one or more styles of pan as a standard.

The request for such a conference is one of ten recommendations made by a committee on standardisation of the pan, appointed during the National Consultation on the Steelband, which concluded Wednesday at Chaguaramas Convention Centre.

The committee, which was headed by Dr. Kenneth Julien, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, made the following recommendations:

1. Positive attempts be made towards standardisation of

pitch and in this regard, tuners be requested to work towards this adopting some internationally accepted standard.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Musical directors, band leaders and arrangers should be requested to assist in this effort and influence the tuners to accelerate this standardisation.

2. An appropriate body arrange for technical advice on the facilities needed to assist in standardisation of pitch and devise ways and means of providing such facilities.

3. Pan Trinbago be requested to organise a conference inviting all tuners, leading arrangers and representatives of leaders and players to:

(a) Review existing designs of note placement and range.

(b) Exchange ideas and information on all factors pertaining to surface design.

(c) On the basis of (a) and (b), recommend the adoption of one or more styles as a standard.

4. That at the proposed conference, all pan tuners be

requested to submit full-scale charts of their accepted designs of the various instrument types. The Committee wished it to be understood that this was not to be viewed as a competition but rather provision of information and pooling of experience and ideas towards overall improvement of the instrument and identification of problems in any effort towards standardisation of note placement and range. Assistance could be provided to tuners in the preparation of the specimen charts.

5. The National Cultural Council or some such agency commission the writing up of the story of the historical development of the instrument as distinct from the music and the movement. The Committee was impressed by the fascinating history of the pioneers in 'pantuning' and feels that this should be recorded in all its technical and musical aspects for the world at large.

6. The Industrial Development Corporation immediately undertake a feasibility study on the establishment of a factory producing steelband instruments and associated equipment.

7. That continued research into various aspects of the improvement of the steelband instruments be continued and that such research involve the efforts of interested tuners and the Faculty of Engineering, University of the West Indies.

8. That existing results of research as well as future results be brought to the attention of the tuners in Tobago.

9. That tuners begin the practice of supplying charts with their particular design of instruments.

10. That notwithstanding recommendation (6) the possibility of wholesale purchase of steel drums be explored as well as the feasibility of members of the movement being themselves involved in the fabrication of the basic drum.

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