

# THE CARIBBEAN INSIDER CRITICISE STEELBANDMEN AND BEST VILLAGE CONTEST

## 'AN INDECENT EXPOSURE OF OUR CULTURE'

STEELBANDS-  
MEN? They will  
have to learn  
music.

Calypso and the Best Village competition? They cannot "shape music taste of a kind proper to a matured people or provide reasonable arbiters of musical taste or judgment."

These devastating comments on local music are published in the second issue of the "Caribbean Insider", whose music critic applauds the recently-concluded Music Festival but lambasts calypso, steelband and folk choirs.

The critic, unnamed, thinks that the "high standard" achieved at the Music Festival "provides abundant justification for the belief that there is everything to be said for establishing it as a permanent feature of the music scene" in Trinidad and Tobago.

## Folk choirs

"Calypso tents and the Best Village competition may be diverting," the critic adds. But that's about all.

In a later comment, the critic says that "the kindest response" to the Best Village competition "is silence."

As for some adult folk choirs which performed at the Music Festival, they "delivered their ditties in a fashion which must seriously have exposed them to suspicion of being drunk and disorderly and indecently exposing one's culture in a public place."

The "plain and nasty fact," the critic adds, "is that both the form and its executants are too limited to stimulate us on a serious level."

## Calypso

Steelbands "may be forced, by the Music Festival, to understand that they function within the context of a certain musical tradition and that an assault on Bach or Beethoven requires that they understand that tradition. The tradition is not 'we culture'. They would have to learn music."

Much has happened, the critic noted, since calypsonian Mighty Sparrow "demonstrated that a calypso could come close to being genuine folk poetry."

Calypso was very nearly dead, with a Carnival Development Committee "ponderously pronouncing the last rites backwards."