



NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON THE STEELBAND

Mausica proposes UWI pan department

MAUSICA Teachers' Training College has proposed that the steelband be formalised and institutionalised "in such a way that it embraces the society in a total way."

In a Paper placed before the National Consultation on the Steelband at Convention Centre, Chaguaramas, yesterday, the residential teachers' college suggests that the steelband movement should be made "part of our education system" with specialist teachers devoting full time to teaching children who have the necessary interest, ability, initiative and discipline in the art.

The teaching should run from the primary through to junior secondary and secondary schools, youth camps, teachers' training colleges and the UWI, St. Augustine.

The College also proposes establishment of a "pan technology centre" where pan making and tuning would be carried on.

One of the College's proposals is that "rooms suitable for music teaching in general and pan music in particular" be built into the two new teacher training colleges to be constructed in the near future.

PILOT SURVEY

The proposal adds that both the Mausica College and the Caribbean Union College at Maracas should be fitted with complexes for the teaching of music and pan music in particular.

The reason is that both institutions stand on extensive grounds of several acres which can accommodate the complexes and the sound of pan.

However, before putting pan on the school curriculum, the Mausicans recommend that a nation-wide pilot survey be carried out to "test the practical feasibility of the programme and to give time for more persons to be trained to implement the full-scale programme when it is launched."

The University at St. Augustine is also to play its part in the Mausica "pan plan." It is recommended that a representative of the Faculty of Engineering which has conducted certain experiments in pan techniques should be included in the team to draft proposals for establishment of the proposed institute of pan technology.

Under the section titled "Long term aspects of the programme," Mausica suggests "the establishment at UWI of a Pan Department in the Faculty of Fine Arts which already exists at Mona.

Mausica claims that this would, "in an intelligent and sophisticated way, extend the range of pan to adult and higher education levels—thereby deepening understanding and appreciation of and respectability for pan."

The rationale for pan at the

University adds that "it would cater for and serve the needs of nationals and regionals who opt for pan as their area of specialisation in musical education."

And finally that "it would, in collaboration with the Pan Technology Centre, ensure our continual comparative advantage in pan."

The College notes that "we have to be very mindful of the increasing interests which metropolitan countries are taking in pan—interests backed by superior technology."

Panmen want better life

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ging and not demanding what was due to them."

During the post-lunch session, the discussions centred on the Steelband — its preservation as an art form; the organisation of bands — individual, regional and on a national level, and the panyard as a workshop and community.

Mr. Yeates, speaking on behalf of Pan, Trinidad, suggested that the anthropologists and sociologists be called in to study the preservation of the Steelband as an art form.

In relation to organisation, it should be left to the individual steelband to do its own thing, while in relation to the regional and national levels, the Pan Trinbago's Constitution made provision for this.

Mr. Yeates also suggested that a panyard be allowed to remain a panyard to be run by panmen.

Mr. William Johnson, of Old Oak Casablanca, called for training of panmen in present sleable skills, and social acceptance of the panyard theatre. Cassablanca already operates one.

Tourist Board offers annual pan festival

THE Trinidad and Tobago Tourist Board is willing to sponsor a month-long Steelband Festival annually aimed at attracting overseas visitors.

This is among proposals contained in a Paper submitted by the Board to the current three-day National Consultation on the Steelband.

The Board has expressed a partiality to the month of November for holding the festival, to be on alternate days of the finals of the Prime Minister's Best Village Competition. The Board says the plan would provide a full month of entertainment.

The Paper deals with the steelbandsman and takes in his role as performer, tuner, arranger, inventor and administrator.

It fears that the steelband will perish as an art form "unless satisfactory working conditions can be arranged for steelband performers."

The Board is in favour of:

- * A National Pan Theatre and a National Steel Orchestra.

- * An annual money prize to the person making the most outstanding contribution to the instrument of the steelband.

- * Instruments should be patented internationally.

- * Individual steelbandsmen should be trained.

- * Participating in the production of a documentary film on the steelband.

Other proposals and suggestions by the Board include:

RECOGNITION

- * There should be recognition of the pan man by society for his contribution to the development of a unique form of cultural expression.

- * His role in society would have to be determined by whether he is a professional entertainer or whether this is an extra-curricular activity.

If his role is that of professional entertainer he should be considered in the same way as a member of any orchestra. If on the other hand his role is that of extra-curricular activist, methods of obtaining employment should be found, with sponsors assisting in obtaining jobs for their respective bands.

If it felt that the number of persons comprising a steelband and the size of the instruments, which take up a lot of space, make it very expensive to hire

such a band, and that bands could only be used in large hotels and night clubs. It is also felt that this is the reason for the difficulty in finding a venue where the visitor could hear a "real" steelband every night of the week.

- * The services of qualified musicians, technicians, engineers, and metallurgists, are a must, and the services of a qualified musician in the form of an arranger is of paramount importance for top performance.

- * Unless satisfactory working conditions can be arranged for steelband performers, the steelband as an art form will perish. Also, lack of sponsorship as well as a sufficient number of large hotels capable of employing steelbands, can cause this art form to perish.

- * Some salary scale, should be determined for the holders of the specific jobs — as composer, tuner, arranger and conductor.

- * It is felt that if all of the pans could not be standardised, at least the special larger pans should be standardised for overseas travel; also that a set of the standardised larger pans should be kept permanently in the Government Missions in countries in which steelbands often perform.

- * The Business Community should have some representation on any Association in existence or that may be formed in the future, in view of its sponsorship of the steelband.

- * Greater recognition should be given to the steelband by mass media.

- * All music should be in school curriculum, including steelband.

- * The Board would make every effort to assist steelbands to obtain overseas tours and contracts.



REPRESENTATIVES of the Samaroo Kids — the family steelband at yesterday's Consultation. Left to right: Manager Fitzroy Gajar, Miss Pauline Samaroo and Mr. Lalchan Samaroo.

Photo by Kenny R