



Trinidad steelband pioneer, Winston "Spree" Simon.

Two types of players - And 69% unemployed

"PAN have a role to play in the liberation of mankind." With these words of Abdul Hemeed, the young Curepe Scherzando panman, we can resume where we left off in the previous article on the "Steelband Life" (June CONTACT). The way he relates them, Hemeed's experiences in the formation and development of the Curepe Scherzando band are illuminating.

Pan, as he talks about it, is not merely a music, or a musical instrument to play any kind of music. Pan is a way of life, a dynamic sector of the ongoing "struggle" towards "the liberation of mankind."

Struggle: The term is inseparable from the history of pan. It used to be violent and bloody for nearly a whole generation. Researchers cite police records as valuable sources of the history of pan. Anthony Rouff in his 1972 pamphlet urged that the Government "should erase the prison records which our panmen may have because most of these men have convictions which were caused through the creation of pan."

Pan, wrote anthropologist and Chairman of the National Cultural Council, Senator Dr. J.

**LENNOX GRANT
CONTINUES HIS
FOCUS ON THE
"PAN MEN" LIFE
IN TRINIDAD.**

at what has been described a "peppercorn rental" of 25 cents a year.

The Regal Calypso Tent broke with tradition and had Spree Simon declare open the last calypso season, instead of the customary dignitaries like

persuaded to start a steelband of its own.

The 60,000 or more people who turned out to the annual Panorama competition in Port of Spain and San Fernando are undoubtedly expressing an appreciation of steelband music. What causes the bitter reactions of the panmen to the results is the knowledge that such appreciation is expressed so tangibly only at Carnival time.

The acutely critical mind of calypsonian, the Mighty Stalin, has concluded that the current appreciation is for the music of the steelband and not for the man who produces it. (See box for his 1974 calypso "Panman").

Who is the panman? Bertie Fraser is one. The President of Pan Trinbago since November 1974, Bertie is a university graduate in anthropology and music and the musical arranger of the band, L. J. Williams Nu-Tones. He is articulate in a quiet way which nevertheless suggests a passionate involvement with the issues of pan. At time of writing - unemployed.

His exposition of a statistical picture which I asked for is thorough. It is clear he feels bound, as a social scientist, to spell out all the qualifications

players are some 4,100 in number. The distribution throughout the country shows the highest concentration of bands in the areas surrounding Port of Spain and San Fernando, the two main towns.

In the poor East Dry River area of Port of Spain where the steelband started, there are still more steelbands than anywhere else in the country. And in that part of San Fernando west of

to the progression from "Negro" to "coloured" to "black."

So that the "panman" of today is associated with a "fast-growing recognition of brotherhood" which is in contrast to the feelings of rivalry of the past. Again the "Panman" could be not merely someone who beats pan, but a specialist, even professional, pan tuner, or arranger.

George Goddard, a founder

PANMAN *****

(Sung by the Mighty Stalin, 1974)

Everyday you could hear people talking
About the height steelband reach
And still going
But brother I must be blind
Or I can't see
Or all who saying that
Could see more than me
What going on with the steelband
Give me a chance to tell
Is the art doing good
The artist ketching hell

x x x x x x

It is true to say
They ent gone no way
Is the steelpan gone
And the panman dey

x x x x x x

Trinidadians are known as the creators of steelpan That is a world fact It established without a question