

POLITICS BEHIND NATASHA'S SELECTION?

WHY HAS little Natasha Wilson been included in the list of seven calypsonians to challenge King David Rudder for the Calypso Monarch show on Sunday

night? "Straight politics," is the word coming from an insider in the Carnival Development Committee. The angry official told Mirror: "Every-

one heard when Natasha burst on stage while trying to sing 'How to Soca.' "She was forced to sing this tune because she wasn't allowed to sing 'Mas in We,' which had been

previously sung by Francine. "Everyone knows that Natasha is the protege of Sparrow, an NAR lover who has been recently appointed to the Board of 610 Radio.

'Well, when Natasha burst, Sparrow prompted Phil Simmonds (the MC) to go onstage and ask the judges if they wanted Natasha to sing her tune over again.

"It was an attempt to make it look as if the sound system was at fault (which Sparrow tried on the Savannah Monday night when the crowd booed him). "The judges thought that wasn't necessary, but it was clear that she had burst in truth and in fact, and should not have been picked.

"If one of the two youths on the show had to be selected on Saturday's performances at Skinner's Park, then Machel Montano should have made it again.

"On merit, Natasha should not have been selected before people who performed well, like Poser and Merchant for example, but the talk I hear is that she could finish 1-2.

"I feel Sparrow is pushing her too fast.

"I won't be surprised if she bursts again on Sunday, finishes down the field, and then the hurt cracks her up."

MIRROR

THE SUPER PAPER

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 27, 1987 No. 470 • \$1.50

STEELBAND HOAX

... 'SPREE' SIMON DID NOT INVENT PAN

By HAROLD RAMOUTAR

THE BIGGEST steelband hoax ever has been exposed.

For years and years, the country has hailed Winston "Spree" Simon as the inventor of pan and a national hero.

In fact, several calypsoes honouring him were recorded just before his death several years ago, and one bard even had him wheeled out on the Grand Stand stage on the Dimanche Gras Show of the same year.

He was even given a National award as pan's inventor.

But the fraud was unmasked on Tuesday when George Goddard, currently on contract with the TnT Government, blew the lid on it during a

meeting held earlier this week in Barataria.

"The pan which took 'Spree' to glory, had actually been bought from a man named Andrew 'Pan' De La Bastide for a shilling (24 cents)," Goddard stated.

"It was the first pan ever sold."

Goddard, however, was not alone in levelling the serious charge.

With him were several stalwarts of the steelband movement: Carlton Comstance "Zigilly" Barrow, former member of Hellyard (now Catelli All Stars), John Slater and Mc Kellar "Big Mac" Sandiford.

According to Goddard, Spree Simon got his pan in 1946, but the steelband had been in existence since the late 1930s.

"Steelbands were

already established in the early '40s.... before Spree bought his pan."

The three veteran panmen with him all agreed.

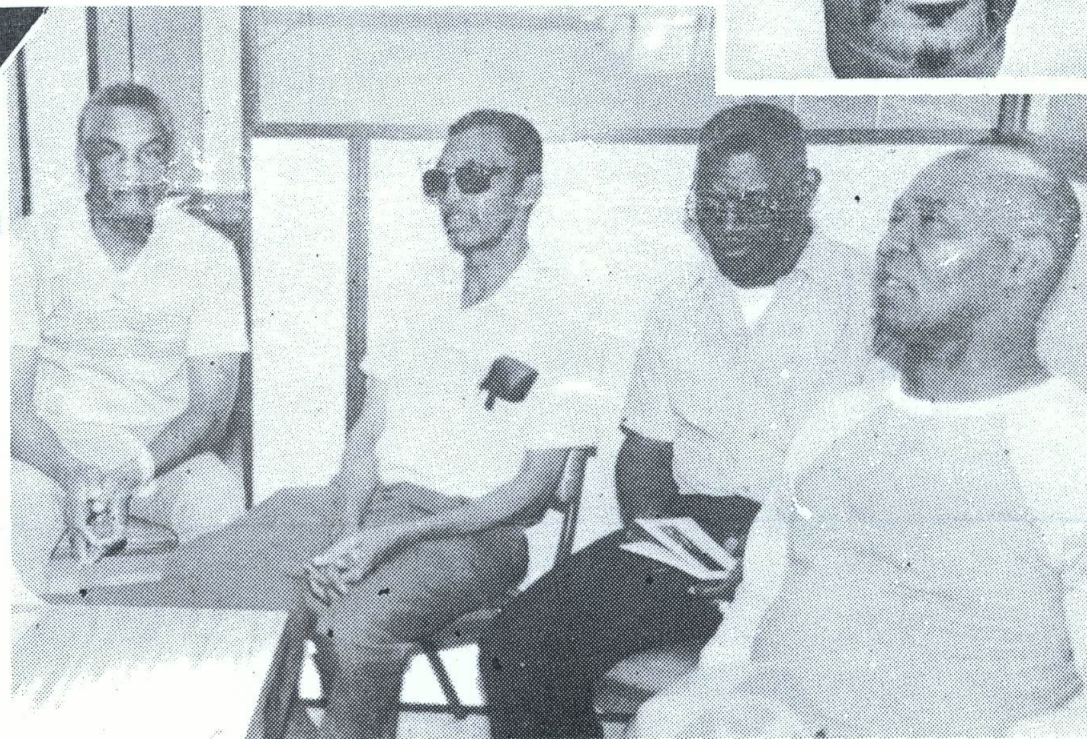
Goddard added: "The first two steelbands to exist were Hellyard and Alexander Ragtime."

Slater, author of a book on his own life and times with the Steelband movement in the early days, blamed the people of John John for the Spree Simon hoax.

"These people have to be real selfish to insist that Spree invented pan because the facts are different.

"Spree played the first established tune, a hymn called 'I'm a Warrior,' but others had been playing local compositions before."

"The first steel instrument to replace



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Slater, Goddard, Big Mac and Zigilly discussing the early days of pan. INSET: WINSTON "Spree" SIMON.

the bamboo was actually a Bermudez biscuit drum," Ziggily then interjected.

Goddard, who is currently working with author-historian Michael Anthony to compile the "Official History of Steelband in TnT," told Mirror that touted pan experts like JD Elder, Lennox Pierre, Sylvia Gonzales and Ellie Mannette had been writing and saying a lot of nonsense.

"They have distorted the history of the pan evolution," he charged.

"I took seven pieces of documents on pan history written by JD Elder, former Chairman of the National Cultural Council, and I found that they were not only badly written, but they contained a lot of wrong information as well.

"Cecil Gray and Allan Gilchrist also wrote a lot of mis-

leading information for students in the book 'Languages for Living,' and Mannette produced an article for an international musical magazine which ranks with distortions.

"Trinidad and Tobago must surely have the most backward set of people producing information on the pan movement," Goddard concluded.

JD ELDER

