

Bandleaders: We will not boycott the carnival

BANDLEADERS have given assurance they will not boycott Carnival 1980. But the masmen will meet the Carnival Development Committee [CDC] Monday to discuss increased prize money and general financial assistance for bandleaders. The reassuring message came yesterday from Irving McWilliams, president of the Carnival Bandleaders Association.

Mr. McWilliams said bandleaders had been facing serious financial problems and were seeking general assistance from the CDC along with the prize increase. "But the question of a boycott has not been raised," he said.

Bandleaders were facing hardships in the area of transportation costs, mas camp rents and materials. He said some masmen were paying as much as \$4,000 to rent a mas camp for the season. Some large bandleaders had as many as eight camps scattered throughout the city.

Another bandleader, Albert Bailey, said the cost of transporting large costumes and the price of materials had increased considerably this year. Also some dealers were exploiting the fact that the masmen needed the materials. Within a matter of months much of the material including sequins, silks, thread, and braid had skyrocketed, he added.

To make things worse, most of the material had not yet been cleared off the docks by customs. Masmen were seeking some assistance from CDC in defraying some of the costs they incurred. Said Mr. Mc Williams: "If we don't get through with it this year their is always next year."