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GORDON: SELL PAN TO WORLD

Minister urges aggressive marketing

By FRANCIS JOSEPH

SENATOR KEN GORDON, Minister of Industry, Enterprise and Tourism, called yesterday for an aggressive plan to market the steelpan to the world and make it a thriving business.

Saying the aim should not only be to captivate music lovers, but also to produce pan for export to the capitals of the world, he told of hearing a master of ceremonies introduce Jamaica as the home of the steelband on the north coast of that island during a steelband performance to an international body of newspaper publishers.

Senator Gordon said he understands that steelbands are being developed in Sweden, the United States and neighbouring Caribbean island.

The Minister made the disclosures at the launching of "Pan is Beautiful V — World Steelband Music Festival," to be held in Trinidad between October 20 and November 6. The ceremony was held at Royal Bank's Independence Square branch. The bank has pledged \$200,000 to assist Pan Trinbago in staging the festival.

Live Via Satellite

"This is all healthy and in fact quite complimentary to the movement but let us not misunderstand what will follow. Where market demands exist, investment in development to exploit that opportunity will inevitably follow. The reality is if we do not, others will and we would have no one to blame but ourselves," Gordon said.

He suggested as a form of promotion that a "Pan is Beautiful V — a World Festival" stamp be placed on all items of stationery or correspondence going out of the country.

"Simple though it would be," he said, "it is an effective way to tell the world that pan belongs to all of us and we stand four-square behind the festival."

Pledging support for the festival, the Minister suggested to the organisers that they explore with the

major television stations in North America the possibility of beaming the finals live via satellite, and added:

"Can you imagine what it would do for the steelband movement if major television stations in North and South America, the United Kingdom and Europe and the Far East could be persuaded to televise the final half-hour of the championships live from the stadium?"

He said he was assured by the general manager of Textel that this was possible from a technical point of view and the major hurdle would be the commercial arrangements.

Gordon said the External Affairs Minister also pledged his support by promising to enlist this country's ambassadors and high commissioners in making appropriate representations to the relevant people in the countries to which they are accredited.

He revealed that Tourist Board has put together a special two-week promotional package which will be marketed to music lovers throughout the world.

Special Invitations

As an extension, he suggested that special invitations be extended to tour promoters in North America and Europe to be brought down to experience at first hand the extraordinary attraction of pan in full flight.

Senator Gordon said the Tourism Ministry was finalising arrangements for six steelbands to visit different parts of the world this year.

This will be used for marketing purposes and will be extended to promote other performances at suitable venues wherever satisfactory arrangements could be put in place, he added.

Arnim Smith, president of Pan Trinbago, said that between ten and 15 foreign bands are willing to participate in the festival. The bands may come from London, the US, Antigua, St Vincent, St Thomas and Grenada.

He said the budget for staging such a festival would be in the vicinity of \$800,000 and believes the festival, if planned and executed well, will be a revenue-earner for the country.

He thanked Royal Bank for its contribution and other business establishments for their support.



Ken Gordon, Minister of Industry, Enterprise and Tourism (third from right), listens to what Royal Bank's Public Relations Manager, Sandra Bernard-Bastien (right), is saying at yesterday's launching of "Pan is Beautiful V — World Steelband Music Festival." Others (from left) are Chand Baggan, Corporate Manager,

Planning and Finance, Royal Bank; Arnim Smith, Pan Trinbago president; Bruce Anansen, Manager, Retail Banking and Development, Royal Bank, and Herman P. Erich, Chairman of Royal Bank.

Photo by NOEL SALDENHA