

WHAT OUR READERS SAY... WHAT OUR READERS SAY...

THE EDITOR: Please permit me, through the medium of your newspaper, to state some observations on crowd behaviour at the 1981 Panorama Competition and to focus on the issue of competition, as a whole and the effect this is having on the Trinidad and Tobago culture and society at present.

For several years now, and as recently as the 1981 Panorama Competition, some steelbands, have had to suffer boos and jeers from certain sections of the crowd during their performances and after.

To my mind, this isolated incident can be used as a gauge to determine the state of our nation.

Let's face it. Pan is our culture, our invention. It is something to be cherished and encouraged. Imagine the many nights' sleep these panmen have sacrificed!

We are all aware of the hardships panmen go through just to appear for panorama, and what do they get in return, apart from the petty financial handouts, which are sure to evaporate in quick time due to inflationary trends? Nothing but boos and jeers!

It makes one infuriated to know that some of these same people who say they support

It must be cherished not jeered at

pan by going to the shows, would not think of playing mas with a steelband on Carnival day. Many of them even consider hearing pan after Carnival an embarrassment.

There are those who say that such action by some people at panorama time is only human. They say that this is one of the peculiar traits of the Trinidadian and are content to leave it at that.

Little do they realize, or they refuse to realize, that it is this all embracing ideology of competition, including panorama, which has a definite input in both the decadent state of our nation today, and in making us the kind of people we are: "creative" and

PAN IS OUR CULTURE

Culture has no place for winners and losers. Culture flourishes where there is genuine on-going encouragement and support by all members of society, high or low, rich or poor.

Pan will progress not by "who beat who," but by a total involvement of the leaders and people of the nation, in supporting and encouraging the art form in all its aspects.

Two simple questions here may help to get the point across clearly, viz. Where is the standardized pan? Where is the school to train local musicians?

A look at the wider society will show where this ideology of competition in all areas of national life is hampering our development as one people.

The average Trinidadian today, is virtually struggling to make ends meet despite the abundance of petro-dollars. He, however, sees the struggle as being his and his alone, not stopping once to consider that others just like him are struggling just as hard, and that unity and determination in any struggle is strength.

We are all so pre-occupied, in competition with the next person, running after the Amoco money, the Wharf money, the T&TEC money, the DEWD money, the recreation club money, the lottery money, the panorama money and their related favours and advantages (?) that we do not realize that we are killing the soul of this infant nation.

Sir, with all this talent we are supposed to have, it is high time that we, as a people, 'run de head', put a stop to these petty competitions' and divide and rule tactics, change the society for the all-round benefit of every individual, whether he be an artiste or otherwise, learn to appreciate what is ours...and revolutionize pan!

BLACK PEPPER
Port of Spain.

Mas costumes nice from far but far from nice

THE EDITOR: The greatest show on earth has again made its departure until another year, but there are certain aspects that will remain fresh in my mind. I am referring to pan, mas and kaiso, which are the main ingredients.

First of all Panorama. From all appearances gaining the

panorama title only takes a proper interpretation of any simple, sweet calypso along with a pulsating rhythm bringing up the rear.

It started with Natasha and the trend has continued. Probably judging may soon be just a past - time since the voice of the people has taken over.

"talented", but "lazy", "intolerant", "unappreciative" of our own culture, "rootless" and "unpatriotic."

Civilised people who identify with and appreciate a common culture do not act in this way. They know that it is their very culture that has made them vibrant enough to be civilised in the first place. They identify with it and proclaim it to the high heavens.

It is this competitive aspect of the panorama show that is responsible for these negative feedbacks, vis-a-vis the crowd and appreciation of their own culture.

If we, as a people, are to fully accept pan as part and parcel of our indigenous culture and to project it to the outside world meaningfully, this idea of competition for pan must cease or at least be lessened considerably.

Once the system that is now used in panorama remains, I have the strange feeling that we are going to experience serious problems in the future.

Now let's get into costuming. Apart from Wayne Berkeley, Peter Minshall and Raoul Garib, I think much is left to be desired from the rest.

Again Berkely has shown his supremacy in design, craftsmanship and colour; he is really a tremendous individual.

Minshall is an outstanding innovator whilst Garib has been very promising ever since he launched his first presentation.

STOP VOTING FOR FAILURE