

Pan Trinbago to attend Govt sponsored talks

AT A SPECIAL general meeting yesterday, steelband representatives of Pan Trinbago voted to attend Government's Consultation on Steelbands, scheduled for January 29.

But this decision was taken with the understanding that Pan Trinbago receives official registration as a union, prior to January 21.

A special committee, set up last weekend, to deal with the registration issue, reported to the meeting yesterday.

The organisation's president, Mr. Roy Augustus, reported that the organisation's papers were now in order, and the Registration Certificate will be signed soon and handed to the body.

During discussion of the Consultation's agenda yesterday, it was pointed out that Pan Trinbago has not been invited as a body, and as such, any member of its Executive attending, was doing so as a representative of their respective bands.

However, steelband representatives present were unanimous in their decision to let the Consultation know that any move being made in the interest of steelbands, must be done through their official body — Pan Trinbago.

While being invited individually, the panmen said they intended to speak with "one tongue."

As a result, several items on the Consultation's agenda were discussed, and decisions taken as to what line they should pursue at the Convention Centre.

Some of the decisions taken at yesterday's meeting, included:

That the delegation size be left to the individual band, and that the running of each individual band, should be left to the particular band itself.

On the question of regional organisation and national organisation, the meeting agreed that the present policy existing in Pan Trinbago's Constitution,

be taken up at the Consultation.

There was agreement too that efforts must be explored to assist "unfortunate steelbands to obtain their own panyards." And that a panyard should remain as such under the control of steelbandmen.

In relation to panyard theatres, the meeting agreed that such theatres be set up on a regional basis, since it would be impossible for every band to have a panyard theatre.

Also, that Pan Trinbago will be responsible for the administration of these regional panyard theatres.

The meeting also agreed on a national production centre being run as a co-operative, with the regional panyard theatres serving as outlets for the various items produced.

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Members voiced the view that production from the co-operative centre should not only be tourist-oriented, but should also service steelbands themselves.

Example — basic items needed by the bands at Carnival, could be obtained in bulk by the co-operative centre and sold to the bands.

Yesterday's meeting also agreed to a committee of the organisation meeting with appropriate experts from the Department of Co-operatives to explore the possibilities of establishing a co-operative, appropriately suitable to steelbands.

There was the agreement too that the organisation urge Government to consider the question of awarding scholarships to suitably qualified steelbandmen to be involved in the research and development of the steelband movement.

Also, that representatives of the Faculty of Engineering at the University of the West Indies, work on this issue, in conjunction with the Education Committee of Pan Trinbago.

Further discussions on the agenda for the Consultation will be continued next Sunday at 10 a.m., at the same venue.

ML 104