



NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON THE STEELBAND

It costs \$11,800 to hit road on Carnival Monday

COST of a steelband to hit the road on Carnival Monday and Tuesday, has been put at approximately \$11,820.

Mr. Dennis Legendre a member of the Steelband Research Committee of the National Cultural Council, gave this figure in a memorandum to the Prime Minister, Dr. Eric Williams.

The document was circulated at the current National Consultation on the Steelband, taking place at Convention Centre, Chaguaramas.

The figure was broken down as follows:

Twenty tenor pans at \$80 each — \$1,600; eight double tenors at \$65 each — \$520; eight double seconds at \$65 each — \$520; eight double guitars at \$65 each — \$520; eight cellos at \$70 each — \$560; eight 4-bass at \$70 each — \$560; eight 6-bass at \$80 each — \$640.

Rhythm section (including drum set, timbales etc) — \$1,200; stands (including cost of materials for rhythm section, stand wheels etc) — \$3,000; painting of stands and pans — \$500; and transport of pans to tuner — \$200.

"The above cost is based on a steelband coming on the road for the first time or after a lapse of two or more years."

"The cost could depreciate however, depending on the replacement of certain instruments and a saving of about 50 per cent could be made if the band decides to remain an 80-member band," Mr. Legendre explained.

CONVENIENCE

On another factor Mr. Legendre compared the estimated revenue and expenditure of the steelband for Carnival.

Basing a 40-day practise period for eighty players at eight hours per day, he ultimately broke it down to 25,600 man-hours at approximately \$2 per man-hour — \$51,200.

By deriving a revenue figure of \$40,380, Panorama preliminaries (appearance fee) \$180 four Carnival engagements at \$500 each — \$2,000; 500 players (Carnival Monday) band fee at \$3 per player — \$1,500; and 600 players (Carnival Tuesday), band fee at \$5 per player — \$3,000.

The memorandum also

Prospect: Set up pan factory

THE FOLLOWING suggestions were submitted yesterday by Police Supt. Anthony Prospect in relation to the music of the steelband at the steelband consultation at the Convention Centre, Chaguaramas:

- That a training centre, academy or school of music, fully equipped with standardised pan instruments and other teaching materials, be established.
- a pan factory be set up, headed by two top tuners and working staff, to produce pan instruments, stands, sticks and other equipment required by steelbands;
- that a small working committee be set up comprising the two top tuners and tutors of the training centre or school to work towards the standardisation of pitch, design, and compass of instruments; and
- that a music library containing musical scores and all kinds of records be established for reference and use by arrangers.

Pierre tells how to operate pan industry

AN OFFICIAL of Pan Trnago has recommended standardisation of note placement and range of three accepted pan styles and setting up of a factory to produce the instruments for the home and foreign market.

Mr. Curtis Pierre, leader of Texaco Dixieland steelband and Education Officer of Pan Trnago told the National Consultation on the Steelband that the factory should be set up as soon as possible.

Mr. Pierre suggested that as an industry involved in the promotion and development of one of the country's most indigenous cultural form, Government should grant pioneer status to the first pan-producing factory.

Another concession should be duty-free importation of all equipment or materials needed for establishment of each factory.

Speaking on behalf of Dixieland, Mr. Pierre advanced five ideas concerning ownership and control of the proposed steelband industry:

- Shares in the pan factories should be offered on a priority basis to all steelbandmen.
- Ownership and control should come directly under Pan Trnago, which would select a suitable board of management.
- The site or sites for establishment of the operations should be provided free by Government.
- Sponsors should be approached for grants in order to pool funds to finance the start of this undertaking.
- All technical advice should come from the Trinidad and Tobago Management Development and Business Consultancy Centre.

Mr. Pierre said that note placement and range, as well as patenting, were the three main criteria for standardisation of pans.

He said the 45-gallon oil drum would, for the time being, be considered the standard basic

material since it was difficult for the average steelband to change to any other basic material.

Mr. Pierre admitted that note placement was easily the most controversial subject amongst steelbandmen, tuners and arrangers. He said he did not intend to suggest the complete, immediate standardisation of note placement.

MOST POPULAR

He preferred to suggest three different pan styles based on acoustics, ease of playing and popularity.

A survey could be conducted to determine the three most popular pan styles to avoid affecting the performing ability, repertoire-wise, of the majority of bands.

"The next step," Mr. Pierre told the Consultation, "would be to ask all interested bands to align themselves with any one of the three pan styles they prefer, and this move would be the first step towards eventual standardisation of the instruments."

In this context, Mr. Pierre suggested discussions be held as soon as possible with tuners, bandleaders and arrangers to pool and exchange ideas.

He said standardisation would facilitate tremendously the task of teaching the art of pan-beating at all levels, especially in schools.

PASS ON TECHNIQUES

It would also encourage composers to write for the steelband as it would then be a standard instrument as far as pitch, range and note-placement were concerned, and would eliminate the "unrewarding task" of writing music only for a few bands.

Standardisation, Mr. Pierre added, would allow much easier movements of players among bands and should successfully remove the psycho-



FOR A WHILE, municipal affairs took a back seat yesterday in preference to the steelband. Here, Mayor Egbert Alleyne, of Arima discusses the art form with Dr. J. D. Elder, Chairman of the National Cultural Council (left) and Miss June Joseph, Secretary of the NCC, at yesterday's session of the National Consultation on the Steelband at the Chaguaramas Convention Centre.

Committee proposes National School of Steelband Music

Staff Reporter

A COMMITTEE appointed from the National Consultation on the Steelband, to consider the training of individual steelbandmen in music, yesterday recommended the establishment of a National School of Steelband Music (NSSM).

According to the recommendation, the school should be run by a nine-man Board responsible to the Minister of Education and Culture.

Composition of the Board calls for four representatives of Pan Trnago — official parent body of the panmen — and a representative each from Tobago, the Ministry of Education and Culture, Community Development Department, the Public, and the Sponsors.

Also, a non-voting Secretary appointed by Government.

Another recommendation calls for the appointment of two committees by the Prime Minister, Dr. Eric Williams — chairman of the Consultation.

One committee is to work out the costing of the proposed school; and the other to consider curricula and syllabuses.

Suggested membership of the committee on curricula and syllabuses: Supt. Anthony Prospect, Mr. Jerry Jemmott, Mr. Roderick Urquhart, Mr. D. Corbie, Mr. Melville Robin, Miss Marjorie Padmore, Miss June Joseph and representatives of Pan Trnago.

The committee, which was headed by Minister of Education and Culture, Mr. Carlton

Gomes, was appointed on Monday — opening day of the Consultation — on the basis of the discussions that had taken place, emphasising the need for trained steelbandmen in music.

After deliberating for just over two hours, the committee came up with the following recommendations:

Intensive training should be given to steelbandmen at a central venue.

A Completion Certificate be given to every course participant, indicating performances reached in the various fields of study.

The Committee even produced a draft of the kind of certificate recommended.

It also recommended four kinds of courses at the proposed school:

- A general full-time, three-month residential course to be held from Mondays to Fridays. This course to be taken by participants up to Grade Three in Music.
- A general full-time, four-month residential course to be held from Mondays to Fridays, and to be taken by participants up to Grade Five in Music.
- Bursaries to existing, Trinidad and Tobago music schools be given to gifted panmen who already have musical training, and who may wish to improve their knowledge of music.
- Also, special courses in conducting and arranging, to be organised from time to time for steelbandmen.

In respect to the full-time residential courses, the Committee recommended that Government seek the necessary leave of absence for participants with terms and conditions as if they were at work.

Where participants are unemployed, a pocket allowance should be given.

Apart from Mr. Gomes, membership of the committee comprised: Supt. Anthony Prospect, Mr. Jerry Jemmott, Mr. D. Corbie, Mr. Melville Robin, Miss Marjorie Padmore, Miss June Joseph, Mr. Hans Hanoomansingh, Mr. Camp Campins, Mr. C. Pierre, Mr. M. Quesnel and Mr. R. St. Clair.

Committee calls for count

GOVERNMENT should employ, training facilities to which panmen have access.

The other general recommendation of the Committee, which was headed by Labour Minister, Mr. Errol Mahabir, was that the size of the performing band be reduced depending on the type of performance in which the band are engaged.

This recommendation was made in the light of the observation that steelbands as they were at present constituted, were not able to take advantage of performing opportunities which involved small numbers of players, and quite often limited spaces.



MR. CURTIS PIERRE

BWIA head says: Don't standardise

BWIA Managing Director Sven-Erik Svanberg was one of several persons submitting comments on the future of the steelband when the National Consultation on the Steelband convened at Chaguaramas yesterday.

Mr. Svanberg, who has been seconded to BWIA from the Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS), was a steelband fanatic even before he arrived in Trinidad late last year.

In Stockholm, Sweden, he was associated with the Merry Makers Steelband, one of the first Trinidad bands to put steelband music on wax.

In a statement submitted to the Consultation, Mr. Svanberg felt pan tuning should not be standardised. He said he thought it added to the enjoyment to listen to each band with its own individual sound.

BWIA is represented at the Consultation by Mr. Peter Look Hong, General Manager — Marketing, who is attending as a BWIA representative on the Tourist Board and Mr. Terry Hill, a Sales Representative of the airline.

In his statement to the Consultation, Mr. Svanberg also felt steelband music in school curriculum was a good idea but it should be optional.

MUSIC COURSE

He suggested that there should be courses in music for the tuner-arranger of each band and such a person should try to impart this knowledge to the other members of the band.

Concessions, he said, should be granted for the production of steelband instruments and the industry should be run by representatives of the movement themselves instructed by the national organisation with help from the business community.

Concerning sponsorship, Mr. Svanberg said more attention

should be paid to the steelbandmen by their sponsors, other than fulfilling the contractual agreement of sponsorship.

For example, more attention should be given the men and their individual problems, such as finding jobs, etc.

Mr. Svanberg felt that Government could contribute to the advancement of the steelband by erecting a theatre pan yard.

This should be built to accommodate about 1,000 persons and concerts should be given every night by different bands, on a rostered basis, and a small fee charged for entrance.

The theatre, he suggested, could be run by the national organisation and serve as a means of raising funds for the organisation.

Mr. Svanberg further pointed out that having a place in which to display their talents would encourage the competitive spirit in each band.

There would be also a place to which one could take visitors to listen to pan music, he added.

He noted that at present, other than the Pan Yard Theatre on Argyle Street, Port-of-Spain, there was no organised show-place for the steelband.

NOT NIGHTCLUBS

And he made it clear that in this aspect of steelband entertainment what he was talking about was specifically concerts and not nightclub entertainment.

Mr. Svanberg also suggested to the Consultation that there should be a steelband jamboree or festival to coincide with the Prime Minister's Best Village Competition.

First concert — Irving Park

OPEN air steelband concerts for Carnival, sponsored by the Carnival Development Committee and Pan Trnago, will begin on Sunday.

The first concert will be held at Irving Park, San Fernando, at 2 p.m. Bands playing will be Hatters, Ju-C Antillean All Stars, Sando Organettes, WASA Silvertones and T&TEC Motown.

Other concerts are to be held at Princess Royal Park, Arima (February 10); Rock Gardens, Port-of-Spain (February 11), and Shaw Park, Tobago, (February 11).

All shows will begin at 2 p.m. and end at 6 p.m.

Persons selected to adjudicate this year's Panorama competition will meet steelband leaders and arrangers at the Carnival Development Committee's office, 76 Queen Street, Port-of-Spain, on Friday at 5 p.m.

Tobago bands under fire for lack of self-help

TOBAGO steelbandmen in sponsored bands have been accused of not trying to help themselves.

This accusation came out in a Paper prepared by Mount Irvine Developments Limited in conjunction with the Tobago Chamber of Commerce.

The Paper, presented at the National Consultation on the Steelband, takes an all-round look at the steelband situation in Tobago touching on sponsorship, employment of the pan men, attitude of steelbandmen to sponsors and the cost of sponsorship.

On "attitude" the Paper had this to say: "Some steelbandmen tend to take the question of sponsorship from the angle that the sponsors are completely responsible for their existence, hence many of them do not consider it necessary to try to help themselves."

"It is usually difficult for some of them to appreciate the role of the sponsor."

Comparison of sponsors drew this remark: "There is a tendency among some steelbandmen to compare sponsors of bands in respect to contracts and general assistance, sometimes obviously unmindful of the fact that a sponsor's ability to assist must of necessity be limited and determined by many factors including size and scope of business, profits and other commitments."

MANY PROBLEMS

Sponsorship of bands in Tobago, says the Paper, is fraught with many problems such as the provision of steel drums — shortage of supply, cost and difficulties in transporting.

"It is obvious that all steelbands for use by Tobago steelbandmen must be obtained in Trinidad. Obtaining steelbands from the oil companies usually necessitates trips to Trinidad by two or more members of a

'Make sponsors sign proper agreement'

SPONSORSHIP of steelbands in Tobago is not what it should be.

Mr. Jeffrey Chapman, of Carib Dixieland Steelband, is making this claim at the National Consultation on the Steelband, called on Government to make band sponsors sign legitimate and proper contract agreements.

He said: "Few steelbands, if any, enjoy the full juice of sponsorship in Tobago. Many are only sponsored by name and nothing is being done about it."

Mr. Chapman's contribution echoed opinions voiced in a paper prepared by the Mount Irvine Developments Limited and the Tobago Chamber of Commerce about hardships in getting proper tuners and arrangers.

He said that no member of a steelband in Tobago could afford to make "pan" his profession because of the lack of proper incentives.

"Many promises made to the bands in Tobago are not fulfilled," Carib Dixieland still awaits a pan-yard. Not only a National Steelband is needed, but a national body with regional committees," Mr. Chapman stressed.

He called for the placing of steelband music on the school curriculum. Films to be shown on a rotation basis at all the pan yards in Tobago. Government should send various personnel to speak to the steelbandmen on administrative matters.

Mr. Chapman also pleaded for legal protection for steelbandmen at home and abroad.

He said that much more must be done for the Tobago panmen with regard to tours.

"A steelband factory is set up there is no need for a Development Centre, and there ought to be steelband attaches abroad where the Government had diplomatic ties," he proposed.

"Everyone involved in the steelband should work in harmony and let us share the benefits equally," he concluded.



MR. VERNON ALVES, of WASA Silvertones, a qualified technician in music, puts across his views at yesterday's Consultation on the Steelband at the Convention Centre. Mr. Alves is a London-trained technician.

band involving cost of passages, accommodation and subsistence."

Problems were also experienced in obtaining reputable tuners and arrangers. These persons must be obtained from Trinidad and, at a costly price.

The opportunities for the financially profitable playing of steelband music in Tobago, the Paper added, were comparatively small.

"This means that most sponsored bands rely heavily on their sponsors to keep them 'gainfully employed' in this respect. This is not always easily accomplished."

"Unemployment among steelbandmen in Tobago as in other parts of the country is relatively high. Sponsors are sometimes besieged by band members either to provide them employment or to assist in procuring employment."

Advantages of sponsorship, as outlined in the Paper, were mainly psychological and financial.

FEELING OF PRIDE

A sponsored band usually bears the name or part of its sponsor with a certain feeling of pride, distinction and satisfaction and the more affluent, influential, prestigious or reputable the business enterprise, the greater the feeling of achievement and satisfaction.

Among the recommendations put forward for solving the woes of Tobago panmen:

- (1) There should be a supply of steelbands available at a regional level and controlled by a Regional Controlling Authority which will determine quota and cost.
- (2) Specialist tuners be employed by Government and a system of "soft-payments" arranged for bands and sponsors.
- (3) Steelbandmen with the ability should be encouraged and trained in the art of arranging. Every band should be able to produce an arranger with some sort of skill and training.
- (4) A system of training should be established by which potential steelband players could be discovered and trained.
- (5) There should be regular training sessions including conferences, seminars and lectures to provide opportunities for improving the general standard of education for steelbandmen.
- (6) The Steelband Movement as a whole and sponsors in particular would be greatly assisted if Government would allow duty concessions on all steelband equipment including wheels and other materials for mobile stands and such instruments as drum-sets, timbales and cymbals.