

# Carnival, but at what price?

SIR: The decision taken by members of Pan Trinbago to boycott shows programmed by the Carnival Development Committee for "Carnival 1979" has been greeted by mixed reactions of members of the public. Pan Trinbago claimed an initial appearance fee of five hundred dollars, in addition to three thousand five hundred dollars participation fee as incentive allowance.

The executive of the CDC indicated that they were prepared to meet the appearance fee but the incentive funds were dependent upon receipt of a sum profit in excess of what was needed to clear expenses, amounting to two hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars (\$275,000 TT).

The main argument presented by Pan Trinbago was the enormous expenses sustained by individual panmen. Panorama, it was felt, is the main activity that drew so many bands, and required weeks of continuous effort, practice and patience by individuals who are members of the steelbands.

Many members of the public are sympathetic with the views of Pan Trinbago, but take the view that expenses should be covered by the profits of the CDC.

Carnival is a national effort, a national festival, and we all float or sink together. This nationalistic

the CDC during the Carnival season.

Yet steelband festivals have been held in the course of the regular season and have drawn a sizeable proportion of the steelband music enthusiasts of this country.

CDC shows should not be regarded as the life-blood of the steelband movement but merely the main part of an important national (rather than local or international) festival.

The steelband movement has a chance to plan for the future, but it must see the need for unhinging its plans and policies around the Carnival season alone.

There is a necessity for a festival of "Brass, Steel, and Drums" to be held at regular intervals. This should not be left to the mercies of the CDC, but be a deliberate part of the programmes of Pan Trinbago and our national steel orchestras.

Usually, we think of Steel-Drums as whole drums, the sounds is hollow and music different from the Steel-Bands, where the orchestras are felt to consist of a melodic motley of strains.

Pan Trinbago appears to represent orchestras in the main, while "pan-round neck" serenaders are of peripheral interest.

The interested groups that make up our "Brass, Steel and Drum" Bands must of necessity seek to protect

chac-chac?" No, Mr. Steelbandsman, think again of the enormous scope that there is out of the Carnival season.

At the same time the Pan Trinbago representatives do show the anomaly of having all "eggs" stored in the CDC basket. There is a necessity for a decentralisation of representation and rapport with members of the Carnival committees from the various counties.

Members should hopefully be elected from grass-root level rather than appointed by statutory declarations.

The executive of Pan Trinbago can make a much better case of seeking representation on a greater scale in the CDC rather than appealing for more money at the moment.

**CECIL SEETAHAL**  
El Dorado.