

By JOHN BABB

STEELBANDS in the membership of Pan Trinbago — now their officially-registered parent body—yesterday called for a National Academy of Music, a section of which will assist in the training of steelbandsmen to become qualified musicians.

At their special general meeting held yesterday at the St. Paul Street Community Centre, the panmen also called for a standardised "concert pitch" among pans, and for three basic pan designs.

The meeting, an adjourned one from last week Sunday, was at the time continuing discussions on the agenda for next Monday's National Consultation on the Steelband, to be held at the Chaguaramas Convention Centre.

Via a request from Whitehall, bands were asked yesterday to submit the names of

their representatives as early as possible so that adequate arrangements could be made.

On the question of transport, representatives of bands were informed that transport will be free to panmen attending the Consultation — from the Bus Terminus at the Old Railway Station to the Convention Centre.

Special arrangements as regards transport will be made to accommodate representatives of bands in Tobago, as

well as bands in outlying districts like Biche, Mayaro, Toco and Cedros.

Members were informed that the Consultation starts at 9.30 a.m. and continue until 12 noon. There will be a lunch break from 12 noon to 2 p.m., after which discussions will be resumed, and will end at 5.30 p.m.

Members suggested yesterday that some form of identification be given band representatives attending the Con-

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sultation in order to facilitate them on the buses.

Resuming their discussions on the agenda yesterday, the panmen agreed to adopt certain lines on particular issues.

They suggested that every encouragement be given to the latent talent of panmen to write musical scores; the all-year-round writing of calypso music, since the steelband was the best medium for putting across the calypso beat.

Also, that panmen be encouraged to compose calypso music for the steelbands.

There was also the suggestion that an early meeting of pan-tuners, steelband leaders and arrangers be summoned to clear the air on the question of tuning.

It was during these discussions that the idea of a National Academy of Music came up, with the aim that it should also assist panmen to become qualified musicians.

As an interim measure, the

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PANMEN

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Executive of Pan Trinbago has already got down to discussing the question of having bands pool the resources of qualified musicians in their respective bands, to further educate steelbandmen in music.

On the suggested three basic styles (designs on pan), the following guidelines were suggested — correct placement of notes on the pan to obtain appropriate sound; ease of playing, and the accepted popularity of a particular design.

In relation to the last guideline, it was suggested that a survey be made to ascertain which of the current stylings was the most popular.

This move on basic styles, the panmen felt, would go a long way towards standardisation of the instrument.