

Memories of a Schools Panorama

S EVEN YEARS AGO School Panorama happened on a Sunday instead of a Monday and I remember rushing from Arima to Port of Spain to take part in the big "lime".

The North Stand would be crowded from as early as 10 a.m. and the pounding of the chairs would begin at 10:15.

On Monday last, I visited the Junior Panorama competition as a reporter and not as a 15-year-old youth. It was then I realised why responsible adults sought to have greater control over the show. Thousands of energetic young people getting on "bad" is not something to be encouraged.

The competition started around noon with T.M.B.D. which included players from Trinity College, Mucurapo, Bishops', and St James Secondary. "Fire Comin' Down" was the tune chosen by the second band, Success Laventille Composite. Their arrangement sounded like something a "big" band would play. I later learned that many of the schools were expected to provide players to the Panorama bands and they in turn would assist the schools in securing sponsors, arrangers, tutors and pans.

South East Port of Spain Secondary played "By All Means" arranged by Lennard Lera. After their enthusiastic performance I was accosted by an old friend who teaches at the school.

"Please mention the hard work of Ms Selman and Ms Niles and the dedication of the staff and the students," she said. There, I did it! But really, all the people who come together each year to make this event possible deserve the highest commendation.

The show continued with a strong and spirited performance by defending champions Morvant Laventille Composite, followed by the Lady Hochoy Music Makers with Kitcheners' "Earthquake." I think these young musicians and their tutors, Misses Peterson and Edwards, should be commended for their efforts. Siparia Senior Secondary followed with their rendition of Crazy's "O.P.P. In De Party" and Diamond Vale Youth Steel Orchestra's "Fire Comin' Down" had their sup-

porters jumping as they swung into a samba variation of the song.

When I crossed over to the shade of the North Stand I stumbled upon a bunch of young pan enthusiasts. Mavis John, singer, actress, teacher and avid pan supporter, accompanied her Morvant Anglican Primary School students to the Junior Panorama event. There in the North Stand they sat enthralled by the sound of steel complete with their own engine room. Boys between the ages of 10 and 12 put spoon to bottle and fork to chair and knocked them into musical shape. By the time Mucurapo Senior Comprehensive launched off into De-Fosto's "Play, Mr Pannist", the rhythm section minors were in ripping form.

The Chaguanas Senior Comprehensive caused the stage to rumble as they performed their arrangement of "Earthquake". Malick finished off the rather short pro-

gramme by doing "Fire Works" by De Fosto. As this young band made their exit from the stage there remained only one unanswered question: Where was St Augustine Senior and Arima Senior Comprehensive?

The announcer had just finished urging the youths to go straight home and not to "look for any lime or for fight." At that point a banner bearing the St Augustine insignia and the name of their selection was brought on stage carried by a large crowd of disappointed young pannists.

It turned out that there was some problem with the transportation arrangement for the bands and as stated by a student representative of St Augustine, they had been waiting since 6:30 a.m. for trucks that never came.

"This is not good enough," said an incensed student.

In a day of youth excellence and achievement, it seemed the only people behaving "bad" were some of the adults. ☺

By OZY
MERRIQUE

