



ML 1040

TO THE EDITOR

Refers 7/9/88 p-10

Time for Govt to see the value of pan

THE EDITOR: Please allow me space in your newspapers to openly congratulate Pan Trinbago and all the Steelbandsmen and women who contributed to the most enjoyable Independence evening I have spent since our country gained Independence, and I am sure that there are other persons who share this view.

The military parade was the worst in a long time and I feel the non-payment of salaries caused the lacklustre performance, however, I returned home, got myself together and returned to Port of Spain to witness the pan parade on Frederick Street and I want to congratulate the Commissioner of Police and persons involved in granting permission for this street parade.

I must say that our politicians should take note of the good job the steelband organisation is doing, for while the public servants, teachers and others have not received their August salary, the steelbands were able to ease the tension as the chant of the evening by many of the revellers was "We ain't get money but we happy." Added to this, the evening was incident-free for at the time of writing, no complaint of any kind had been reported.

The time is now for the Government, who is trying to balance its books, to see the value of our steelband and to provide much more support. private enterprises should also take a cue from the Neal and Massy Group who has realised the potential of the steelbands as the most progressive form of advertising in a declining period and has entered into a partnership with the Trinidad All Stars. Please note that there are many other steel orchestras needing assistance and if they attain this help, can climb to the pinnacle as All Stars have done over the years.

It must be made abundantly clear that I am not saying suffer the people and give them pan music to soothe the situation, but there are situations and circumstances which will warrant free recreation and entertainment for the nation as a whole.

Our Culture Ministry should also take note and assist Pan Trinbago and other similar groups with funding, for in the long run, the nation has all to benefit.

In closing, I wish to state, while we may have squandered our money, this country is very rich indeed.