

AT FIVE o'clock yesterday morning, three large red-band maxis transporting a contingent of revellers arrived on Duke Street, Port of Spain, close to Hell Yard.

Actors from the Malick Folk Performers, the Lord Street Theatre, students from Trinity College in Connecticut and research scholars from the Pacific Lutheran University in Lacoma, Washington State, had come to re-enact the Canboulay Riots of 1881.

Duke Street was lit up with hundreds of flambeaux, held high by the "rioters of the street theatre."

The people chanted battle songs, dragging their feet on the roadway, waving sticks as a sign of defiance.

Just around the corner, at the top of George Street, Captain Baker, portrayed by Daniel Aidala of New York, stood in front of his forces.

The people came closer. Their war cries became louder.

In a flash, Captain Baker rushed forward with his forces to disperse the masqueraders.

They battled. Captain Baker was outnumbered and beaten back. He fled for his life while his dispersed forces ran all over the place like crazy ants.

Dame Lorraine, the Bookman, Brian Honore (the king of Midnight Robbers), Jab Jabs, Jab Molassies, Blue Devils from Paramin and an army of stickfighters shouted in glee.

One masquerader lit up his cigarette with a flambeau. The flambeau, he asserted, was his new symbol of freedom.

On hearing the "bad news" Governor Freeling, portrayed by Thom McDade, made his way downtown and climbed atop a steelpan drum to make an important announcement to the people he governed.

He assured them that they could play mas in future without interference or disturbance from the police.

He however sought a promise from the people that they would not break the law. "Yeah, we will abide by the law!" they shouted.

The drums never stopped rolling. The drummers were joined by the panmen from Free



FLAMBEAUX were out to light up the city.

# Flambeaux outside Hell Yard at dawn

## *Canboulay Riots relived*

By CALDEO SOOKRAM

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Lancers Steelband.

Captain Baker later reported that he took some of his injured men to hospital. "We got a lot of blows. If the horses were here, it would have been more trouble. That's why we didn't come with horses in the first place," he said.

"The authorities said they were bringing horses but the trailer got damaged so the horses couldn't arrive in time," Governor Freeling added.

"We really like your Carnival," said Thom McDade who played the role of Governor Freeling. "It's great being part of this cultural event."

"We are doing research work on Caribbean culture. That's why we are taking part in this historical street theatre," he said.

"We came in January and will be here until May. We have 20 students in this programme," he added.



VICTORY for the People's Carnival as they celebrate on the streets of the city.

Photos: CALDEO SOOKRAM