

'PAN TRINBAGO LURING BANDS WITH PROMISES'

THE Southern Steelband Movement has accused Pan Trinbago of offering cash incentives to

steelbands although the incentives have not yet been approved by government.

Winston Gibson, secretary of the SSM, said Pan Trinbago was of-

fering a \$5,000 appearance fee to steelbands in its Panorama competition.

The Carnival Development Committee is reportedly negotiating a \$1.2 million grant from government for Pan Trinbago's annual Panorama competition, but so far, the money has not been approved.

George Goddard, president of Pan Trinbago, said it was negotiating for the \$5,000 appearance fee for the panmen. But it was still undecided.

He said: "We have asked for that figure because of the high cost of putting out a steelband."

He noted that according to its request this year's Panorama champions will get \$35,500.

"There will be about 100 members in that band, so each man will get about \$350," Mr. Goddard said.

He added, "From January 2 to February 24, panmen are preparing for Carnival. That is eight



WINSTON GIBSON

weeks, so if the money is divided equally, a panman will make \$6 a day."

He said for an unsponsored band that cash prize might not be enough to cover expenses, especially if it was the band's first year."

Mr. Goddard said. "I see no reason why the private movements can not offer the same incentives we do, because they do not have to foot our kind of transportation bills and they do not cater for as many bands."

Mr. Gibson said the promise of the \$5,000 fee had drawn many

steelbands away from the SSM Panorama competition. The normal appearance fee for steelbands at Panorama ranges between \$300 to \$500.

"But when you offer a band \$5,000 to appear, they appear," said Mr. Gibson. He said the SSM was in no position to pay these exorbitantly high prices.

Mr. Gibson said recent statements by Mr. Goddard had served to scare steelbands away from the SSM competition.

Mr. Goddard said recently any bands taking part in Panorama competitions not sanctioned by Pan Trinbago would be banned from taking part in any Pan Trinbago competition.

Mr. Gibson said this threat had served to keep away steelbands that would normally have taken part in the SSM competition.

Last year was the first time the SSM organised and ran the south Panorama competition.

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