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INTRODUCTION

Many have commented on the history of Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago. Many have researched, but few have seen. Among those who saw was Albert Gomes who stated:

*Long after most of us are forgotten, certain calypsoes
will survive as the only reminders to some later generation
of how we lived, loved, laboured and sinned.*

He went on to note that-

The Calypso is the most effective political weapon.

Errol Hill realized too that as more and more pressures were placed on the carnival makers, they adjusted and changed in order to cope with situations. He commented accordingly as he tried to show that Carnival is not a European festival.

*The Trinidad Carnival is not simply a retention of a European
inspired festival...it underwent a rebirth, resulting from peculiar
historical and social pressures...*

Hill went on to note that it was a celebration of the anniversary of the slaves' deliverance from bondage.

There were others such as Gordon Rohlehr, Glen Roach, Keith Warner, Canon Farquhar, Dom Basil Matthews, Makandal Daaga, J.D. Elder and

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Aiyegoro Ome whose contributions testify to the fact that the history of our Carnival is closely linked with struggle and sacrifice, and a determination on the part of the people to free themselves from tyranny and not a history of what the French gave to us.

Eric Williams also saw, for he noted that culture must be in the

vanguard of the nationalist movement.

Accordingly such persons have motivated me to research our carnival past, with a view to better understanding that struggle, that determination, that strength so finely exhibited by the guardians of our cultural past, that allowed Carnival to live.

I have researched too not only to discover the fight and assess our peoples' strengths and weaknesses, not only to prove that the history of Carnival is a history of protest, but because I am convinced that for us to win our freedom and be totally liberated, we must break away from Imperialist cultural domination. To do so, our carnival must form the bases of a liberating force, providing us with the unity, pride, strength of will and weapons necessary for the assault on Colonialism, Imperialism and their metropolitan garbage.

Hollis Liverpool,
71 Opal Gardens,
Diamond Vale,
DIEGO MARTIN.
TRINIDAD.