

ML 1040

Pan Trinbago: Sue Cabinet, not us

By TERRY JOSEPH

THE threat of legal action against Pan Trinbago by the advertising firm Hernandez/FCB for outstanding monies from last year's World Steelband Music Festival is misdirected and should have been addressed to Cabinet, pan president Patrick Arnold said yesterday.

Pan Trinbago swift-

ly issued a news release disclaiming any responsibility in the matter, after receiving a letter from the law firm JD Sellier & Co, threatening action against Arnold for non-payment of \$173,107.63 and a further \$251.85 in costs, if those monies were not paid within 14 days.

Arnold yesterday said he would like to

make it clear that it was the Government of Trinidad and Tobago which ran the World Steelband Music Festival 2000 and not Pan Trinbago.

"The festival was managed by a Cabinet-appointed committee," Arnold said "and while that committee was chaired by me and included two other executive members of Pan Trinbago, it was

made clear to us at every sequence that it was not our project."

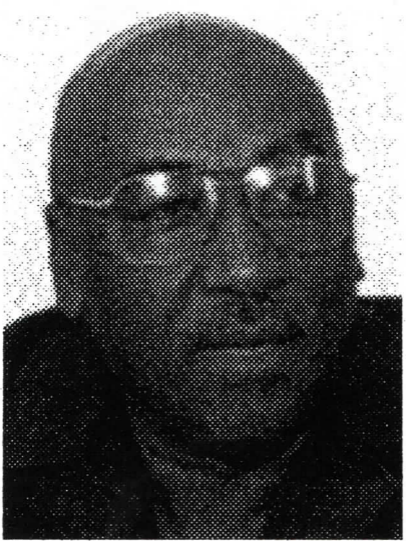
The release said Pan Trinbago was not liable for any of the debts of the festival. "We devised the World Festival, went to then Culture Minister Dr Daphne Phillips, who took it to Cabinet as part of her Millennium Celebration package. Cabinet rejected every other component of her

package, but embraced the festival, appointing a committee with six Ministry representatives and chaired by Alvin Daniell," the release said.

"Daniell was replaced by Amral Khan who, in turn, was replaced by Keith Byer. Eventually, I was asked to chair the festival committee. By the time I was made chairman, Her-

nandez/FCB had already been hired, hotel rooms booked and other major contracts signed."

Arnold said it was "less than honest" for the current Culture Minister to speak as if he bailed out Pan Trinbago by approving additional sums to meet festival bills and to make statements alluding to Pan Trinbago's "misman-



PATRICK ARNOLD

agement" of festival funding.

"The Culture Ministry disbanded the Cabinet-appointed committee immediately after the festival and when came time to meet its outstanding bills, those supplemental sums were not delivered to Pan Trinbago, but went instead to the National Carnival Commission (NCC) for disbursement," he said.

"They also arbitrarily withheld the normal ten per cent tariff that bands would normally have paid to Pan Trinbago if it had been our competition, so there was little doubt that it was not our event, so we are puzzled that a lawsuit resulting from delinquency on the part of Government is now being directed to Pan Trinbago," Arnold said.

Pan Trinbago has passed the letter to its attorneys for reply.