

# THE WORD FROM HELLYARD: All Stars will go on forever

CAPTAIN of Trinidad All Stars Beresford Hunte believes the six members who recently quit the band had planned to do so long before they tendered their resignations on March 11.

All Stars called a press conference at their panyard yesterday to clear the air on events occurring within the last few weeks, including the withdrawal of Catelli's sponsorship after 20 years and the resignation of six core members of the band.

"We have no grudge against them and other members can feel free to go and join them," Hunte told the media and a large group of All Stars supporters who had gathered in the panyard.

"All Stars will continue functioning and no six people could ever put a stop to that; we are prepared to fly this flag forever." He said the loss of Catelli as a sponsor would help the band get its identity back.

Hunte, who gave his side of the events of the last three weeks that led up to the current situation, said that after Carnival this year six members got together and without first meeting with the elected committee, went to the sponsors, Catelli Primo Ltd, to give their side of the story.

They complained, among other things, of a lack of respect and discipline among band members.

He said only two of the six who went to the sponsors were on the committee, one being musical director Jerry Jemmott. Catelli said they wanted to meet with the rest of the committee to get their side.

On March 11 a meeting, attended by representatives of Catelli, Jemmott, Hunte and others, took place. According to Hunte, Jemmott declared he would return to the band only if 50 per cent of the members were dismissed.

The other five members, Hunte said, didn't particular care about this move; they just wanted out as they felt the rest of the band "hated them."

At this time, Hunte said, what all the members were supposedly striving for was reconciliation. Therefore when, three days later, letters of resignation dated

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March 11 (the day of the meeting) were submitted by the six "defectors", Hunte assumed this was a decision they had taken some time before.

On March 17 the band received a letter from Hand Arnold (the parent company of Catelli Primo Ltd) withdrawing its sponsorship.

According to Hunte, the sponsors gave the same reasons for their withdrawal as the six defectors gave for their resignation. These included a lack of discipline within the band and the use of drugs in the panyard, both of which Hunte refuted.



All Stars in action during Panorama 1988.

"The same people who complained about the lack of discipline are the same ones who are showing the membership a complete disregard for discipline," Hunte said.

Hunte said they had been approached by two possible sponsors for All Stars but nothing had

materialised. In this light, he outlined some short-term (for 1988) and long-term plans for the band, including fund-raising ventures, the building of a proper structure for the panyard and the provision of transport for pans and players.