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# Today

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## Phase II, Starlift stand firm

# We're not moving

By TERRY JOSEPH

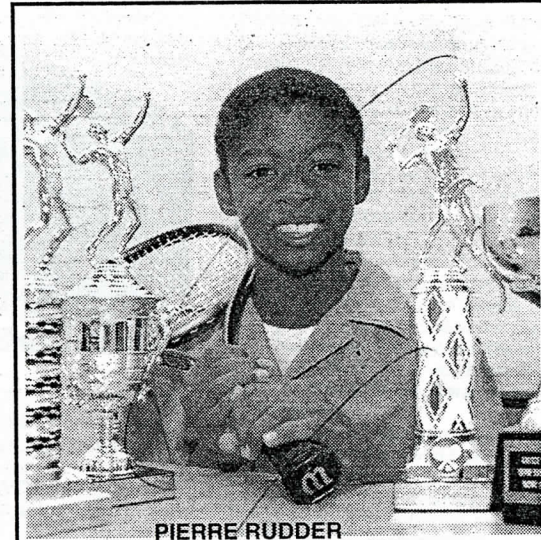
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after the construction of the apartments, are perhaps the strongest arguments against the stolid position of the bands.

Then, there is the New Port of Spain concert



PIERRE RUDDER

## He's king of the under-12s

By CAMILLE MORENO



By TERRY JOSEPH

**P**ANNISTS who met last week to discuss fresh eviction orders from the Port of Spain Corporation, left the gathering angry with Mayor Ethelbert Paul.

They are blaming the Mayor for the demand that two Woodbrook steelbands vacate their present panyards.

Mayor Paul is already on record as having impounded the instruments of the Woodbrook Modernaires, another steelband, who ran afoul of the Corporation's rules shortly before Carnival this year.

Now, the Starlift and Phase II Pan Groove Steel Orchestras have been asked to vacate their present panyards and occupy instead, other lands offered them by the Corporation.

The new sites for both bands are on the Mucurapo Freeway, just west of the National Stadium. The bands have said that they are not interested in occupying

the new lands, because those locations are "out of the way" and the area will expose their instruments to "sea blast".

Both Starlift and Phase II Pan Groove have been on their present locations since 1972. The lands are part of the block which has as its boundaries Western Main Road, Damian Street, Mucurapo Road and the Maraval River (where it passes through St James).

Neither band has as yet made public any deed or note to support its claims to tenure.

Both bands have had some infra-structural work done on their panyards and were apparently set to occupy the same spaces until well into the next century.

But now that the Corporation is pressing for the bands to vacate, members of both orchestras met to plan strategies for what is expected to be a major confrontation.

The Corporation, which occupies a large stretch of the land on that block, is already making plans to move its own operations to the Mucurapo location. On the other hand, the bands have dug in and are adamant.

"We're not moving," said Keith Diaz, Starlift's manager, immediately after the meeting.

Selwyn Tarradath, public relations officer for Phase II Pan Groove, adopted a similarly posture.

Ironically, Pan Trinbago, the body which represents all steelbands in the land, has since last year, accepted a parcel of land along the Freeway front, as the site of their new headquarters.

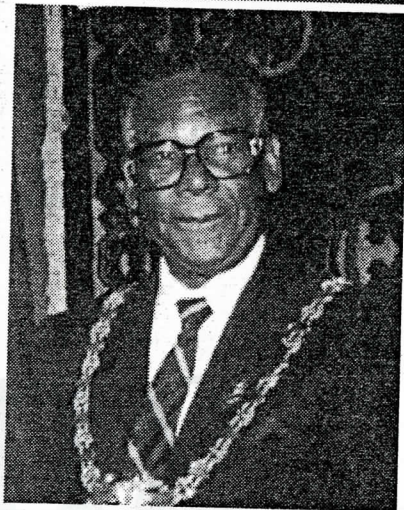
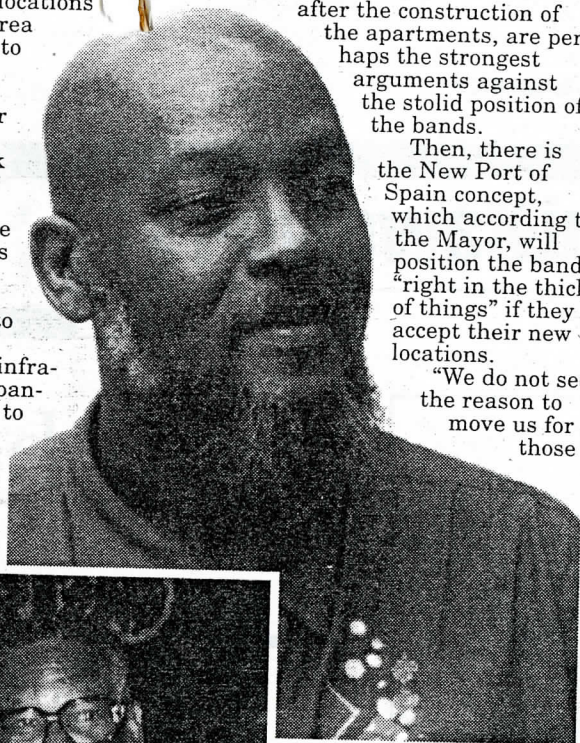
The Corporation is said to have leased the land to a developer who has approved plans to put up high-rise housing on the block.

Opportunities for employment and other business initiatives during and

after the construction of the apartments, are perhaps the strongest arguments against the stolid position of the bands.

Then, there is the New Port of Spain concept, which according to the Mayor, will position the bands "right in the thick of things" if they accept their new locations.

"We do not see the reason to move us for those



**KEITH DIAZ**, of Pan Trinbago above

**MAYOR 'TELLY' PAUL**, left

**SELWYN TARRADATH**, PRO, Pan Trinbago, extreme left

reasons," said Diaz. "The whole development can be done around the steelbands, since we are community organisations."

"To uproot decades of cultural history and just dump it a mile down to the south is not the way to build communities," he said.

Tarradath, whose late mother once sued Phase II Pan Groove for the noise that the band produced, says that the band to which he is attached "just cannot pick up and move like that."

"We will meet fire with fire and force with force," he said.

The Corporation has no comment...yet.

