

American specialist, Eddison, are frequent visitors to most North American cities. They can be contacted at 26 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1, phone (01) 730-3450, telex 919041. "If you have a London event in mind," urges Smith, "it's always useful to touch base with the bureau at an early stage."

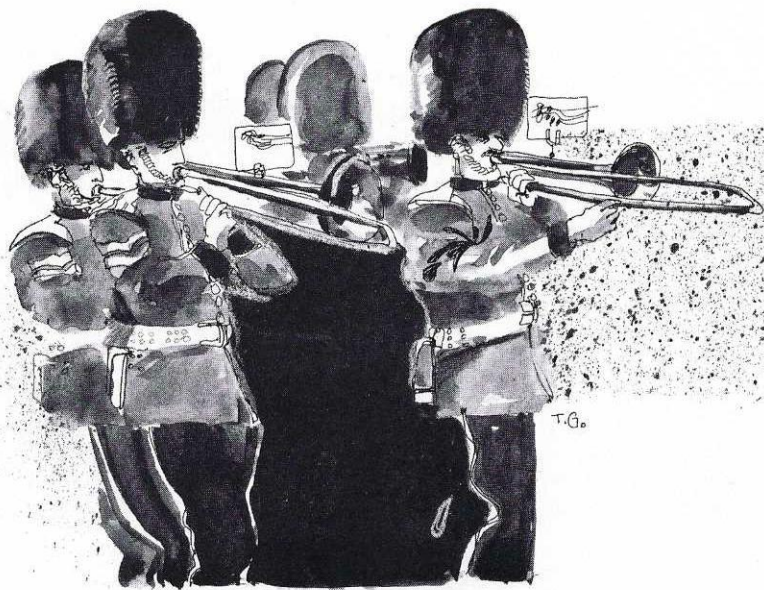
The British Tourist Authority (BTA), the government agency entrusted with promoting tourism to the British Isles, is a rich source of assistance for incentives headed anywhere in English territory, including all of England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. BTA can advise on program content, tie a package together with transfers and accommodations, help with motivational aspects of a program, and provide mailing pieces, audio-visual aids, and photographs. BTA is avowedly out to help IT planners get the best deal, and their services are free. BTA has offices in 19 countries, including four in the U.S., one in Canada, and one in Mexico. Of these six North American BTA branches, two (New York and Toronto) have incentive travel specialists on staff, while the others have personnel who handle conference and incentive groups as one of their responsibilities. Explains Richard I. Batchelor, Business Travel Manager of the BTA home office in London, "About 80%-90% of our incentive traffic to England comes from North America, so we have two men with a full-time involvement in the business-travel area, where much of the business originates." BTA's London office (239 Old Marylebone Rd., London NW1, phone [01] 262-0141, telex 264305) counts on the services of incentive travel expert Maggie Cambridge. Batchelor heads the BTA business-travel effort worldwide (see page 54).

Highly professional ground operations are a crucial factor in smoothing the incentive path abroad; in London, nearly 50 ground handling firms, or incoming handling agents as they are called there, are available to choose from. Some 10-12 of them specialize in IT groups, according to Dick Batchelor, and several more outside of London have experience with the specific demands of the IT buyer and the makings of an exciting program. Some of the ground operators with expertise in travel incentives are described here.

Destination London Ltd., represented in the U.S. by Crown Eagle International (282 Rockingstone Ave., Larchmont, N.Y., 10538, phone [914] 834-6899 collect), is a 30-year-old firm that offers such services as its own fleet of the familiar English double-decker buses, sightseeing tours, private-casino visits, and, like most operators in London, negotiations with hotels for space and rates. Casino gambling, in-

centially, is a relatively little-known aspect of the London scene, although the English capital is one of the world's major gambling centers with 23 casinos and an estimated 1977 handle of some £500 million (about \$900 million). There are 300 casinos throughout the United Kingdom, and gambling is strictly regulated by the Royal Gambling Commission; planners who wish to work some time at the tables into their IT program should do some advance planning: you have to be either a member of a club or accompanied by a member of a club, and foreigners must be in London for 48 hours before they can play (players must sign in with a club on arrival and must wait two days). Temporary membership for overseas visitors is available in various gambling clubs, but winners cannot be registered in advance. Among the best London casinos are the Clermont, Crockford's, Curzon House, Hertford, International Sporting Club, Ladbroke, Les Ambassadeurs, Olympic Casino, Palm Beach Casino Club, and Playboy Club.

Another London-based tour operator, Supertravel Ltd. (22 Hans Place, London SW1, telephone [901] 589-5161, telex 263725) ran a nine-day seminar for an Ohio distributor of nonwoven disposable



soft goods, Cleveland Cotton Products, a few years ago that was impressive enough to merit a write-up in the *New York Times* and to rate raves from those of the 270 participants who were interviewed for that article. The 15-year-old firm has handled incentive groups from such top U.S. sponsors as Superior Metal Moldings, Capp Homes, and Delco Electronics. Supertravel, represented in the U.S. and