

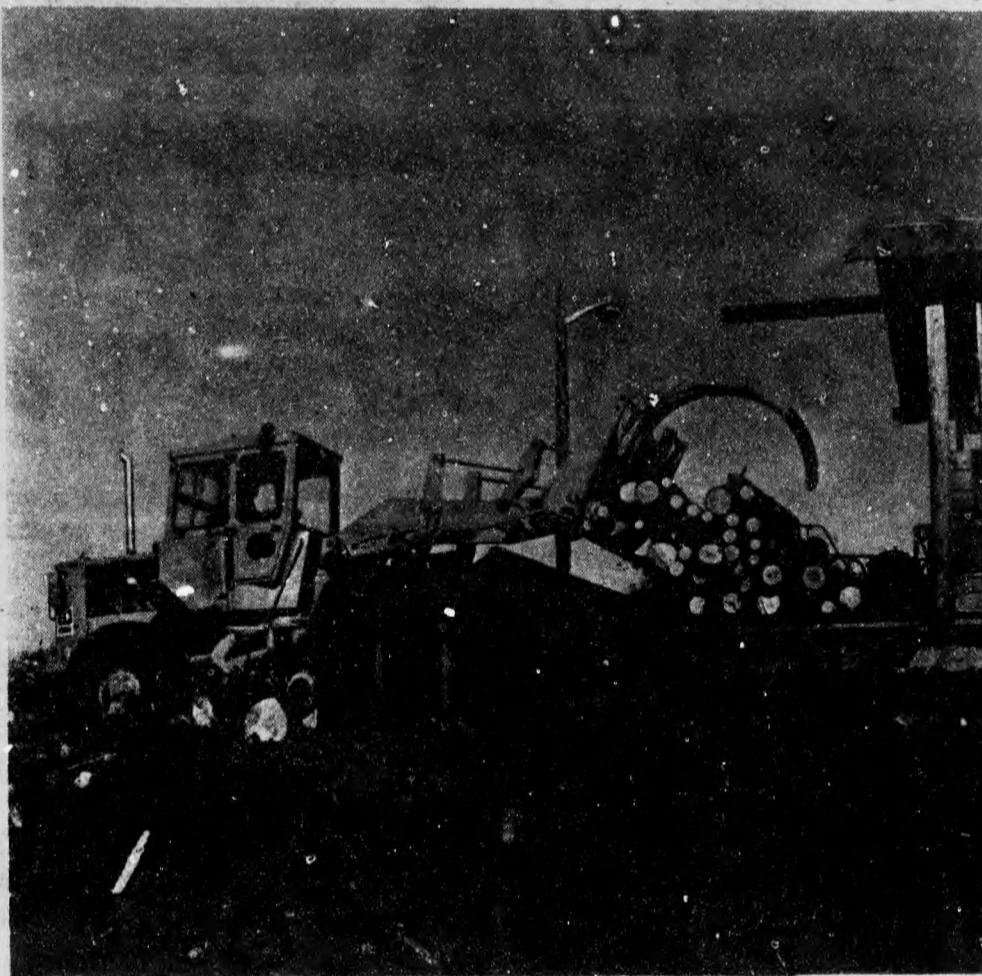
...or do they? What's going on?

Some of these questions were put to Mr. Ralph Gill, the President of H. S. Gill and Sons Limited. He said that Moffitt was the previous foreman of the mill and that the boys decided that he should become the president of their company. He said that Moffitt still carries out all his former duties. He continued that some of the functions which are normally carried out by a company operating a mill were given over to H. S. Gill and Sons Limited. Among these were the right to hire and fire. He thought that the boys had a real good operation going there and though the equity of their company is pretty small right now he hopes to see it grow to quite a level in the next twelve months.

When asked specifically how he arrived at his figure of 20 percent of employees wishing certification, he said that the men signed a petition one way or another after the trouble started and those were the results. "They had the fifty or sixty percent for certification at that date, but later most of them changed their minds." He agreed that now with the new company operating the mill, the position of the union was not exactly clear as to which party they will want to negotiate with.

It perhaps should be noted that Gill made the following statement to the Daily Gleaner on February 22. "We will not operate under the union as H. S. Gill and Sons". It would appear that they have succeeded in their aims. He

suggested one alternative was to decertify the union and he allowed for the possibility of the mill being moved to the State of Maine. That, coming from a company which benefitted to the tune of a \$152,000 DREE grant in



Loading logs at one of the Gill sawmills

Photo by Gary Constantine

1971, admittedly not for the Harvey Station operation, sounds like real gratitude.

A lot of the difficulties in this situation will probably be aired at the hearing of the Industrial Relations Board to be held this week. What, for most of the employees of the Harvey Station saw mill started out as an attempt to organize themselves in a legitimate labour union, has turned sour. Their livelihoods were threatened by plant closure, and they have somehow ended up shareholders in a company that must lease equipment, land and facilities and even retain outside managerial skills. The fees for these services provided are probably not low. Not only is the position of the workers open to speculation, the position of H. S. Gill and Sons Limited in relation to the Industrial Relations Board will be interesting to note following the hearings. The union claims a lock-out, the company claims a close-out of operations was being contemplated. The Board must decide.

What of the workers in Harvey Station? They start at \$1.60 an hour, up from \$1.50 an hour before the trouble started. They work a 45 hour week from Monday to Friday beginning at 7:30 a.m. and quitting at 5:30 p.m. They get a time bonus of \$1.70 per day. The time bonus is lost for the week if they are late more than two minutes on any one day in the week. They get time and a half for over-time and sick pay at the rate of one day per year of employment. They get nine statutory holidays in the year after having worked six months and they get two weeks vacation after one year of employment.

A dollar sixty an hour for a forty five hour week is 72.00 a week and if you are a good guy you get a time bonus of \$8.50. That adds up to \$80.50 a week before deductions. Can you blame them for perhaps wanting to get themselves organized?

Death penalty

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4. Persons, as above, who inadvertently kill a guard or inmate should be placed under severe restrictions, but for a period not exceeding ten years.
5. Persons who directly cause the death of a guard or inmate while serving time in prison should be imprisoned for their life-span.
6. Persons who inadvertently kill a guard or inmate while serving time in prison, should be sentenced to a further term of imprisonment, under severe restrictions if necessary.
7. Persons convicted of pre-meditated murder for gain, should be sentenced to prison for their natural lives.
8. The maximum penalty should be referred to as 'natural life in prison' and the present charge of 'capital murder' should be known as 'first-degree murder'.
9. Persons convicted of first-

degree murder should not be eligible for parole.

10. Murders which are not 'first-degree murders' should be known as 'second-degree murders', punishable by a fixed prison term, leaving some discretion in the Court.

It is futile to argue that imprisonment for one's natural life is a weak form of punishment. In the words of Mr. Justice Chapman, sentencing Arthur Skingle who was convicted of murdering a policeman:

"Imprisonment for life means until you shall die. For the ultimate crime must bear the ultimate punishment. If the law is to have any meaning, and if the words are to make sense, my recommendation to the Home Secretary will be that the dreadful words I have used should have their ordinary dreadful meaning — that 'life' shall mean life — and not to be twisted by reformers to

mean anything a day less dreadful."

Some people will argue that Batchelor's suggestions fail to adequately cover the threat to peace-officers. Admittedly, police officers and prison guards are to be protected as officers of the law; a man who kills a police officer who is performing his duty has shown that he has no respect for the human life and the society that police officer represents. Here, if one wished for stronger deterrents, one could opt for a sentence of solitary confinement for life.

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The Death penalty brutalizes and demoralizes those carrying it out. Our social institutions lose more and more credibility every time they are called upon to justify the cold-blooded execution of a human being. It is

intolerable that any system of law so ready as ours to classify the slightest degree of risk as culpable should retain at its core a substantial risk of putting an innocent man to death. The rejection of capital punishment is just a starting point; but it is a good beginning. We are left with the problem of an alternative. But as has been pointed out, alternatives are feasible.

Violent crime is a social statement of some kind. We may not fully understand its import, but we can hardly fail to realize its origins as our own. If we can shoulder the responsibility for that, then the search for alternatives to execution seems little of an additional burden, surely less of a burden than compounding our guilt by acts of assassination.

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Special thanks to Professor D. M. Hurley, UNB School of Law.

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