



VIVA E
Economy with a capital E

*The car
with a
lot more
than you
imagine*

THE ADVERTS for Vauxhall's new Viva E car were spot on:
"For £1,399 you get a lot of car. A lot more than you imagine.
"For example, you find the front seats recline.
"And come with seat belts.
"You get soft, loop-pile carpeting throughout..."

All this and more. More than the adverts says. A lot more than you imagine—

Including RUST. Trust Vauxhall's to give you that something extra.

There's a lot the adverts don't say about this car-at-a-popular-price. They admit the car — produced in their Ellesmere Port factory — is in limited production only. They don't say why.

They don't say the "sporty coupe styling" is the result of using left-over body panels.

The panels were produced for their over-priced sporty car, the Firenza. They just piled up at the factory because the Firenza didn't sell.

Then they went rusty. But that didn't stop Vauxhall's. Desperate for more cash — they call it "problems with cash-flow" — they decided to bundle the old unwanted parts into a new package...

The £1,399 Viva E. Vauxhall's simply have the rusty panels taken to the paint shop. There they are rubbed down with dilute acid, and then — hey presto — they go back to the production line. And that's the story behind the Viva E. The car with "a lot more than you imagine."

DON'T CHANCE IT

GAMBLERS WATCH OUT!... There are Liberals about.

Buy a weekly tote ticket from a Liberal and you may be in for an unpleasant surprise.

Recently a life-long Labour supporter decided to have a flutter. A few days later he received a card saying he was now a member of the Low Hill/Smithdown Liberal Association.

Clearly, the Liberals must be getting desperate...

We are all a little richer on account of Mr Slater.

—Tribute to Jim Slater from the Guardian business page, October 25

Documents reveal plan to close Plessey factory

THE 950 redundancies at Plessey's Edge Lane site are probably only the first step towards total closure of the factory.

Records of confidential talks between Plessey and Liverpool City Council reveal that the company have been unhappy with the Edge Lane headquarters for years.

A decision to close the factory was probably taken more than two years ago.

This means that over 5,000 jobs — both white-collar and on the shop floor — are at stake. And not just the 950 office jobs already declared redundant. It also means:

- That the recent loss of Post Office orders has little to do with the redundancies;

- That Plessey are simply using the lost orders to put a long-term plan into effect;
- And, worse, that the company are cynically allowing the campaign against the redundancies to try and regain the Post Office orders — while knowing perfectly well that the Edge Lane jobs will soon be lost anyway.

Evidence of Plessey's long-term plans is contained in records of confidential meetings between Plessey and top council officials, together with Bill Sefton, who was then leader of the Labour-controlled council.

As long ago as December 4, 1972, Dr B.F. Willetts, Group Managing Director, was explaining the company's problems. Faced with great technological changes, he said, Plessey "had to consider whether to seek these changes in Liverpool

on the present site or move elsewhere."

Dr Willetts went on to outline the "great limitations" of the Edge Lane site.

- It was "grossly congested and covered by an out of date multi-storey building which... increased production costs."
- "Access to the site... was difficult and inadequate."
- Car parking was bad.
- "The whole appearance of the site was unattractive and out of keeping with modern requirements and standards."

Earlier, Plessey had considered improving the Edge Lane (or Strowger) works.

But an internal company memorandum from Plessey's Facilities Planning Manager, Mr P.C. Staines, to Mr D. Lawler, the Employment

Manager, dated 14 June, 1972, raised an alternative proposal:

"...based upon the assumption that the Strowger site will be totally or partially replaced, progressively, by a number of new sites in the Liverpool region."

Events since then suggest it was this second proposal which eventually got the go-ahead.

The Edge Lane works have definitely not been improved.

And, on top of that, Plessey have since opened a new factory at Wilson Road, Huyton, to manufacture their latest electronic telephone exchange equipment.

When they opposed the move, the trade unions were told it was only temporary to allow re-tooling at Edge Lane. Plessey have since said the Huyton factory represents a multi-

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Phoney sounds on the air . . .

RADIO CITY have lost over £100,000 in their first year, according to reliable estimates.

Shareholders have not yet seen detailed accounts, but managing director Terry Smith admitted: "We have had a very tough year and we expected it."

Unless advertising picks up, economies are inevitable. A likely target is the news operation, although Smith says there are no plans for cuts at the moment.

City boast the largest — and most expensive — news staff of all the commercial stations. And London's Capital Radio set a precedent by sacking their entire news staff when they ran into trouble.

Capital, which has a far larger audience (read "advertising market") than City, now has to rely on hourly news bulletins from Independent Radio News (IRN).

All commercial radio stations broadcast IRN national and international news reports.

Independent Radio News is a scandal. It has pioneered new niques in cut-price journalism — including faking news reports.

IRN has only nine general reporters (on different shifts) covering national and international news, all based in London.

Money is so tight they share four typewriters. And reporters are only allowed to travel abroad if they can arrange their own transport.

The shortage of cash has led to the introduction of new and dangerous "journalistic" techniques.

- When the Queen visited Barbados recently, IRN could not afford a man on the spot. Instead they had to make do with a phoned report of her

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arrival from a local journalist.

To make it sound more authentic a record of the National Anthem, complete with crackles, was dubbed onto the report in the IRN studios.

- Worse happened in Portugal. An IRN reporter was unable to get out of Lisbon to cover an anti-Communist demonstration in a northern town.

He later learned that the Communists had fired on the crowd. Undeterred, the reporter used a tape recording of earlier shooting as background for an extremely dramatic — and faked — report.

This was broadcast on Radio City and, no doubt, other commercial stations.

Any cut in Radio City's news coverage would certainly lead to more entertainment from IRN.

It would be nice to think similar techniques would not be adopted.

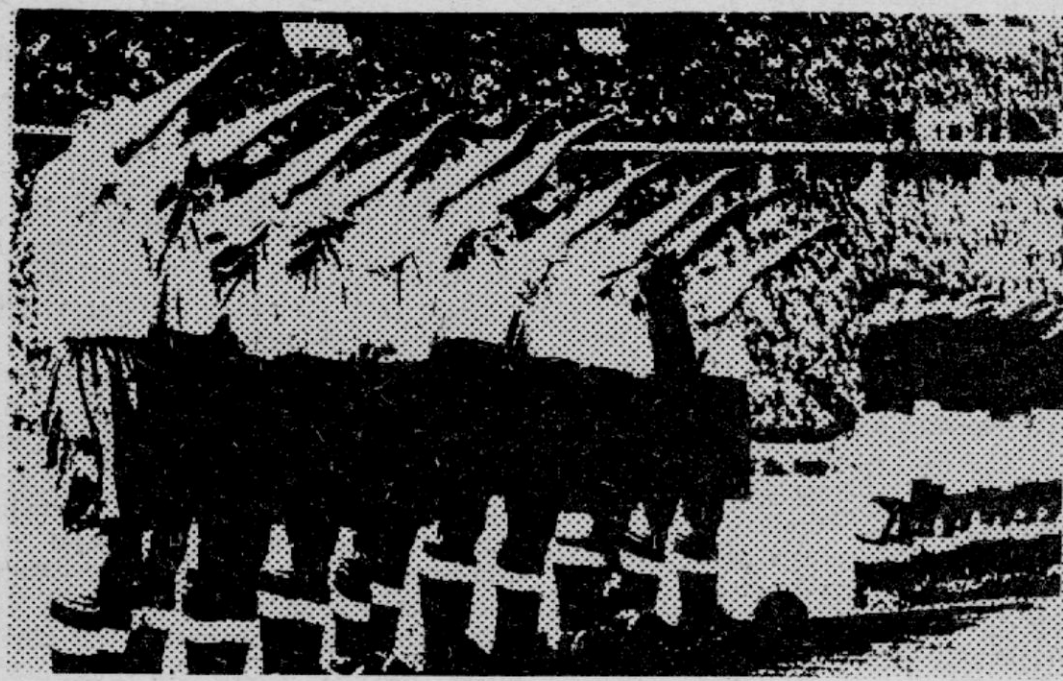
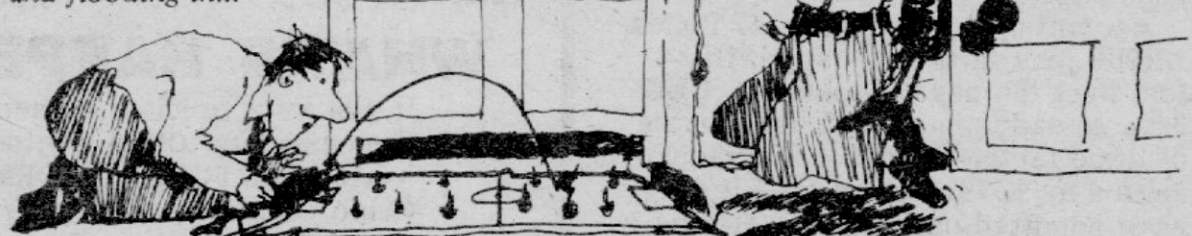
But Radio City have already faked at least one news report.

Lord Lichfield's extravagant wedding in Chester earlier this year was not considered important enough to send a reporter.

Unfortunately, other news media treated the wedding as an event of vital importance. And so City decided they had to have something after all.

What they got was a senior member of staff sitting in a studio, with bells chiming from a tape machine, breathlessly describing the fantastic scenes in Chester... some 20 miles away.

"...we interrupt this live soccer commentary to bring you news of torrential rain and flooding in..."



All in the game . . . CENTRE PAGES

PLAYING DIRTY

GREED has temporarily ended the rivalry between the Liverpool and Everton football clubs.

These two mighty clubs have joined with Burnley FC to try and wreck the finances of amateur soccer teams on Merseyside.

The season was just starting when the three giants pounced.

By devious and under-hand methods they made the local and amateur teams stop selling a weekly 10p pools ticket.

This ticket was organised by Gordon Brown, the chairman of the Merseyside Sports Association together with Midland League Clubs.

It was highly popular. Last year it raised £32,000 for amateur clubs. And it was expected to rise to £75,000 this year.

But its success created enemies... namely Everton, Liverpool and Burnley. Their own tickets suffered by the competition.

One particularly nasty trick they used to end the ticket was by putting pressure on the printer. The printer also did tickets for the league clubs. The big three threatened to take away their (much larger) custom.

The clubs said the pools ticket (first named Midsac then Norsac) broke agreements that clubs would

only run tickets in their own area.

But they had been forced to link up with the Midland league clubs.

They were forced by Everton.

Until a year ago, the Merseyside Sports Association (through Mr Brown's promotions firm) ran a joint ticket with Everton. But Everton wanted more of the profits.

Just before the 1974 season Everton struck. They ended the joint ticket.

The man who wrote to Gordon Brown to tell him was Alan Waterworth, chairman of Everton FC.

So twice in a year Mr Waterworth has been party to a move which threatened the prosperity of amateur clubs.

Now Mr Waterworth has another hat. He likes to think of himself as a (wealthy) do-gooder. He is a former chairman of the Merseyside Youth Association, and is still on the executive.

Gordon Brown Promotions have hurriedly started another ticket.. This time it is being run with Tranmere FC.

But no doubt the Big Three, and Mr Waterworth, are looking to put the boot into amateur soccer once again.