

Women's bus service foils supermarket

WOMEN on the Leathers Lane estate in Halewood have come up with some interesting tactics against a local supermarket.

Until September, they had two supermarkets in the Raven's Court shopping precinct. But then the Co-op closed, leaving only Lipton's. And many women felt Lipton's took advantage of this situation by putting up their prices.

The response was an organised boycott of Lipton's. But the boycott went a lot further than simply organising a picket of the store. The

women contacted Halewood Community Transport, who run a double-decker bus, and started shopping trips to the Kwik-Save supermarket in Mackett's Lane, a mile and a half away.

One woman had compared the prices at Kwik-Save and found them quite a bit cheaper. For instance, Corn Flakes at Kwik-Save were 23½p against 26p at Lipton's; Typhoo tea was 9½p against 12½p; sugar 24p not 25p; Nescafe 49½p not 60p; and Anchor butter 21p instead of 24p at Lipton's. (These prices are at October levels!)

The bus ran three times a week. Organisation was none too good, with little publicity, and complicated because it is illegal to take fares on the community bus. The shoppers made a 5p 'donation' instead.

Still, the campaign had an effect. Other shopkeepers at Raven's Court complained the boycott was affecting them. And Lipton's management were finally forced to meet the organisers. They gave them an assurance that they would not exploit their monopoly position and, also, that the price of certain items would be frozen for six months.

Tenants make progress

THE TENANTS of Entwistle Heights have formed an action group to collectively press the corporation into dealing with a number of their long-standing grievances.

These include dissatisfaction with the under-floor heating (see last issue of Free Press). This only provides 'background' warmth in all the rooms except bedrooms. It frequently breaks down and is probably responsible for the plague of German beetles which occurred in the summer.

It costs tenants £2,86 per

HAZARD

MERSEYSIDE Hazard Group, who aim to focus trade union attention on health and safety matters, are holding their first meeting at the Royal Institution at 8pm on January 20.

It is hoped to establish contact with regional and national groups in the same field and to provide a register of hazards in the Merseyside area.

COURSE

The WEA have arranged a ten week course investigating sex, class and alternatives to the family, starting Tuesday, January 18 at 7.30pm at 45 Canning Street, Liverpool 8.

week and the corporation regard this as part of the rent.

Other demands include a modification of the front entrance and stronger doors.

Some tenants have been burgled by thieves entering the flats by kicking holes in the doors.

The action group have already been successful with some of their demands. MANWEB are to check the under-floor heating in all 160 flats, but the corporation will not consider replacing this with another type of heating because of the cost.

Heating

TENANTS' associations from all over the country met in Manchester last month to campaign for the complete withdrawal of the Clorius heat meters from council estates with district heating schemes.

These devices have been installed in about 23,000 council homes throughout the country. Tenants can still face annual heating surcharges over and above their weekly payments amounting to £300 and more.

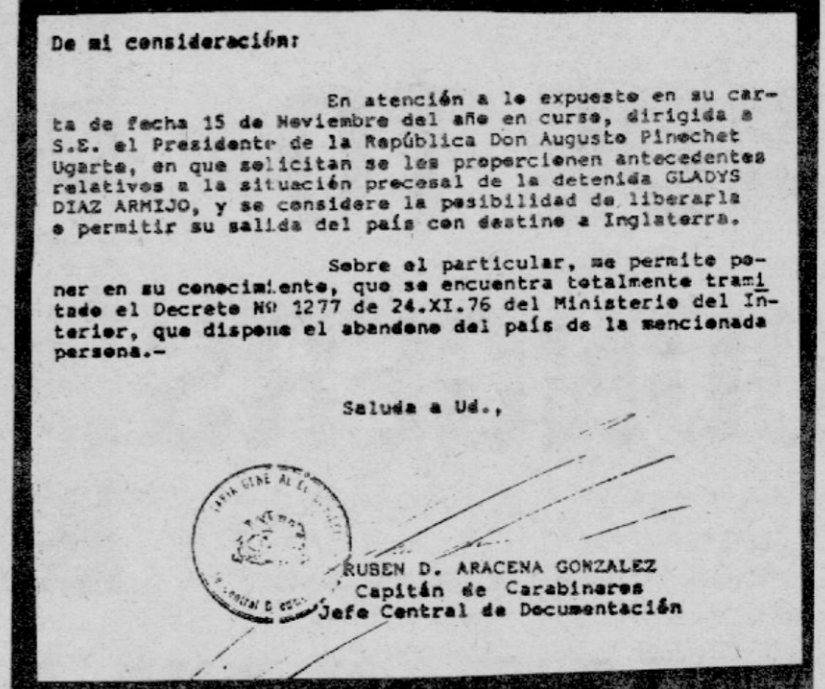
The meters are hopelessly inaccurate and difficult to read.

The groups in the campaign plan to use legal and more direct action to get rid of them.

ARTS

Anyone interested in finding out more about community arts can go to a one-day gathering at the Merseyside Visual Communications Unit (formerly the Grapes pub on Whitechapel) on Saturday, January 15 from 10.30am.

Those who want to take part or make a contribution should contact Penny McPhillips on 709 0671.



Letter from Chile Junta

THE FREE PRESS has received an unexpected letter... from the Chilean junta.

Last month we wrote to the President, General Pinochet, to ask what he was doing about Gladys Diaz, a prominent Chilean journalist, who has been held in prison since February 1975 without being charged or tried.

Similar letters have been ignored in the past, so we didn't expect a reply to this one. But a reply came, on notepaper headed in Spanish "Junta of Government".

The letter says that the Ministry of the Interior have issued a decree giving Ms Diaz the right to leave Chile.

In practice this means that the junta will let her go if she gets a visa to enter another country.

Gladys Diaz, 35, was a popular

and well-known political commentator before the military coup of September 1973, and had been nominated as the best woman journalist in 1972.

In June this year the Washington Post interviewed her at the 3 Alamos prison camp. Shortly after this she was moved to an isolation cell and, as far as we know, she's still there.

On November 16 the junta announced they were releasing over 300 prisoners who had been held without charges or trial, but Gladys Diaz was not among them.

Amnesty International estimates there are still about 1,000 prisoners facing 'political' charges.

Also, there are a further 1,500 Chileans who have been arrested since the coup and have since "disappeared".

THE MEN IN THE SHADOWS

THE MAGAZINE 'Searchlight' this month devotes its entire issue to those it calls "The men in the shadows" — the people it believes are a threat to democracy in Britain.

Searchlight says: "Whilst most eyes are focused on the more obvious anti-democratic organisations such as the National Front or the National Party, behind the scenes lurk more shadowy figures who because of their more respectable backgrounds are more acceptable to those they seek to influence towards a form of right wing authoritarianism."

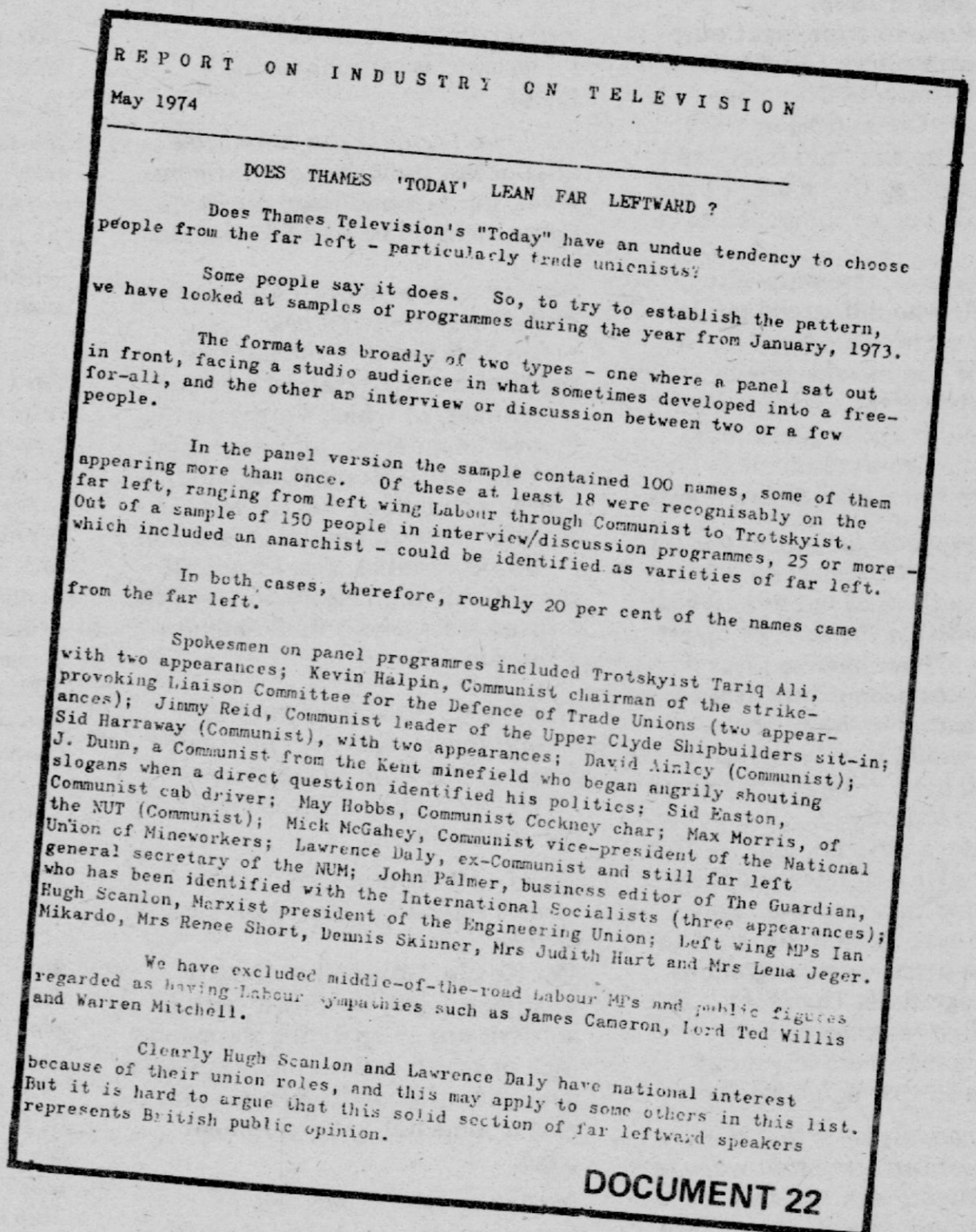
IN THE WRONG HANDS

Searchlight includes among these the retired army officers who want to have their own armies, retired British spies, as well as active CIA agents. There are also well-known personalities like the late Ross McWhirter, and institutions like the Monday Club.

One thing they seem to have in common is the habit of writing letters to each other, discussing their plans in some detail. And fortunately for the rest of us, these letters sometimes fall into the wrong hands.

Searchlight reproduces more than 30 such documents, together with background notes and information on the characters involved.

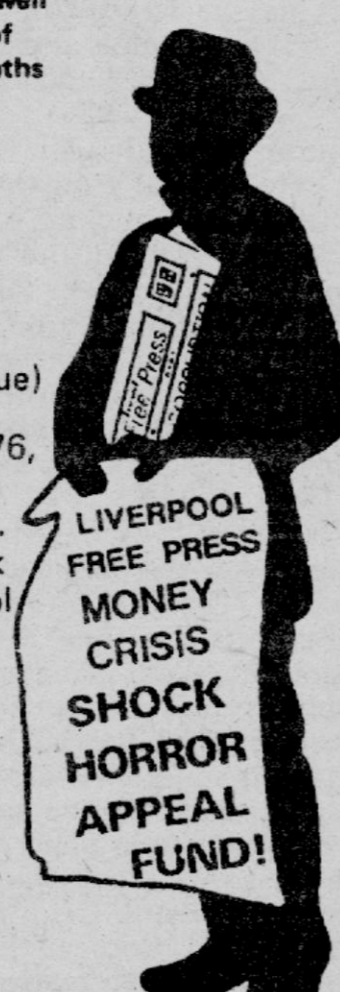
Copies of Searchlight from A.F. & R. Publications, 21 Great Western Buildings, 6 Livery Street, Birmingham 3, or from good bookshops. Price 30p plus postage.



One of the Searchlight documents. This is from an anti-trade union report on 'Reds in the Media'. This one picks on Thames Television, presumably because Tony Bastable, an extreme right-wing producer, works there, and was able to supply the information.

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