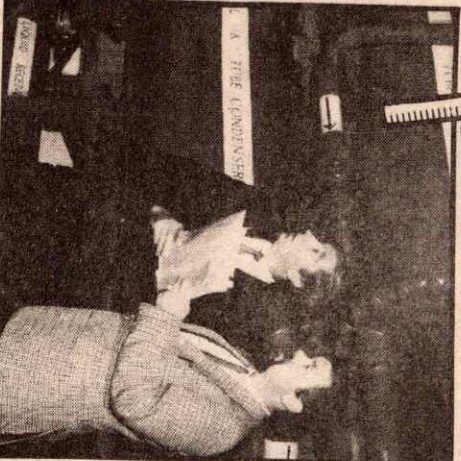
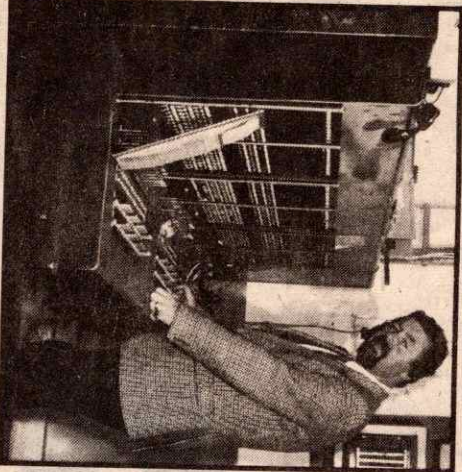


DES RES . . . CLOSE TO SHOPS . . . GUARANTEED FOR ETERNITY

By PAUL DRURY



PIPE DREAMS . . . surveyor Bob Galbraith, left, and Brian Fallon inspect the boilers



CAPITAL CALLING . . . and Brian Fallon listens out on the switch-board.

MAYBE, just this once, we'll believe the estate agents when they describe it as 'the most desirable property in Scotland.'

Is Balmoral suddenly up for grabs? Or perhaps the Gleneagles Hotel?

No, this is a much more modest edifice, pitched at the centre of a dump, filled with charred wrecks, overgrown with weeds.

Certainly, it's on the local bus route and conveniently situated for parks and shops.

It's also within easy reach — if not dash — of the capital.

RATES

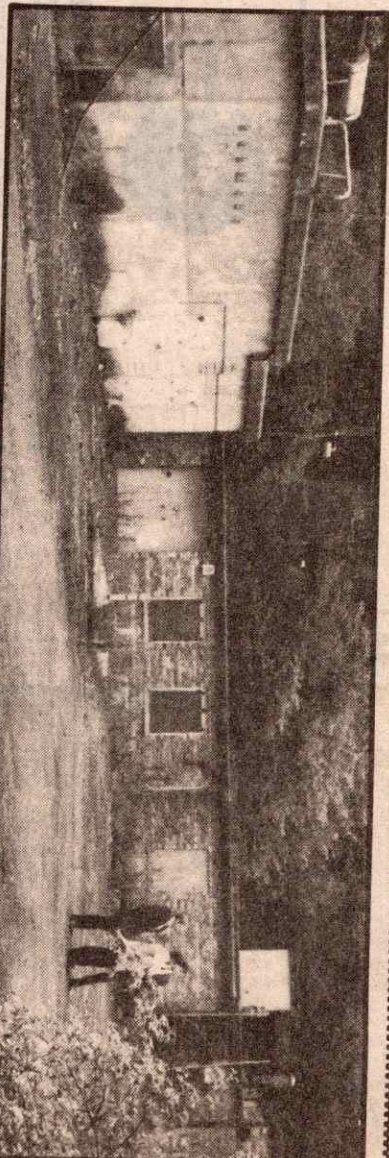
But who would want to lay out up to £100,000 on a crumbling brick construction which looks more like an electricity sub-station?

Someone who hopes to survive Armageddon, perhaps.

Faced with a crippling rates bill, Lothian Regional Council has decided to sell its most unusual possession — an underground nuclear shelter (unused).

"Selling something like this is really quite refreshing," admitted Bob Fowler, the council official picked to handle the intriguing sale.

"Our conveyancing usually extends to unwanted police houses or bus shelters, but a bomb shelter built to last



ALL MOD CONS . . . just the job if you want to survive Armageddon

Pay £100,000 to beat the bomb!

... now that's something else." Bob's excitement has even crept into the wording of advertisements.

SAFE

"For sale: A Nuclear Bunker That Won't Cost You A Bomb!" reads the advert, accompanied by a picture of one-megaton missiles hurtling earthward.

In 1952—at the height of the Cold War—the Ministry of Defence blasted a yawning chasm through Cor-

storphine Hill, Edinburgh built the giant cube in the space and covered it.

It was meant to be a very safe Scottish Command Centre for the national Advance-Warning Radar System.

But, though the building was shrouded in secrecy until it was handed over to Lothian three years ago, it is known that the 88 rooms fell silent after just 10 years.

Allowing for the bunker's outsize dimensions, stepping

inside is like visiting the home of a dearly-departed spinster who refused to move with the times.

RELICS

Down 150 yards of sloping entrance hall, the discarded relics vividly recall the post-war paranoia.

Headsets still lie on top of the old, cord-connected telephone switchboard with sockets marked 'Bomber Command' and a

sign instructing operators not to use the new P.B.X. systems until 1300 hours on September 24, 1958.

"What we are looking for is an eccentric millionaire, who wants to provide a secure future for his family," said councillor Brian Fallon, more in hope than anything else.

"You never know" offered another enthusiastic official from the estate department, "Michael Jackson may just be interested."