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YET ANOTHER HOUSING DEFECT FOUND?

CALDERS SAFETY SHOCKER

Major safety checks are being carried out on the three high-rise blocks in the Calders - Dunsyre House, Cobb-inshaw House and Medwin House.

Consultant structural engineers, Sir Frederic Snow carried out preliminary investigations for Edinburgh District Council earlier this year. This followed complaints from tenants about recurring cracks on their walls and ceilings.

The Council have reacted swiftly to the engineers' findings and urgent safety checks are now being carried out.

In 1969 following the collapse of Ronan Point in London all tower blocks were subjected to strict safety checks and as a result three Calders high-rise blocks were strengthened in 1970.

But the engineers say: "...certain connections assumed to be present had been missing since the time

of construction and others had been badly installed, thus reducing their effectiveness."

Safety checks are being carried out on 15 vacant houses to see if panel connections comply with revised building standards. The Housing Department expect to have results in two months time.

The situation in the Calders appears to be remarkably similar to problems in Hailesland Park. Numerous tests failed to find the root cause of the trouble and now residents are being evacuated so that detailed safety examinations can be carried out.

Block 4 in Hailesland Park is almost empty and tests should start there as soon as all the residents have moved out.

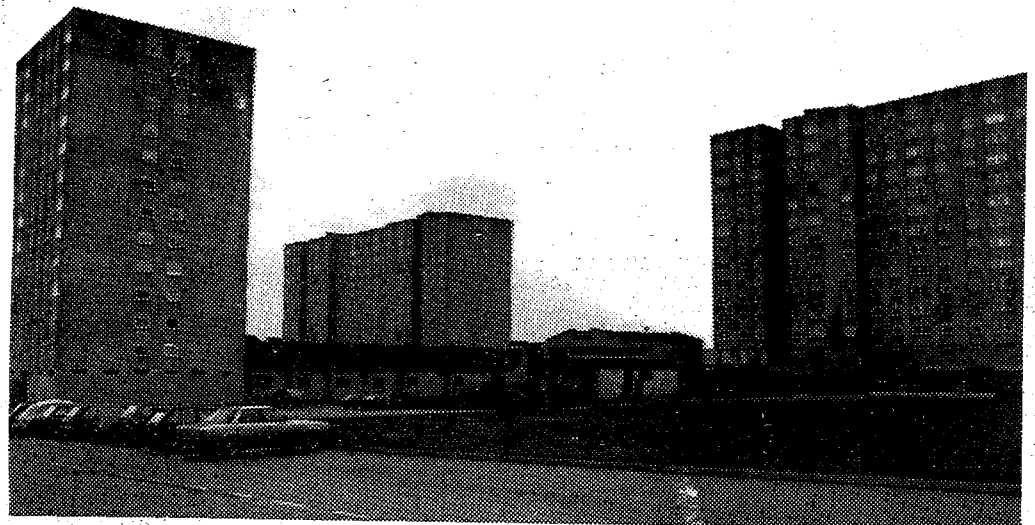
The Council agreed to let the local district councillor for the area, Mark Lazarowicz know if the test revealed any further problems.

"If there is any question of safety on the buildings at all I will be demanding the immediate re-housing of all tenants," he said.

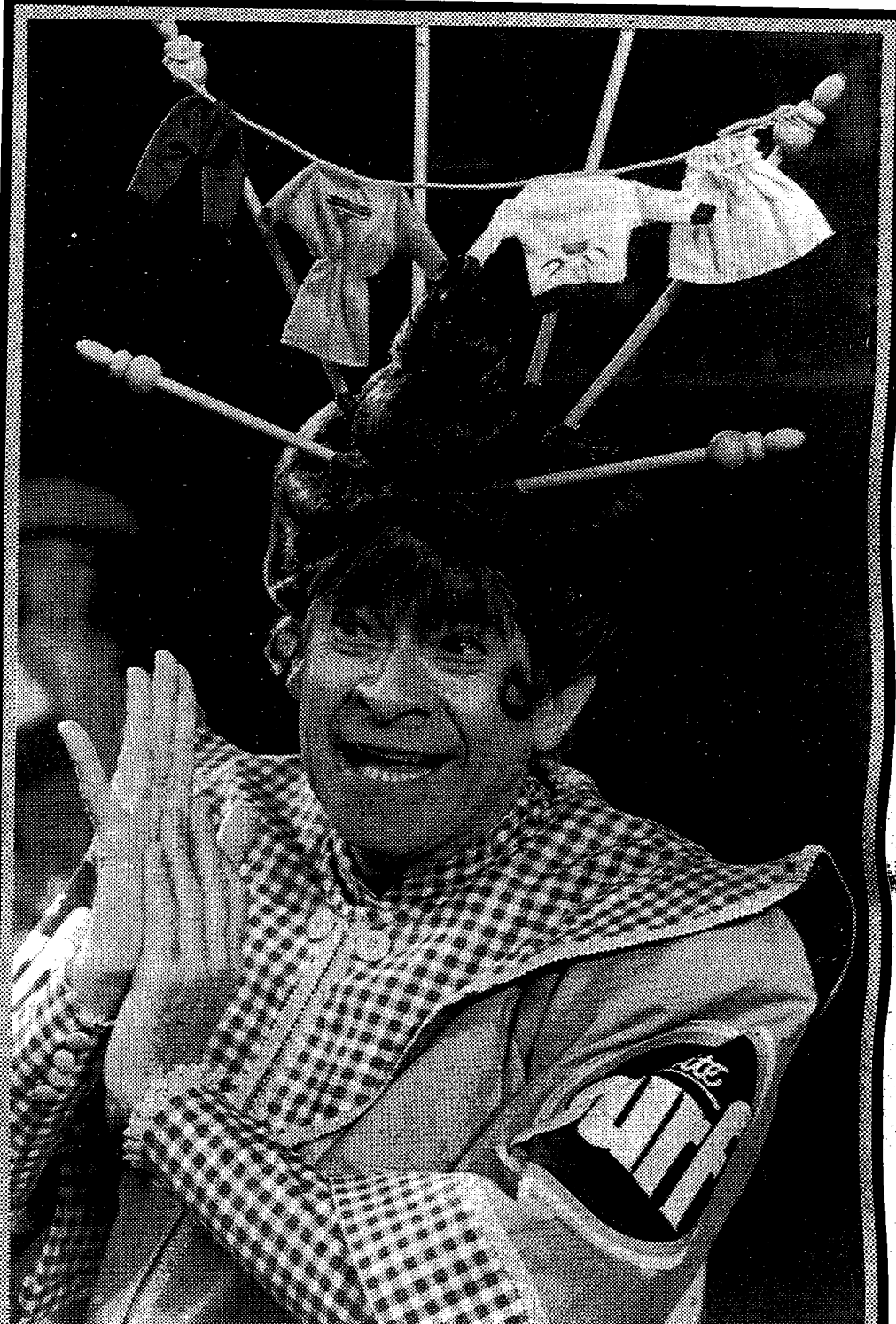
There are over 400 homes in the three blocks which houses over 1200 people.

Councillor Lazarowicz added: "What we are now discovering are the fundamental problems in system built multi-storey housing and the District Council is going to face a major bill for tens of millions for its multi-storey housing."


Barbara Swan, Secretary of Calders Tenants' Association and Chairperson of the Wester Hailes Representative Council, on hearing the news said: "We realised the tests were being carried out but not to this extent. The Tenants' Association will be taking this up as a key issue and finding out as much as we can from the Housing Department as soon as possible."



TRoubled TIMES AHEAD FOR THESE CALDER BLOCKS?



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