

certification work on the once-Buick light-alloy V8. Variants of basically the same engine have been taken to 4.4 litres, so a displacement of 4.2 is not stretching the block too far.

The unstrangled European version of the injected TVR 350i is one of the fastest cars made in Britain, with 0-60 mph acceleration in six seconds and a top speed of 140 mph (220 km/h). Even with emission control, the 420i is expected comfortably to top that. TVR talks of a top speed of 150 mph (240 km/h). TVR claims it is now selling over half the cars it makes to the United States. Production is currently running at 12-14 cars a week from the Blackpool factory.

Not for sale

It's off! Land Rover is no longer for sale. In a controversial about-turn, the British government has withdrawn state-owned Land Rover (part of the BL group of companies) from the market. None of the bids from the four British contenders left in the contest was sufficient, the



SCOOP



Caught on the eve of its debut, the undisguised Rover 800 out in the open. Though it has low cowl and high tail like the related Honda Legend, Rover's body is entirely different with six-window cabin and slim rear pillars. Blacked-out front and side pillars and clever chrome moulding above windows give appearance of cantilevered roof. Note that car in black and white photo has steel wheels, left hand drive. Apart from 2.5-litre Honda V6 engine, Rover will offer its own two-litre 16-valve twin cam four cylinder engine.

the car division that will soon be selling Sterlings in the US. Then talks with GM, bidding for the truck and Land Rover divisions, broke down acrimoniously when the General was refused the "crown-jewel" Land Rover

the company's future has had a damaging effect on its performance, say insiders. The managing director of AR's product development, Mark Snowdon, reckons the company has lost up to 40,000 sales. Its relationship with Honda has not been impaired, though.

What happens now? It's wait-and-see time under BL's new chairman, Canadian Graham Day, late of British Shipbuilders. The government plans to dispose of Land Rover later on, in a Jaguar-style flotation.



Alien — a visiting card for a UK design company

government says. This latest twist in the BL saga brings to an end immediate government plans to return Britain's only volume manufacturer to the private sector. First, Ford was told it couldn't have Austin Rover,

operation. That was to remain in British hands, the Americans were told.

The government's handling of the great BL sale has been widely criticised in Britain as incompetent and muddled. Uncertainty about

Honda's UK thrust

Austin Rover has confirmed it is to build around 4000 Honda Civics/Ballades a year at its British Longbridge plant. The cars will be built alongside Rover's own 200-series compacts, which are Anglicised versions of the Civic. All the new Honda-badged cars will be sold through Honda's UK dealer network and will not be included in the quota

agreement that restricts the sale of Japanese cars in Britain to around 11 percent of the market. About 80 percent of the BL-made Civics' content, measured by value, will be European.

Meanwhile, Rolls-Royce, makers of the Silver Spirit, is to take action against Nissan UK about the use of the hallowed Spirit name on some of its models.

All-drive Sierra wagon on sale

Ford's new Sierra Ghia 4x4 wagon is now on sale in Europe. Developed by Ford's British-based special vehicle operation, SVE, the all-drive wagon uses existing Ferguson-based hardware, including a centre transfer box that gives a 34/66 front-to-rear torque split, and a viscous coupling limited-slip differential. There's a second VC unit between the back wheels. Wheelspin is controlled automatically by these two couplings, doing away with the need for Audi-style manual diff locks.

Ford is now making 120 four-wheel-drive cars a day in Europe. More than 10,000 4x4 Sierras and Scorpios have been produced since Ford entered the all-drive sector in the Spring of '85. Meanwhile, at the Turin show, Ford has projected the Ghia wagon theme into the future with a high-roof, seven-seater, all-purpose concept called the TSX-6.

Alien alert

Britain's answer to Italy's Ital Design, International Automobile Design, has come up with a bizarre two-seater for the Turin show. Looking like a creature from outer space, and not a very pretty one at that, the vehicle is well named — Alien. It's also intended to raise eyebrows, to get people talking.

The Alien is an