

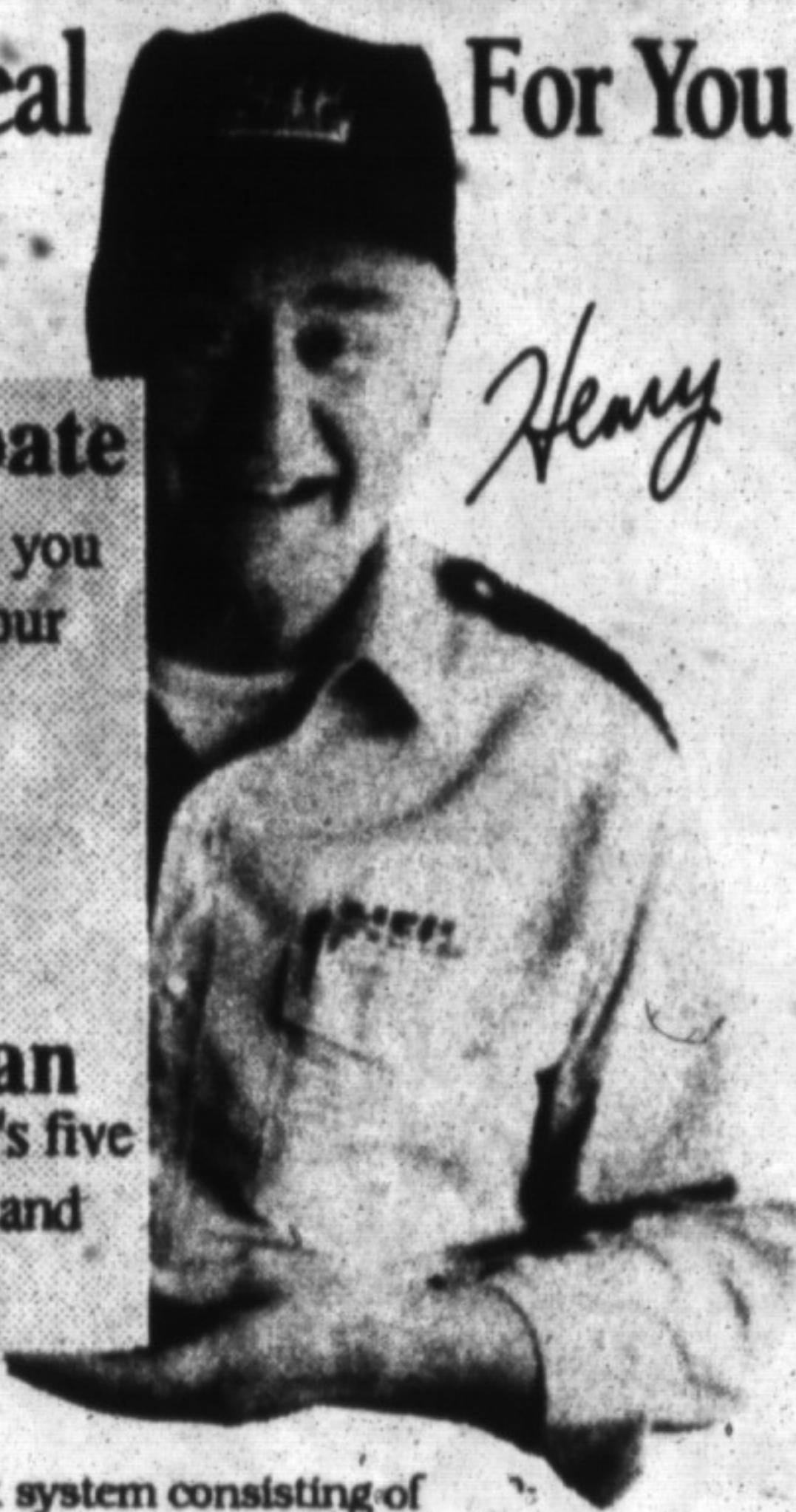
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What to look for in a carpet

Let's get down to the bottom of it all and talk about carpets. First of all, how do you check the quality of a carpet? There are two good ways: the finger press check and the smile check.

The durability of a carpet often depends on the density, resilience and weight of the pile. If you press your finger into the pile and it recovers quickly, you have quality carpet.

The smile check test is to take the carpet sample and bend it. Can you see through the fibres to the base of the carpet easily? If yes, the quality is not too good. Short, dense carpets are the most durable. While long strands and big loops may look bulky, they are of less weight and therefore of less durability.

Here are some carpet terms that will help make you a more informed consumer:

• **Berber:** This carpet is experi-

encing a resurgence of popularity. The original berber was (and is if you get the real thing) a looped pile in a natural, undyed wool. Currently a berber carpet is any nubby carpet and they even come in colors.

• **Broadloom:** Any carpet wider than 6 feet qualifies as a broadloom. The most common is 12 feet wide, though 9- and even 18-foot widths are also available.

• **Body carpet:** This is the baby brother of the broadloom. It is only 6 feet wide. The body carpet is used in such areas as corridors and stairs.

• **Bonded:** The fibres are bonded into an adhesive base. This type of carpet is often of superlative quality.

• **Cut Pile:** Strands of fibre are cut rather than looped into carpet.

• **Tufted:** Here individual fibres are punched into the base material. This pile may be looped or cut.



Tips for couples who renovate

To avoid quarrels while renovating, therapists advise the following:

— Assign and outline duties so you don't fight about who is supposed to do what in do-it-yourself projects.

— Be realistic about the time and money involved. One rule of thumb: predict how long you think it will take and then double it.

— Remember the rules of fair fighting. Stick to the issue at hand.

— To avoid "you're wrong. I'm right" fights, understand there are many ways to do something.

— If you hire a contractor, present a unified front when discussing projects.

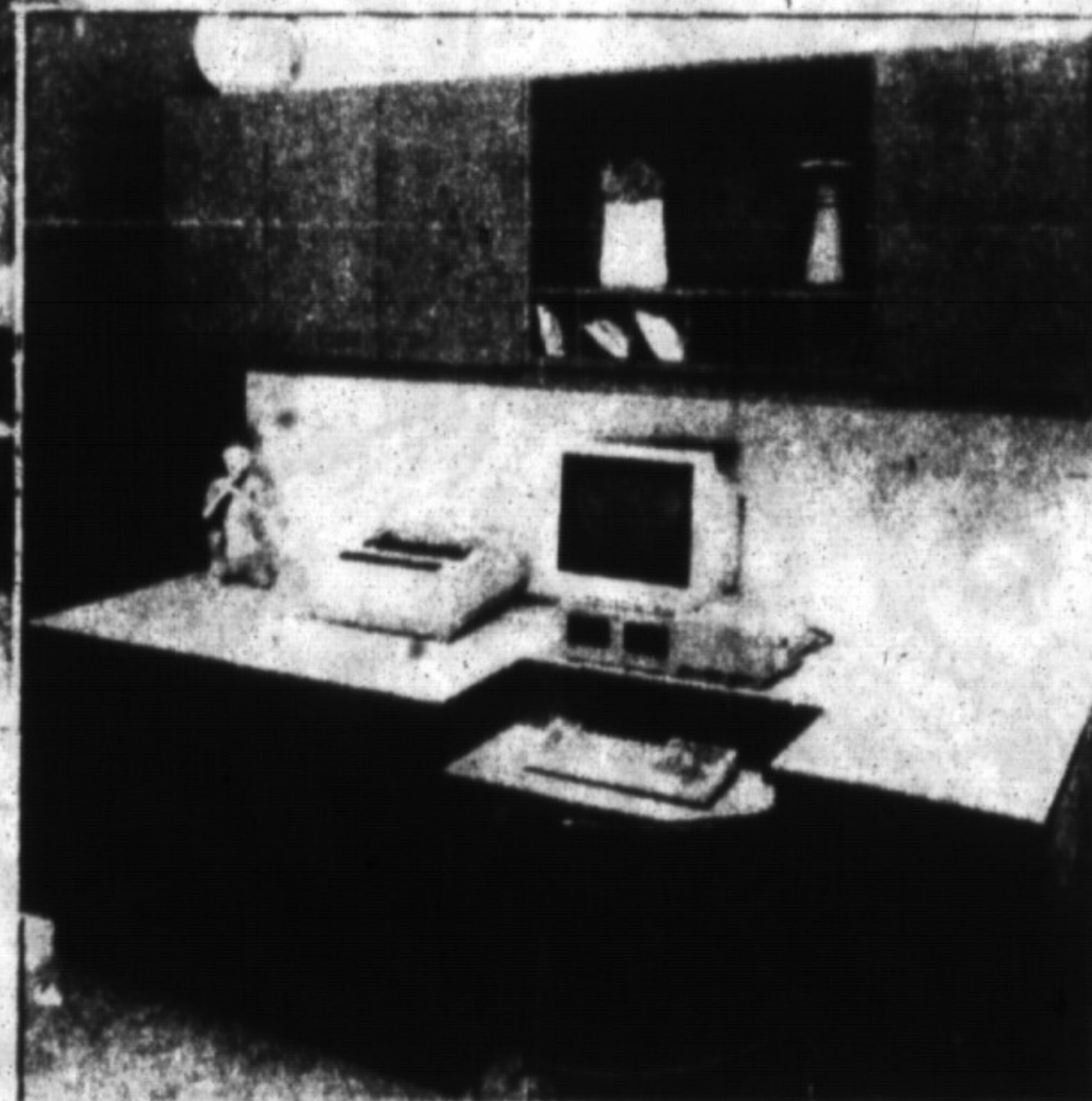
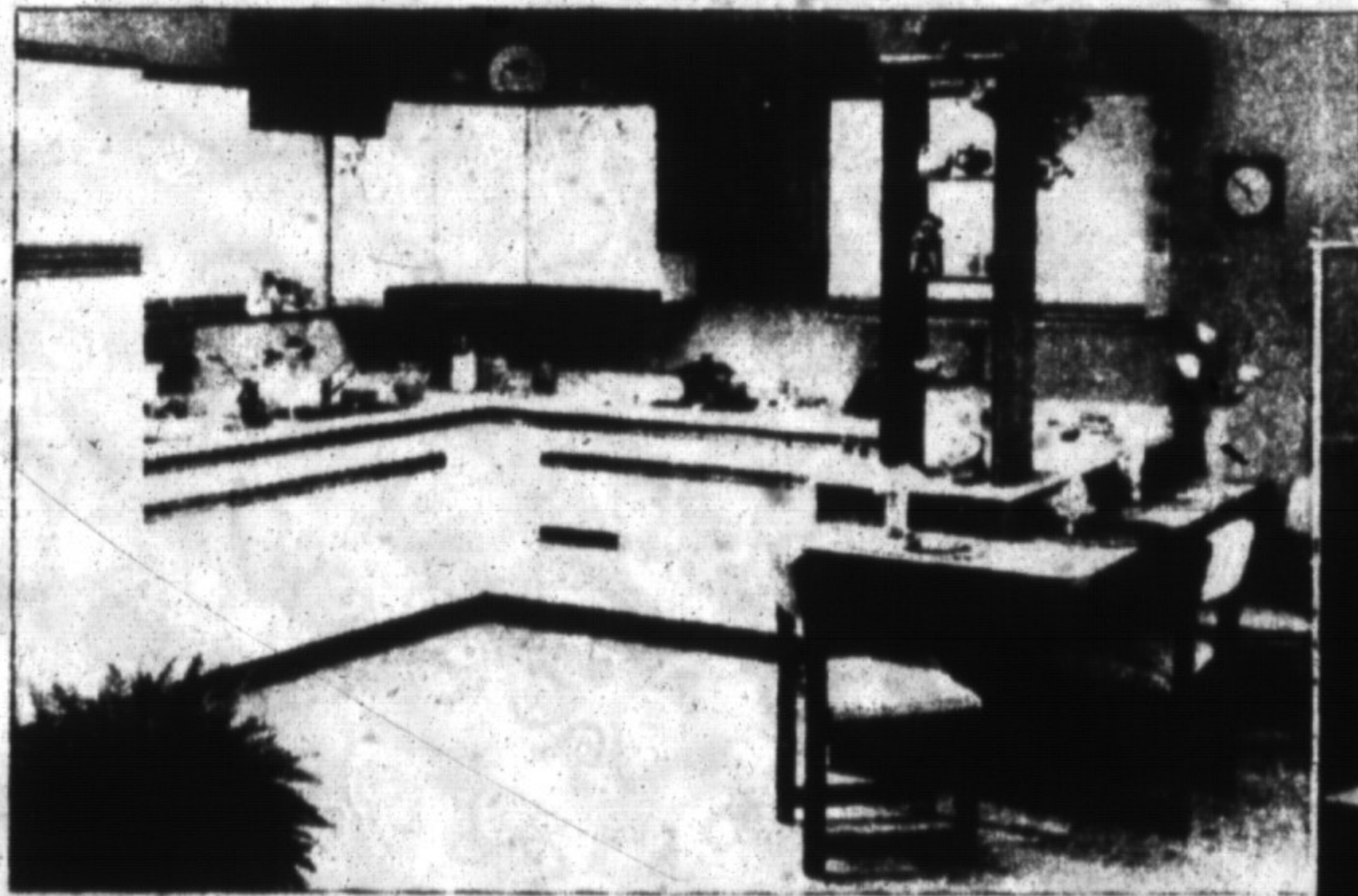
— Take time away from the home, from the project.

— Don't put up walls; encourage communication.

— Expect to be frustrated.

— Try to patch up differences as they occur.

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