

Beavers in disguise

Beavers in disguise enjoyed their Halloween party last week. Front row from left are "Wild Bill" Clark and "Robin" Austin. Middle from left, "Monster" Schoneveld, "Beaver" Regier and

"Swashbuckler" Archer. Back row from left, "Leo" Austin, "Calculator" Willis and "Bozo" Scott.

Photo by Katy Austin

Radio Shack workers fight firing

by KATY AUSTIN

Two Elmvale workers are fighting to get their jobs back at Radio Shack in Barrie.

Cathy Ritchie, formerly of Elmvale and now living in Barrie, and Joe Timms, a Queen Street resident, both heard last Thursday that they would not be among those returning to work after the long strike at the warehouse.

The personnel director for Radio Shack, Al Potter, was unavailable for comment, and did not return a reporter's telephone calls.

According to Ritchie, the firing was over altercations at the picket line, which, in her opinion, were minor. Rather, she felt that the company "was out to get her" because she is the type of person who stands up for herself.

As an example, she cited an incident in which she complained to her supervisor that someone with less seniority was assigned to a higher-paying task which she could have done. In her first year

at the warehouse, Ritchie had received excellent reports regarding her work.

The strike at Radio Shack began last May. According to Gaye Lamb, president of Local 6709 of the United Steelworkers, the union which represents the strikers, there were two issues: wages, and time limits on grievance procedures.

Immediately after the strike began, the company brought in non-union workers in vans with tinted windows. Several of these workers were from Elmvale, former schoolmates of Ritchie and Timms. Radio Shack was able to operate at full capacity throughout the strike.

The Ontario Labour Relations Act requires employers to re-hire strikers if they want to return to work within six months of a strike. Since that deadline was approaching, the local union advised its members to take such action a week ago last Monday.

But Radio Shack is in no hurry to take the workers back. Instead,

it gave them letters stating that the company wanted to recall them in an "orderly manner" and "over a period of time," to avoid disrupting operations. Three days later, Ritchie, Timms and three others heard that they were to be fired because of picket line incidents.

The union last week signed the collective agreement, thereby accepting the offer made by the company in May to raise pay by 4 percent in the first year and by 3 percent in each of the following two years. Radio Shack, however, has refused to

sign.

Because the company has refused to sign, or to put back the workers on its payroll from the time of the application to return to work, the case has been taken by the union to the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

The union will also be fighting to force Radio Shack to rehire the five people it fired and to remove the suspensions of two others. Berry is confident that they will be successful and Ritchie is "definitely optimistic about the union's chances" on this endeavour.



A Barrie man is to appear in Midland court Dec. 3 in connection with the theft of a pick-up truck from a parking space on Simcoe Street in Penetang Oct. 21.

The 1976 Ford pick-up owned by Arthur Reynolds of Midland was recovered near Cedar Point in Tiny

Township shortly after it was reported missing.

Charged in connection with the theft is Gilbert John Sunday, 32, of Barrie. He is charged with theft over \$200. A warrant for the arrest of his brother, Mervyn Sunday, has also been issued, in connection with the incident.

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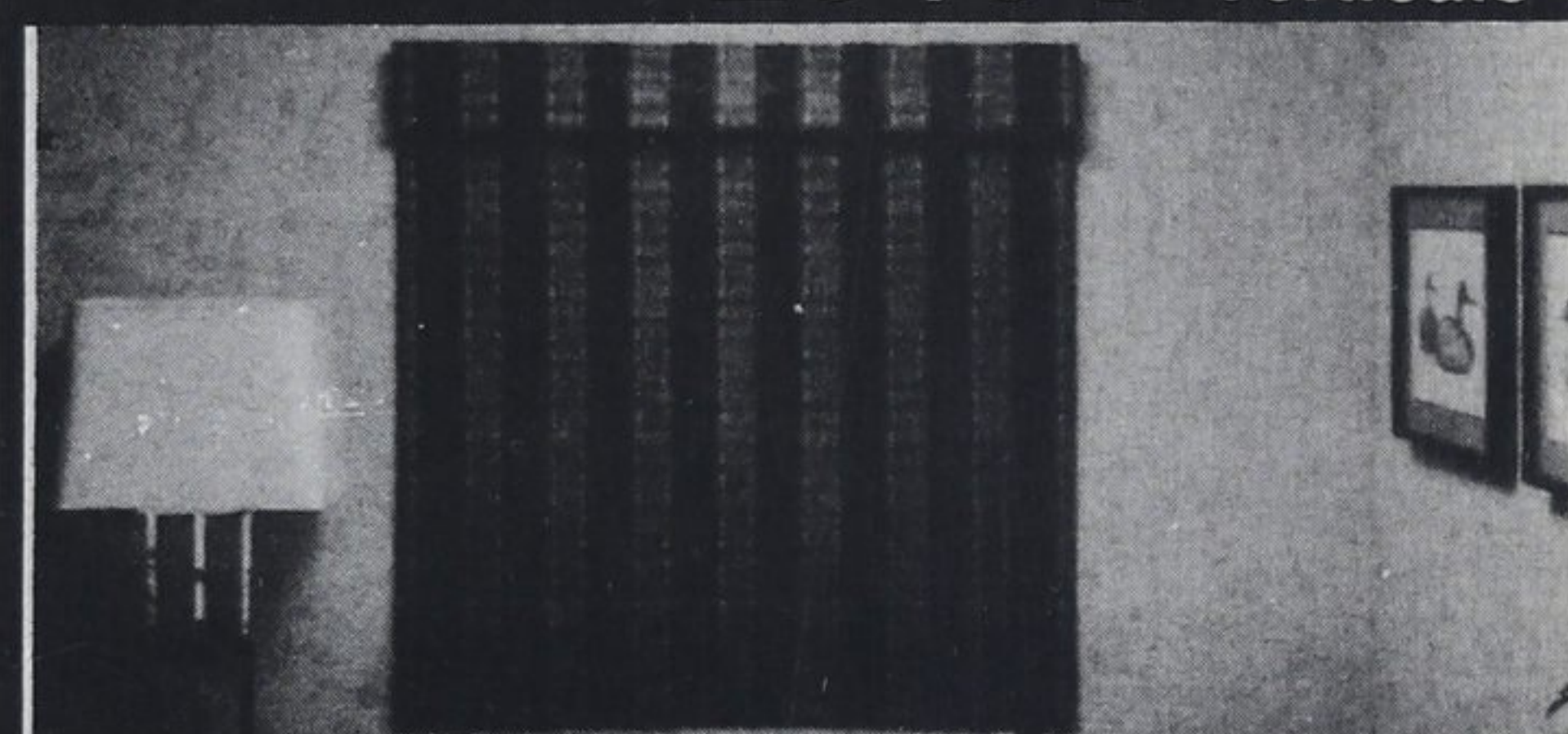
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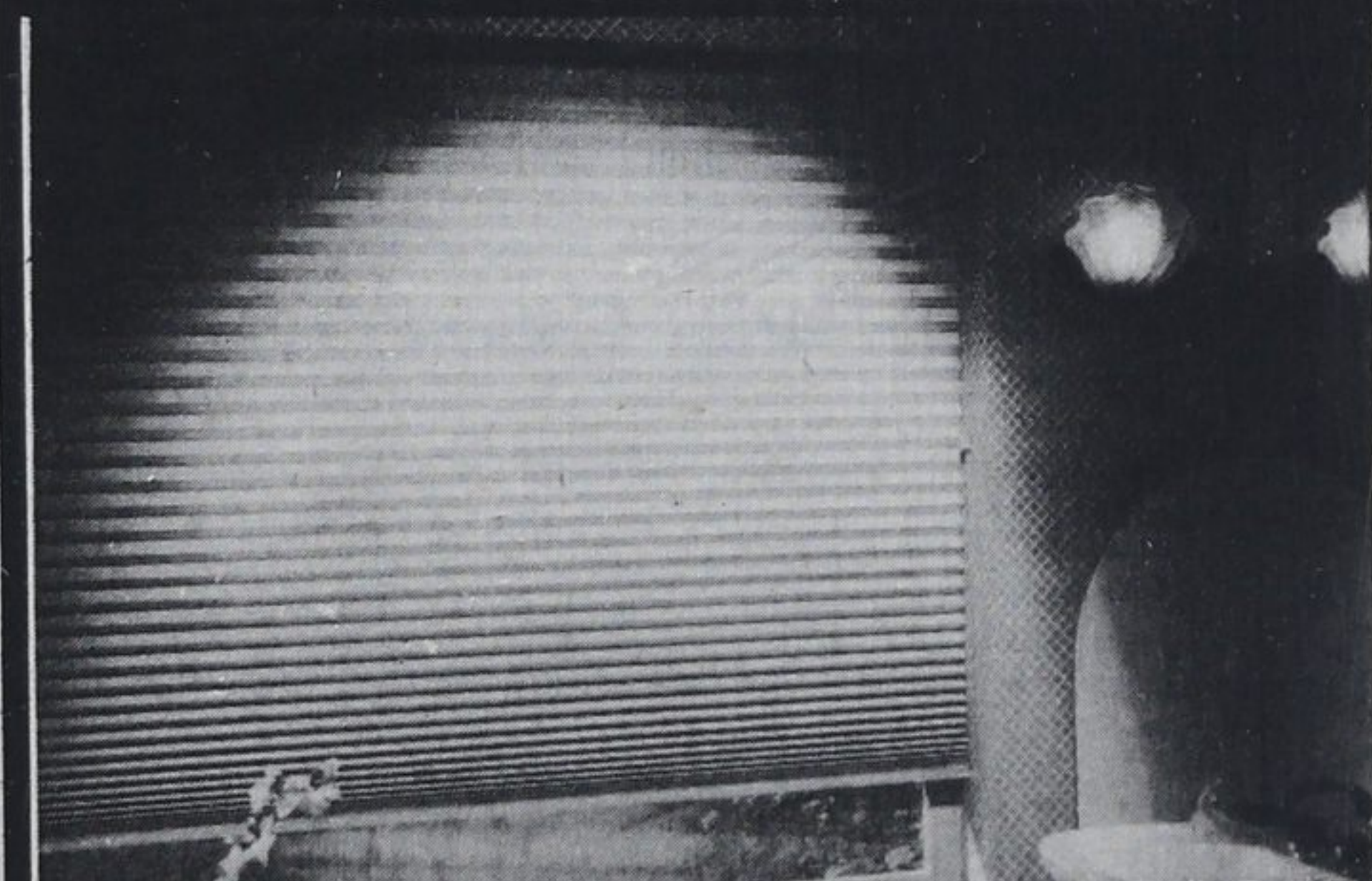


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