



TORNADO BATTERS TOWN—A tornado cut through the west end of Mitchell, S. D., and sent more than two dozen people to hospitals but no one was killed. The district en-

gineering office of the South Dakota Department of Highways, at left, and the maintenance shop were destroyed along with the Boehnen Oil Co., bottom right. (UPI)

A Better Mousetrap

Age of Simple Purpose Inventions Gives Way To Combination Products

By DICK WEST

Washington — (UPI) — If you build a better mousetrap, you had better make certain that



It will do something besides catch rats. Otherwise, you won't make enough out of it to pay for the cheese to bait it with. The age when fortunes could be made with simple purpose inventions has just about vanished. Nowadays the world won't beat a path to your door unless you build a combination mousetrap and vacuum cleaner.

Any doubt that we are living in an era of multiple use products can be dispelled by looking over the list of winners in a recent design contest sponsored by a Pennsylvania department store.

Seldom has one contest produced so many clever ideas, if "clever" is the word that I'm groping for.

Take a bridal gown, which is ordinarily a big waste of money. A girl never gets to wear it a second

time unless she shucks her husband and remarries, which also can be a big waste of money.

All, one of the contest winners was a bridal gown that can be converted into a cocktail dress. Makes it possible to be practical without getting a divorce.

Another winner that caught my eye was a "krushable" hat, which I at first associated with the headgear worn by the Soviet premier. But, no. This is a hat that a fellow

can stick in his pocket when he enters a restaurant and thus avoid checking charges. Should go nicely with a prize-winning suit, which has 19 pockets.

I likewise fancied a casting rod with a radio built into the handle. Brings in rockfish and rock-'n-roll simultaneously. Or maybe opera and octopus.

For really all-around use, however, I'll take the golf scooter that can be used for

lawn mowing, or the combination ballpoint pen and flashlight, which can be used for writing in the dark. I do some of my best writing in the dark.

You have to find the pen before you can turn it on, and for this you can slip on a prize-winning pair of shoes that have a light bulb in the toe. Then all you need is a light to help you find the shoes.

It's easy to see why a clock-radio-barometer won a prize. It gives you not only music and the time, but the weather as well.

Equally deserving of a prize was a vibrator chain that can be used either for weight reducing or for learn-

ing how to do the "twist." But by far my favorite winner in the versatile design contest was a "three-in-one bomb shelter unit." It can be used either as a stretcher, a bed or a burial unit.

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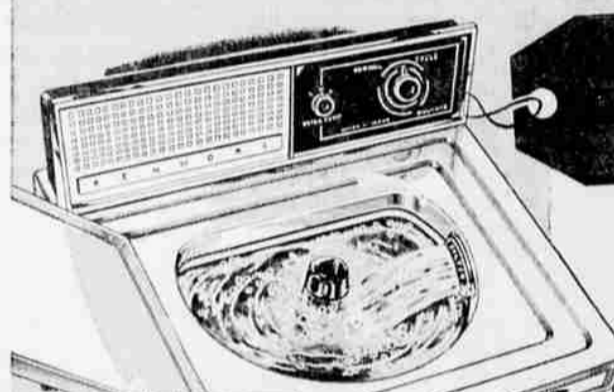


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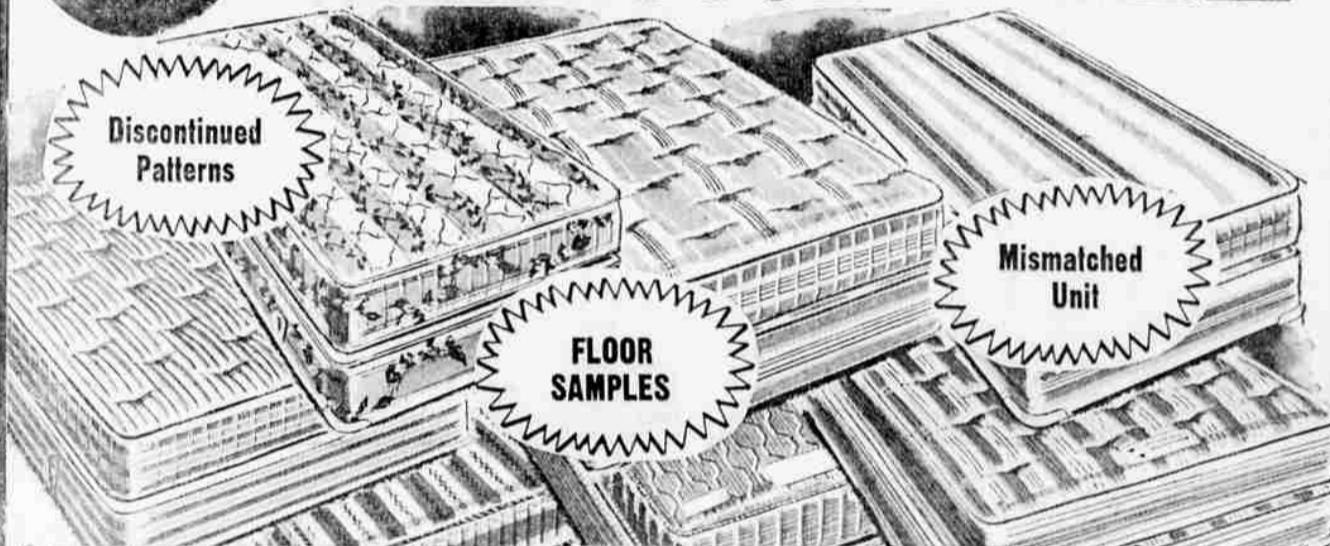


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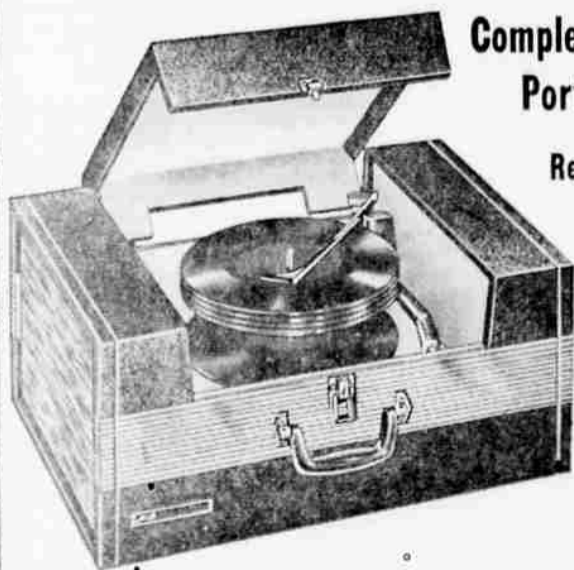
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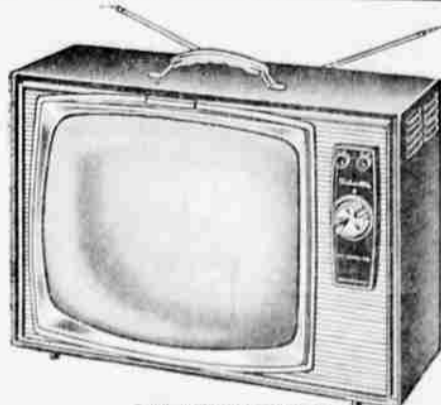
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