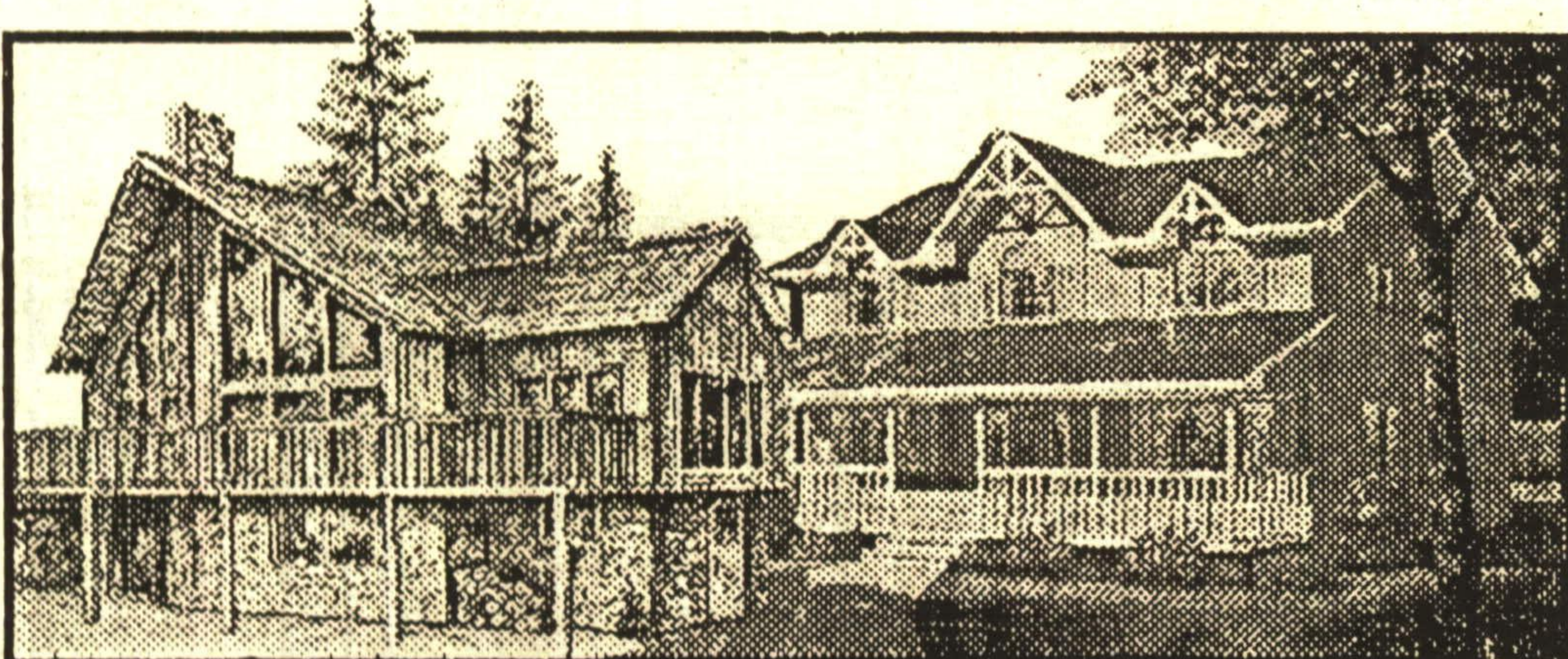


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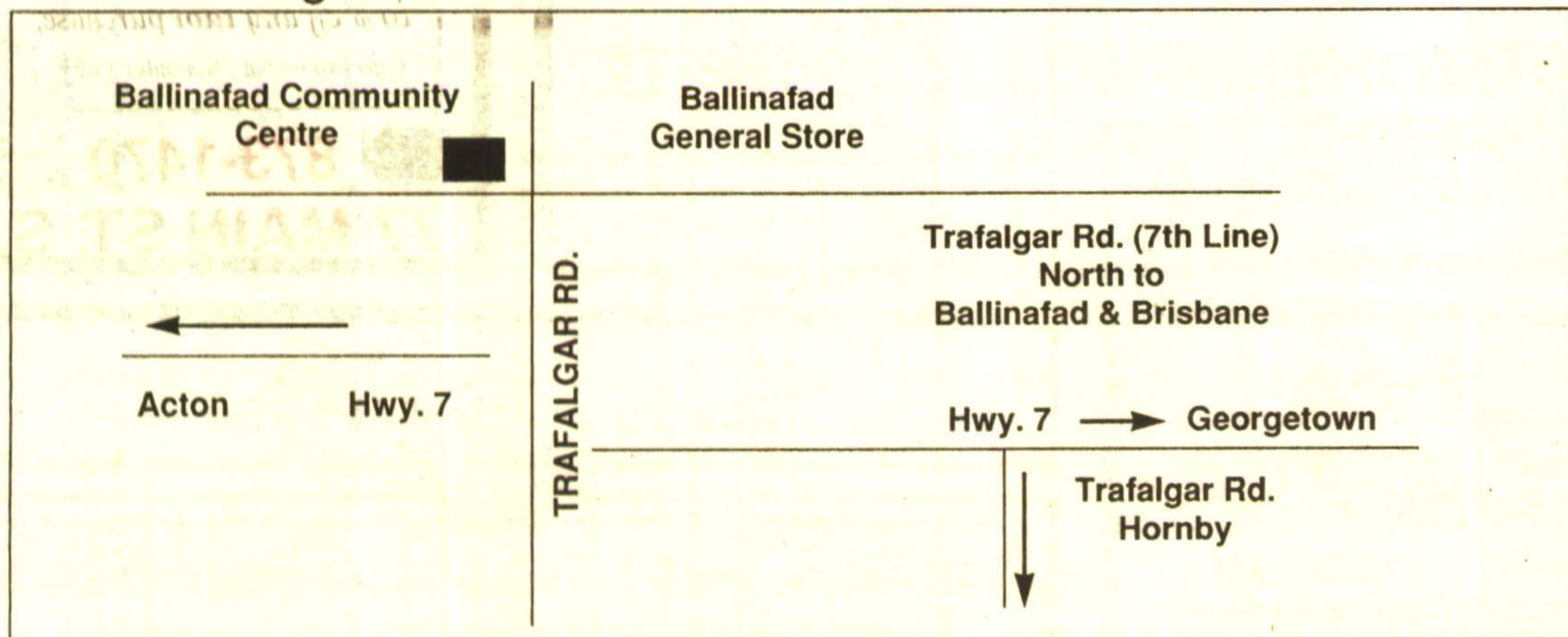


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Halton police chief accepts SIU post

By ALEX MATHESON
Special to The Independent/Free Press

When the chief of Halton Regional Police Service resigns later this year, he will be taking on a new job.

On December 1, Chief James Harding, 59, will become head of investigative operation for the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) of the Attorney General's office.

Sarah Persaud, communication assistant for SIU, said Harding will be directing the work of 16 people investigating serious injuries, death and sexual assault which may have resulted from criminal offences by police officers.

There are about 200 such investigations every year, she added.

Since the SIU was established three years ago, these investigations have been removed from the hands of police forces, she explained. Previously, a criminal investigation involving an officer on one force was conducted by another force, she said.

Now, Harding will be in charge of the investigation.

"His experience, progressive views and international recognition," said Persaud, "will add a whole new dimension to the SIU."

In May 1979, Harding came from the Peel Regional Police Force to

take over as this region's chief. Following a heart attack last fall, he told the force of his intention to resign.

But, Barry Quinn, chair of the Police Services Board, doubts health had anything to do with the chief's decision to quit. He is required, said Quinn, to resign before he reaches his 60th birthday next June.

The chief's ongoing police work and move to the SIU didn't surprise Quinn. Harding feels strongly about the SIU, he said. "He is concerned the SIU hasn't been able to act fast enough to either exonerate the officer or lay charges."

Quinn believes the chief's concern over the speed of investigations may be one of the reasons the SIU is hiring five more investigators to



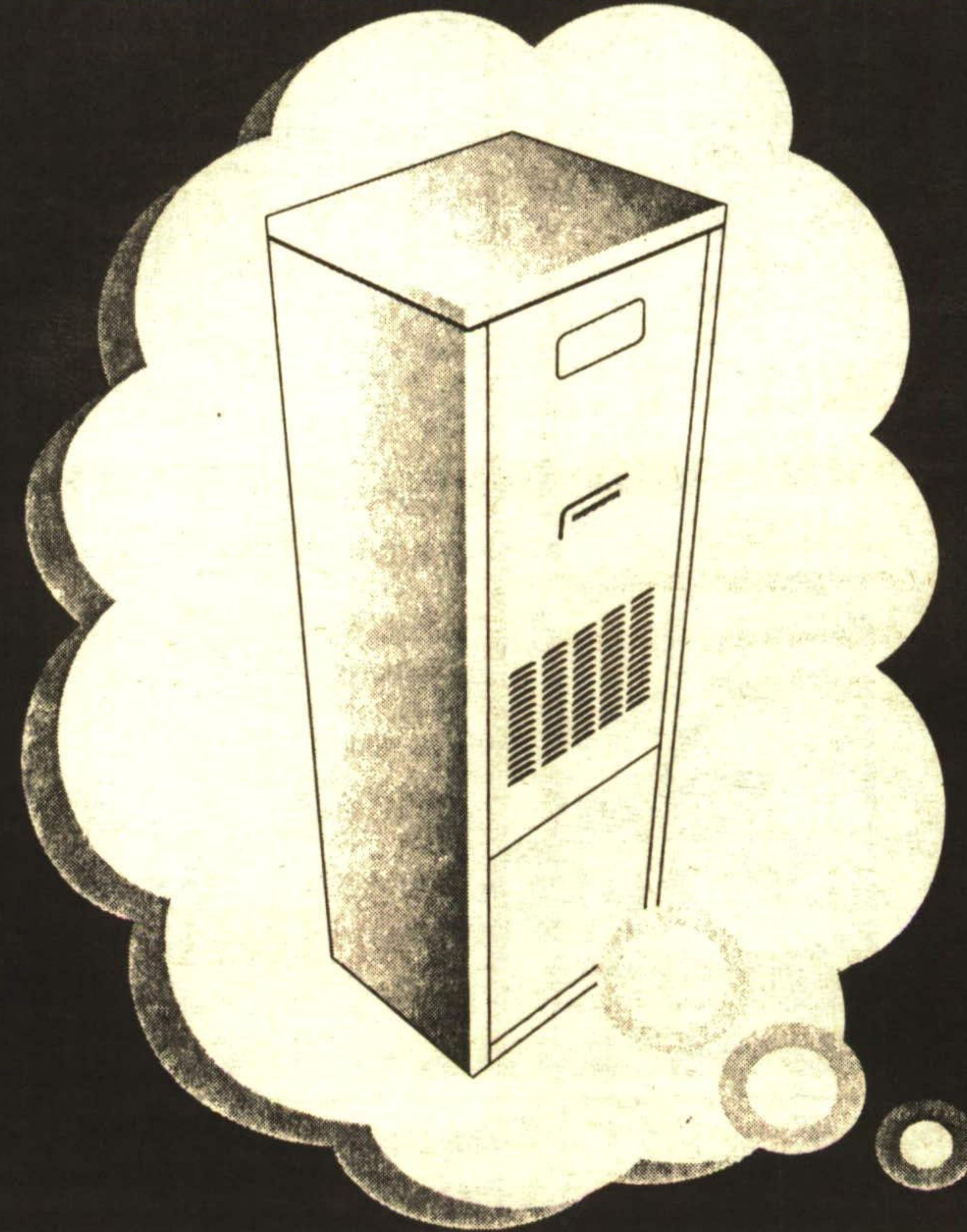
CHIEF JAMES HARDING

bring the total to 16.

Meanwhile, the Halton Police Services Board is still in the process of hiring Harding's replacement. Quinn doesn't know when that decision will be made, but he hopes a new chief will be in place by the New Year.

"He's a tough guy to replace," said Quinn. "Jim's the reason Halton has one of the most highly recognized police services in North America. I know he will do a good job for SIU."

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