

Trustees happy after Queen's Park meeting

By GREG COATES
Staff Reporter

Although no promises were made, Education Minister Sean Conway left representatives from both York Region school boards feeling good following separate meetings Wednesday.

Both Celeste Pelliccione, chairman of the separate school board, and Louise Walter, chairman of the public school board, said they came away from their meeting with the Minister with a "positive feeling."

"Our meeting went very well. I'm pleased," said Mrs. Pelliccione. "It's evident Mr. Conway has been briefed and is aware of the crisis situation in York Region."

Mrs. Walter said the public board's meeting was also very constructive.

"I was very, very pleased," she said. "I haven't been this enthusiastic in a long time. Mr. Conway has obviously done his homework."

Mrs. Walter said the meeting was presented in three parts — a slide presentation showing the

growth in York Region, overhead charts displaying Ontario population projections, and six board requests.

Board requests

York Region Board of Education representatives requested the following: • special financial assistance for capital project needs in view of the rapid growth in York Region;

• introduction of legislation to provide school boards in Ontario with lot levy fees from the sale of homes in subdivisions developed and sold by major developers;

• clarification of the recent distribution of \$25 million to a number of school boards with particular reference as to why the York Region Board of Education received no allocation;

• details of a recent announcement regarding capital needs budgeting for the next two years with particular details to justify the limited amounts proposed;

• consideration to change the timing of school approvals to permit new schools to be built coincidentally with the construction of new homes;

• a statement of opinion on the York Region Board of Education policy on class size — a policy that calls for 3.5 pupils per class less than Ministry of Education pupil loading calculations.

"What we really want is a nice even flow of approvals," said Mrs. Walter. "We need to know the schools are there. We don't need these last-minute approvals."

Concerns outlined

In a seven-page brief to the Minister, the separate school board representatives also outlined the enormous growth in York Region and the growing need for additional elementary and secondary schools.

The York Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board is one of the fastest growing school boards in Ontario. It has grown in student population from 6,760 students in 1975 to 20,254 in 1985, an increase of 200 per cent in 10 years.

"We stressed that this need (for more schools) is because of growth and not extension (of Catholic school funding)," said Mrs. Pelliccione. "Mr. Conway said he would get back to us by the end of November, which shows he understands and realizes we can't wait months and months."

The separate school board representatives also had four recommendations for the Ministry:

• that in addition to the normal capital allocation process, the Minister grant emergency capital funds to growth boards each Fall, so that new schools can be ready for emergency situations the following September;

• that capital projects that have approval for Phase I only, be allowed to be completed through "bridge financing" until the board can be provided direct capital grants in the following year;

• that the Minister consider new legislation allowing boards to obtain lot levies for the construction of schools;

• and that the Minister make a commitment to allow the needed additions to senior elementary schools with the understanding that retroactive grants will be paid when enabling legislation is in place for the Catholic secondary schools.

"He gave no answers, but said he would seriously consider our recommendations with his staff," said Mrs. Pelliccione. "He does understand the situation in York Region which makes it much easier for us to deal with him."

Cousens says meeting was a starting point

Sitting in on meetings between Education Minister Sean Conway and representatives from both York Region school boards on Wednesday, MPP Don Cousens said he was delighted with the outcome.

"I felt Conway showed a genuine interest," Mr. Cousens said. "As busy as he is he sat down for almost three hours and listened."

"It's a starting point," he added. "Fifty per cent of the way to a solution is to have the problem defined and it's now well defined."

Mr. Cousens is currently in the process of establishing a public

awareness meeting to give residents a chance to hear the information presented to Mr. Conway.

"I'd like to begin the new year with a fresh statement of where we're at and where we're going with the school accommodation problem in southern York Region," said Mr. Cousens. "Part of the frustration is that the people don't know how hard both (school) boards are working."

Mr. Cousens is hoping to have representatives from both the separate and public school boards, as well as local municipality mayors on hand for the public forum.

Break-in at local office

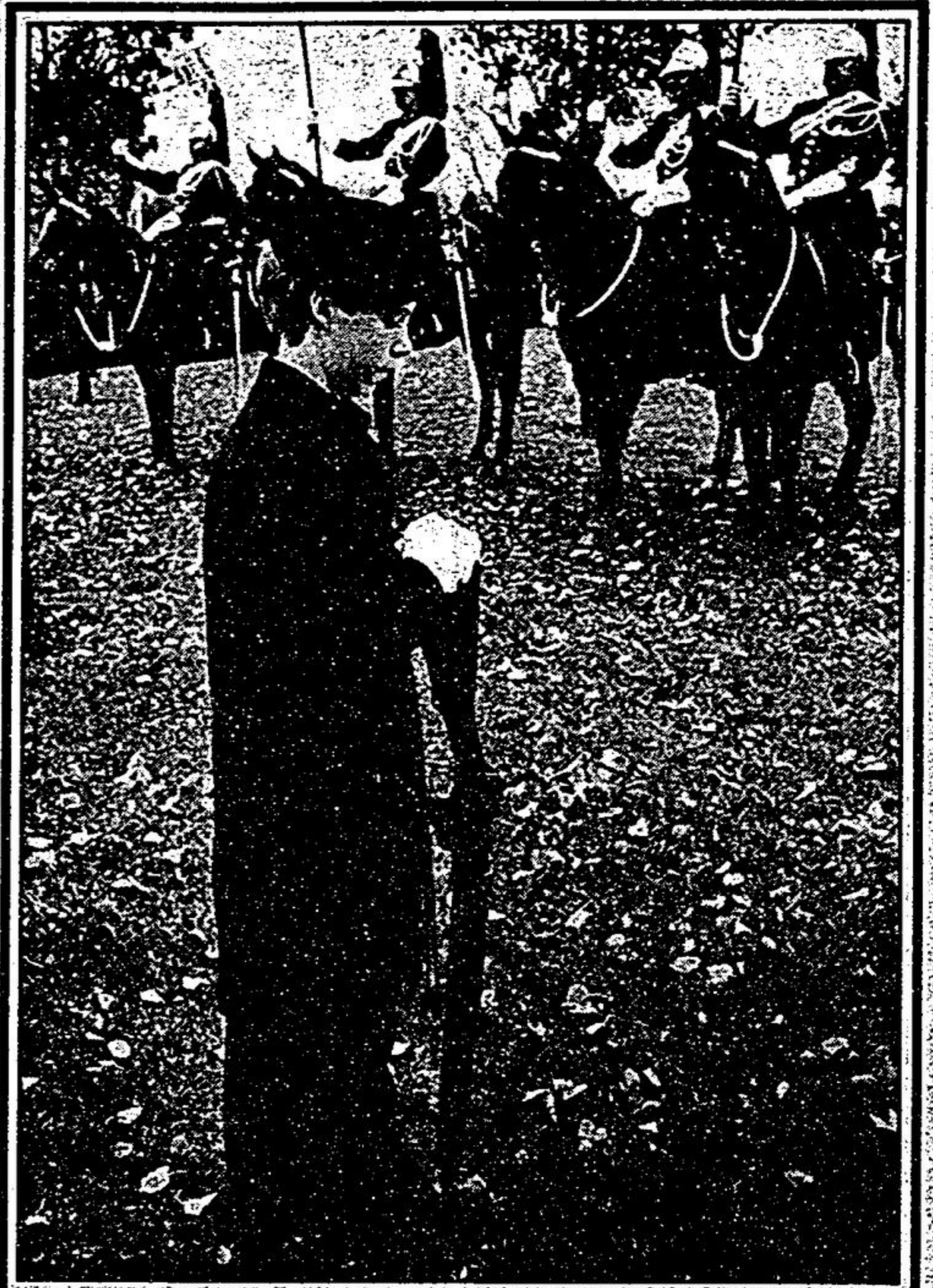
A break-in at a Steelcase Rd. company last week resulted in over \$8,000 worth of property being stolen.

York Regional Police said entry was gained into Midcup Moving and Storage through a window be-

tween Nov. 12 at 7:30 p.m. and Nov. 13 at 7 a.m.

A computer and six microwave ovens, valued at \$8,500, were removed during the break-in.

Police are investigating.



Pause to remember

Markham Cadet Corps Lance Corporal Niall Wallace pauses to reflect during the Remembrance Day wreath-laying ceremony last Saturday in Markham. In the background is a mounted guard from the Governor General's Horse Guard.

— Bill Lanning

York school board takes on new look

The York Region Board of Education will soon have a new look.

Following Tuesday's municipal election, nine new members will sit on the 20-member public school board. Two incumbent trustees were defeated in their bid for re-election, while seven others didn't run.

Defeated were Markham Trustee John Myers and Vaughan Trustee Ruth Reesor.

The vacant seats were left by current board chairman Louise Walter, vice-chairman Colin Goodfellow, Markham Trustees Earl Rowe and David Crombie, Richmond Hill Trustee Bill Monroe, Aurora Trustees Elinora Stoddart and Audrey Hall.

Board members for 1986 will be as follows: Aurora — Ron Wallace; East

Gwillimbury — Ken Taylor; Georgina Township — Dorothy Caine (acclaimed); King Township — Hazel Hodson-Walker (acclaimed); Markham — Charles Cooper (acclaimed), Pat Grand, Anne Atkins, Joanna French (acclaimed), Margaret MacDonald, Ron Stevenson, Newmarket — Susan Wakeling, Richmond Hill — Jane Robertson, Janet Mabley, Vaughan — Nancy Dunlop, Ted Berger, Whitchurch-Stouffville — Harry Bowes; Separate school board representatives — Mike Neill, Cheryl Walker, Victor Gallo and Glenn MacAlpine.

An inaugural meeting of the York Region Board of Education is being held Dec. 2 at 7:30 p.m. at the Markham Theatre for the Performing Arts.

At that time, the board's 1986 chairman and vice-chairman will be elected.

Ed and Claudette

"Right!... I'll take one!"

Trial date set for local MP

A trial date for York North MP Tony Roman will be set Dec. 19 in Newmarket.

Mr. Roman was charged with overspending by about \$11,000 on his 1984 federal election campaign, after an investigation by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

He declared \$52,751.98 in election expenses, but the RCMP alleges that almost \$11,000 in goods, services and office accommodations weren't claimed.

Election expense limits are determined by the number of voters in the riding. In York North the maximum is \$53,287.

Mr. Roman did not appear in court Thursday morning, although his lawyer was present.

The date will be set in December with the trial most likely coming up sometime next spring.

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