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Stouffville Tribune

VOL 7 NO 33

A Metroland Community Newspaper Saturday, August 17, 1991 44 Pages 25 cents

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Shock, concern in wake of trailer park assaults

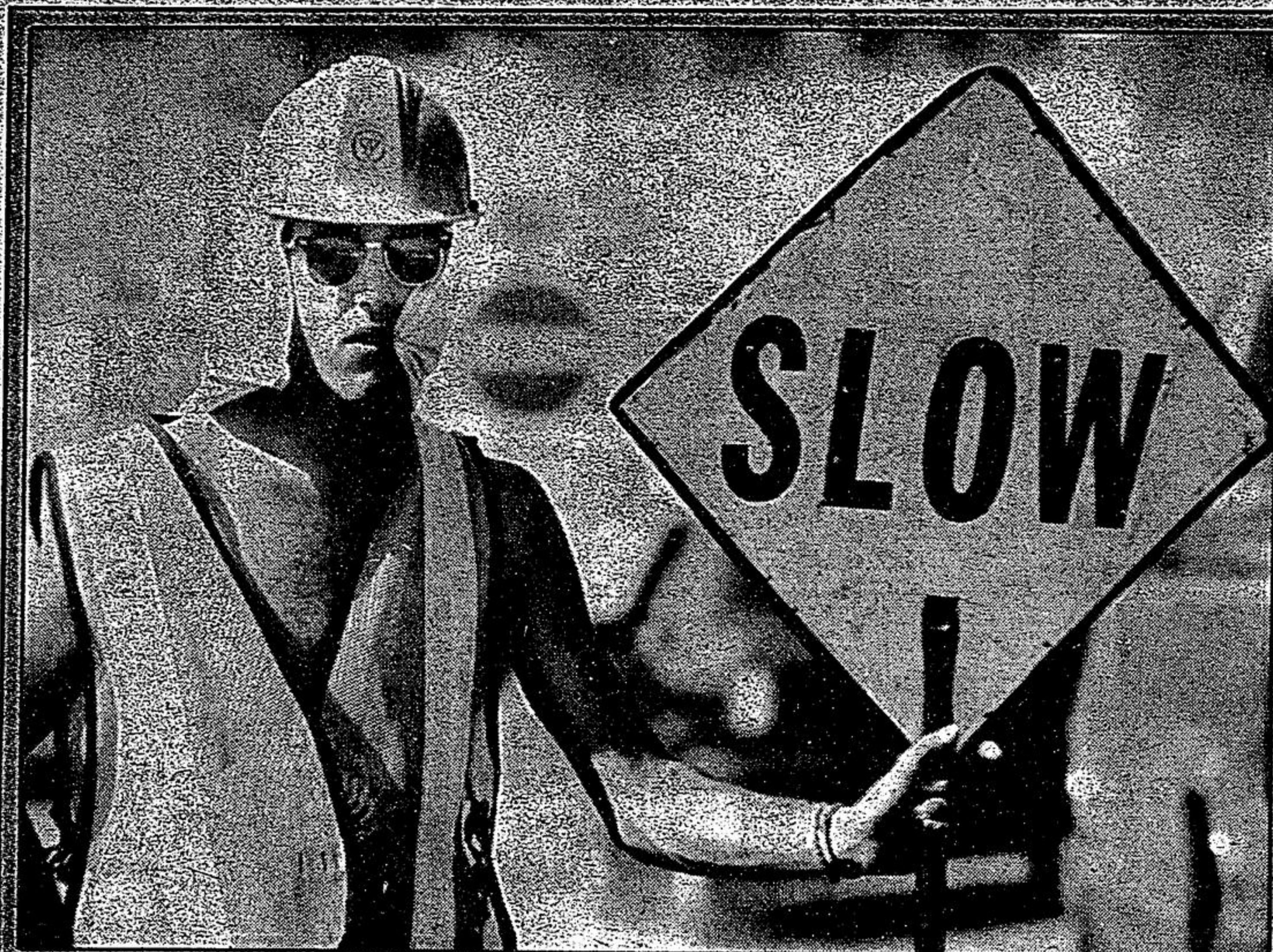
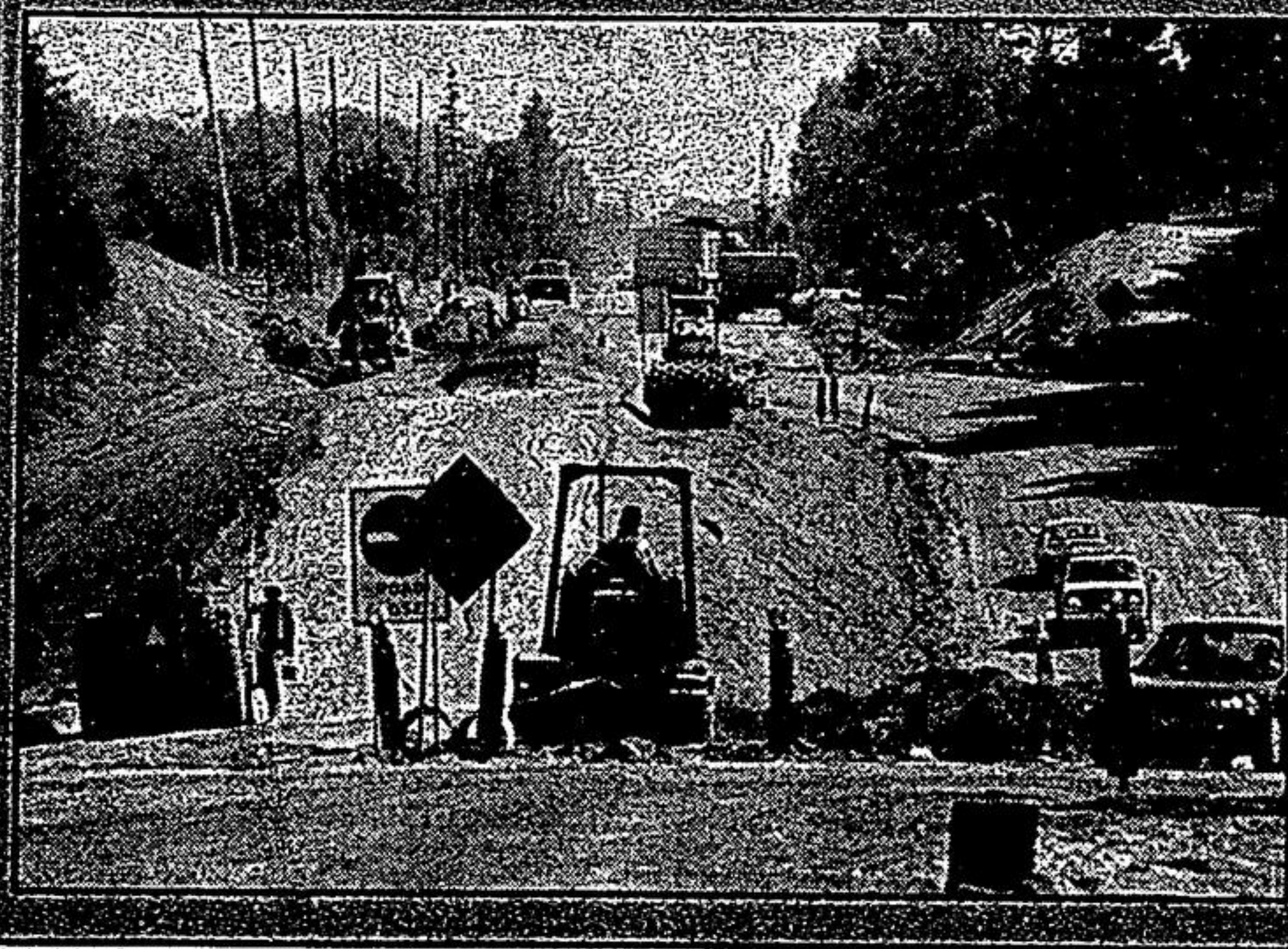


PHOTO: SJOERD WITTEVEN



Working on the highway

Mike Reid, photo above, who spends his days in the hot sun directing traffic through the construction on Hwy 47 between Stouffville Road and Bloomington Road, cools off by sucking water from a damp T-shirt. Reid dips the shirt in a bucket of water prior to putting it over his head. Photo at left, the widening of the road (looking south towards Stouffville) continues and is expected to be finished sometime by the autumn of this year.

ROGER BELGRAVE
Staff Reporter

Shock and concern lingers after a tenant at a local trailer park was arrested following the sexual assault of a young girl.

According to York Regional Police, an 11-year-old Toronto girl was sexually assaulted in a trailer at Cedar Beach Park. The incident, which occurred last Saturday, was also videotaped by the assailant, police reported.

A 65-year-old Rexdale man and five year patron of the trailer park was charged with sexual assault, invitation to sexual touching and two counts of sexual interference.

Officers have seized 49 video tapes and two photo albums containing explicit pornographic shots of 11 or 12-year-old girls. The photographs show young female victims in sexual poses and sexual acts.

The park, with some 540 trailer and camp sites, caters mostly to families, said operator Audrey Davies.

When police arrived on the property to investigate, the news came as a shock to the close-knit park community, she said.

Police are asking for the public's help in identifying the girls in videos and photographs. Anyone knowing of a child that might have been victimized is asked to contact police at 773-1221.

Tina Pereira is part of a group of relatives that spend their summers at the park. Her family has enjoyed the facilities for the last two summers, she said.

"The kids, they really like it here," she commented. "We go home and the kids want to come back right away."

Pereira has eight and 12-year-old daughters and a 16-year-old son. Upon hearing the news, Pereira immediately contacted the police.

"I wanted to show them a picture. I wanted to find out (if my daugh-

ters were in the material)," she said. However, police had yet to return the mother's telephone call.

So far, the experience has had some effect on the children, she indicated. "Our kids are affected because they're friends with these little children. They know them."

Odilia Pereira has two daughters of her own, aged 14 and 11. But she refuses to let the recent events spoil her perception of the picturesque park where her family has spent three summers.

"It's a family park, it's nice and quiet here," she explained.

"This is something that could happen anywhere, no matter where you live. It's just a shame because (the owners) do such a good job," said Pereira.

For more on this story, please see page 3

Sainsbury to make decision on Monday

Mayor Fran Sainsbury is scheduled to announce whether she will run in the upcoming November election early next week.

The mayor has spent two terms in office since winning a landslide decision in the 1985 election. She was first elected to town council in 1982.

Her only political defeat has come at the provincial level in 1990. Sainsbury was vying for the Liberal nomination in Markham, riding, but was upset by Markham regional councillor Frank Scarpitti.

The mayor is expected to bring an end to all the rumors and conjecture at a press conference in her home Monday morning.

Attewell happy with party 'solidarity' at Tory conference

ENZO DI MATTEO
Staff Reporter

Leadership review may not be on the lips of most Metro-area Progressive Conservatives, but the question of Brian Mulroney's leadership is on the minds of many party faithful.

Reports of widespread dissension within the Tory party, primarily over Mulroney's low standing in public opinion polls, repeatedly surfaced at the party's policy convention, which ended in Toronto last Saturday.

While most of the PC faithful said the reports are unfounded, newspapers ran accounts of convention delegates talking about erosion within the party and

the isolation the rank and file feel from the leadership.

None of that feeling was evident at a recent barbecue for the Prime Minister at the home of Markham-Whitchurch-Stouffville MP Bill Attewell.

Marjorie Nielsen, president of the Markham-Whitchurch-Stouffville PC Riding Association, said the party still enjoys "a good measure of support" in this area, despite some dramatic inroads made by the populist Reform Party.

"A lot of people are concerned" about the party's low standing in public opinion polls, Nielsen said. She speculated, however, that more voters,

including conservatives that have recently abandoned the party, will opt for the PC's when the economy improves and the next federal election is called in 1993.

Nielsen said the Markham-Whitchurch-Stouffville association, which signed 3,500 members when it was first established in February 1988, currently counts about 600 paid members, almost 300 of which are recent recruits.

"There's a awful lot more dissension than you'd ever believe," said Stouffville's Ged Stonehouse, a Reform Party spokesperson and former PC supporter. "Things are so bad that they need to project this very positive outward image. If even the slightest

dissension is shown, what's left? They would self-destruct."

MP Attewell, however, rejects the notion the party is divided over Mulroney. He said a major reason for the policy conference was for the party leadership to hear the concerns of the rank and file.

"We have a good number of conservatives across the country that have genuine concerns about the party," he said.

"But it's the parties that do stick together that win elections."

"I thought there would be the odd criticism," said Attewell, who attended the convention. "But I was amazed how genuine the solidarity was."

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