

# Reporter asked to leave Turner's office

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Steve LeBlanc was escorted out of Turner's Main Street campaign office by a security guard — who wouldn't give his name or a reason for the dismissal.

It's presumed the move — coming just before the polls closed at 9:30 p.m. — is backlash for the paper's endorsement of Raitt last Wednesday.

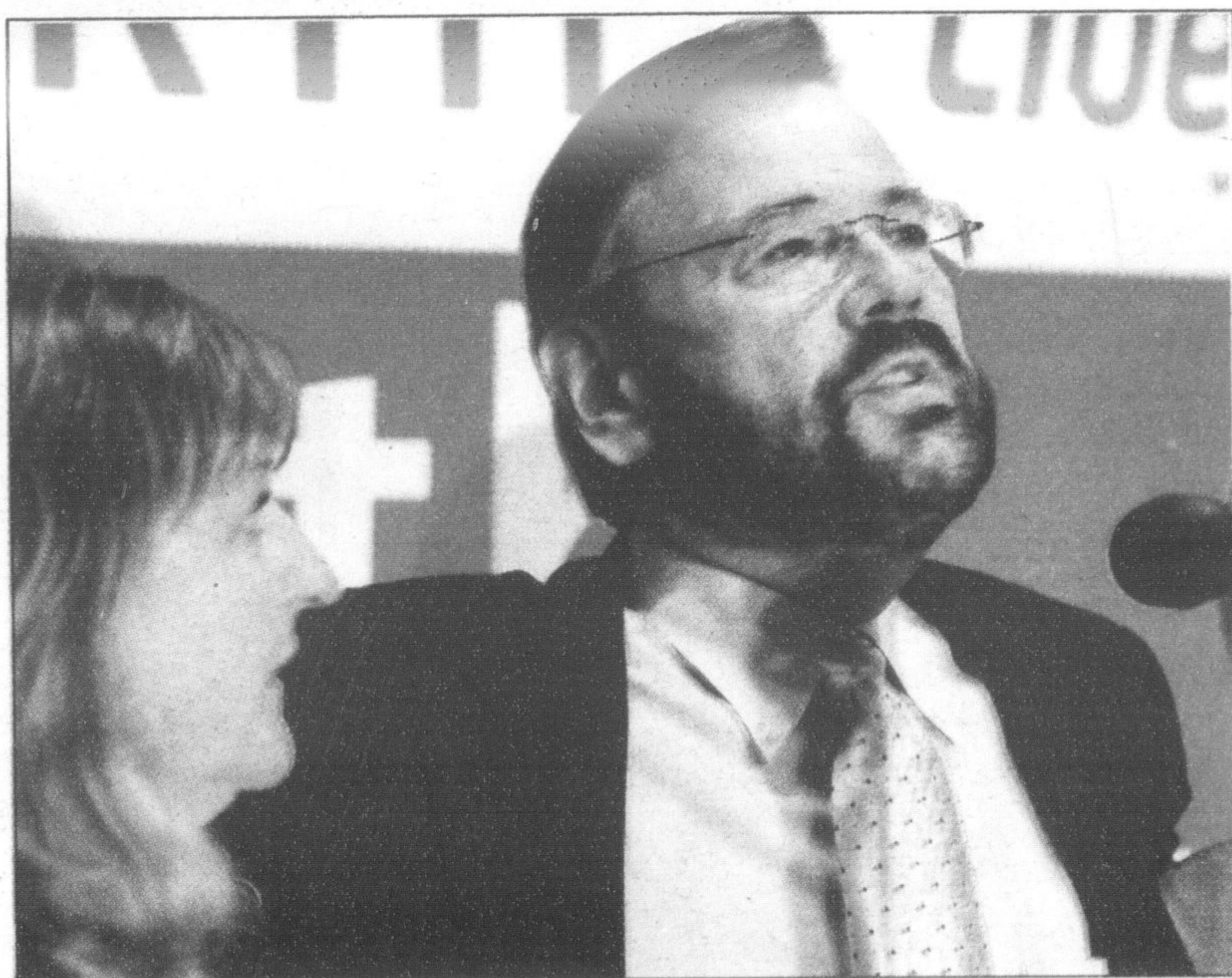
When asked if he could call later in the night for comments, Turner's campaign manager, Esther Shaye, simply replied, "You can call tomorrow."

Conceding defeat shortly before 11 p.m., Turner characterized the campaign as "very competitive" in his address to supporters and media.

"This was a grudge match. Stephen Harper's fingerprints were all over this," he said, amidst dejected chants from his inner circle of followers.

Arriving at election headquarters just after 9 p.m., Turner told reporters that it had been a spirited race and that the Conservatives had "thrown everything they have at me."

Those comments refer to Harper's appointment of Raitt, who was criticized by Turner for being handpicked by the prime minister rather than being allowed to be



NIKKI WESLEY / METROLAND MEDIA GROUP

Campaign manager Esther Shaye looks on as Garth Turner addresses the crowd.

voted for by members of the Halton Conservatives.

Speaking to a television news reporter upon his arrival last night, the rogue politician said he felt the negativity surrounding Halton's election had had minimal impact on voters.

"People here have lives and they have real concerns," he said.

As far as his party's platform was concerned, Turner did admit midway through the campaign that while Stephane Dion's Green Shift

plan made sense on two fronts — curbing pollution and giving families a tax cut — it may take a while for people to absorb.

Offering a personal assessment of the last two-and-a-half years, the ousted MP said, "I didn't take the easy road. I didn't accept the neo-Conservative party of Stephen Harper."

Steve LeBlanc can be reached at sleblanc@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

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