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NDP sweeps riding

STELLA YEADON
 Correspondent

Durham-York saw orange on September 6, as voters in the riding elected Larry O'Connor as their first NDP member to Queen's Park. It was also a first for O'Connor, a General Motors employee running in his first election. He unseated Liberal incumbent Bill Ballinger who was elected during the Liberal sweep in 1987. In his victory speech an obviously shaken O'Connor regained composure and quipped "do you know what NDP stands for? No David Peterson."

David Peterson lost his own London Centre seat to NDP Marion Boyd and promptly resigned as leader of the Ontario Liberals.

As the polls closed and early results were announced to the more than 50 volunteers present at Mr. O'Connor's campaign headquarters in Uxbridge the mood went from anxious disbelief to total jubilation. And as more poll results came in it became evident that the swing

Provincial anti-Liberal swing ousts Bill Ballinger as O'Connor rides NDP tide

toward the new democrats province wide was also going to hit Durham-York.

"I started to sense that there was a real possibility we could take the seat when knocking on doors in the riding. People invited me into their home and told how dissatisfied they are with all levels of government. They told me how they wanted something to happen and tonight they went out and voted for it," said an excited O'Connor shortly after he was declared the winner at 9:45 with 12,551 votes.

With the suggestion this was not a

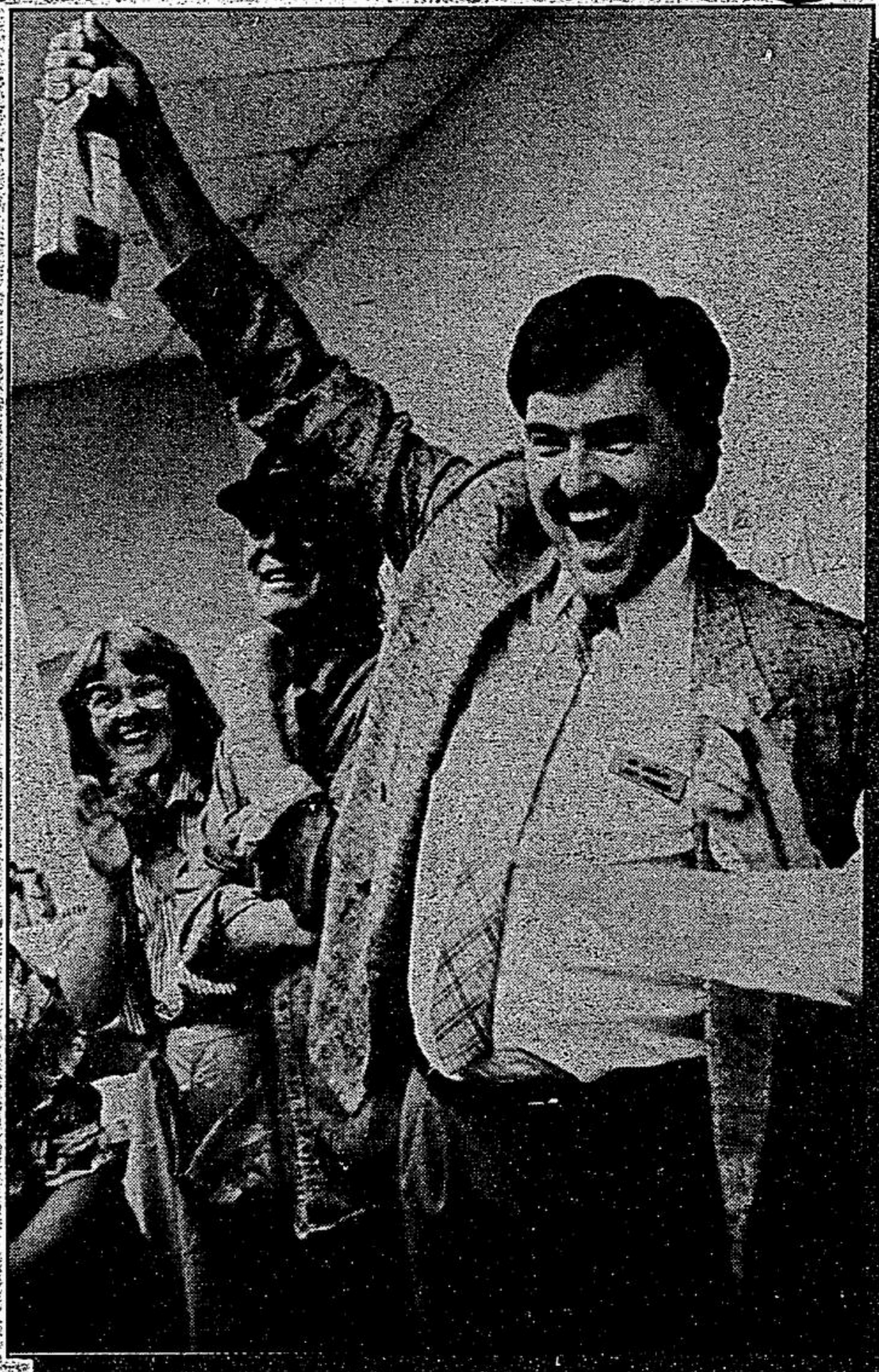
pro-NDP vote but rather a protest vote against the Peterson government, O'Connor retorted "this was a vote for fairness."

Whitchurch-Stouffville Councillor Jim Sanders, a Larry O'Connor supporter who was in attendance at the NDP Uxbridge headquarters said "that people have been coming on our side from the beginning of the campaign. People that have been Tories all their life told me they were casting a vote for the NDP." Sanders also dispels the suggestion this was a gut reaction by the voters that will not translate into vote the next election.

"The NDP have been laying out their agenda for decades, it has been a clear unwavering agenda. Voters have been wondering where other parties are coming from while we have had a consistent policy for many years," added Sanders.

"There is justice in the world," said Laurie Cooke of Wilfrid whose family has a long history of NDP support. "My grandfather helped found the CCF and he told my mother she would never see an NDP government in this province."

O'Connor said he is not sure what his role will be in the new 77 seat NDP majority government headed by leader Bob Rae, except to say that new schools for his riding and improved education funding are issues he will personally champion.



Photo/ANNETTE BUCHKOWSKI

Victorious

Larry O'Connor hails the crowd after his unexpected upset over incumbent Liberal Bill Ballinger in Uxbridge on Thursday night. O'Connor won by more than 1,300 votes.

O'Connor victory evident early

TRACY KIBBLE
 Staff Reporter

The orange wave that swept Ontario Thursday night forced a defeated Premier David Peterson to step down as leader of the province and the Liberal party.

The New Democrats humiliated the Liberals after Peterson called the early election 40 days ago. The irony: Peterson had nearly two years left to govern Ontario.

A conquering majority, the NDP party captured 74 of the 130 seats; the Liberals trailed behind at 36, while the Progressive Conservatives lagged behind with 20 seats.

The Sept. 6 election will go down in Ontario's political history with Bob Rae as the first NDP leader to govern this province.

It will also be the first time an Ontario provincial government has

taken power with less than 40 per cent of the total vote.

Meanwhile, Durham-York electors have joined the orange sweep, abandoning Liberal incumbent Bill

Ballinger to new NDP candidate and victor of this riding, Larry O'Connor of Sunderland.

O'Connor, a GM employee, swept

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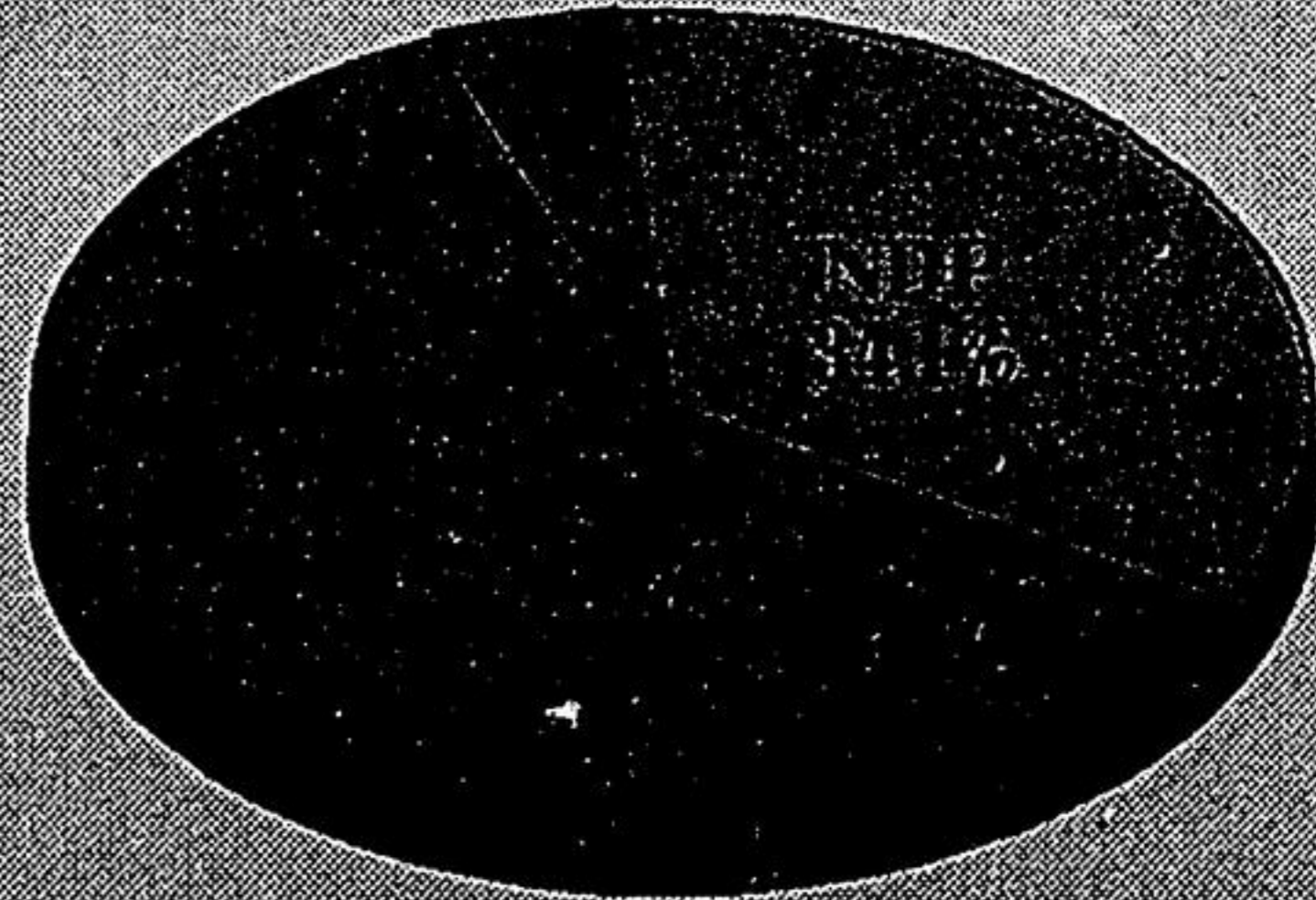
Photo/ANNETTE BUCHKOWSKI

A dejected Bill Ballinger looks on as the results of Thursday night's election come in to his campaign headquarters. Ballinger learned early on his hopes for re-election were to be dashed.



Durham-York Results

Percentage of total votes won by each party in Sept. 6 election in Durham-York.



TOTAL VOTES:
36,790