

OFL Statement

JACK LAYTON: FIGHTER FOR WORKING PEOPLE

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“Love is better than anger. Hope is better than fear. Optimism is better than despair.” – Jack Layton

LABOUR MOVEMENT REMAINS INSPIRED BY NDP LEADER

Ontario’s labour movement is still reeling with shock and sadness at the passing of NDP Leader Jack Layton, but his relentless optimism and sunny hope continue to provide inspiration.

“Jack was a giant of a leader. His compassion, idealism, intellect and wisdom helped to shape Canada,” said OFL President Sid Ryan. “He was a fighter whose progressive vision cut against cynicism and inspired many that change was possible.”

Both as a university professor and politician, Jack distinguished himself through his activism on economic justice, human rights, homelessness, aboriginal issues, health care, environment, AIDS, poverty, violence against women and public transportation. However, he has become best known as the NDP Leader who doubled the party’s electoral success and transformed the NDP into the Official Opposition for the first time in history. Battling cancer and recovering from hip surgery, Jack led the party to unprecedented success this year, riding a wave of optimism that has the potential to unite the country.

Jacks’ positive message resonated with ordinary people who have dreams of a better life and his unswerving vision for economic and social justice prompted millions of people to have hope for themselves and their children’s’ future.

“We are so deeply saddened at this loss of such an inspiring fighter for working people. He was an incomparable leader and human being and we shall miss him greatly,” said Ryan. “Our deepest condolences go out to Jack’s partner, Olivia Chow, his family and his NDP colleagues, whom constitute his ‘second family.’”

Layton died on August 22, 2011, aged 61, after suffering from another bout of cancer. He passed away early Monday at his home surrounded by his family and loved ones.

The Lying-in-State for Jack takes place in the foyer of the House of Commons in Ottawa from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 25. You can also pay tribute to Jack as he lies in repose at Toronto City Hall on Friday, August 26 from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and on Saturday, August 27 beginning at 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. The funeral service will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 27, 2011, at Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto. For more information on the State Funeral or to convey condolences to Mr. Layton’s family, visit www.commemoration.gc.ca<<http://www.commemoration.gc.ca>>.

The OFL share’s Jack’s dedication to a fair, equitable and prosperous Canada and we will continue to draw inspiration from his fighting spirit.

Sid Ryan
President

Marie Kelly
Secretary-Treasurer

Terry Downey
Executive Vice-President