

**BCFED NEWS RELEASE**

August 22, 2011

**** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ******Statement from the B.C. Federation of Labour on passing of Jack Layton**

British Columbians awoke this morning to discover one of the most inspiring and visionary leaders of our country, NDP leader Jack Layton, had passed away in the early hours of the morning, at home surrounded by his family.

Today, British Columbians from all walks of life will be sending our condolences and support to his family, colleagues and close friends.

We join with millions of Canadians across Canada to mourn the loss of a leader that inspired people in a time of cynicism, who believed in a Canada that could be better for everyone, who displayed personal and political courage on a daily basis.

It was under his leadership that the New Democratic Party (NDP) once again became a political force on the federal political landscape. This was doubly true in British Columbia where Jack inherited a Party with only two seats and struggling to remain relevant. Jack visited BC numerous times, both during elections and at many other times as well, encouraging people to run for the Party, inspiring people to volunteer and rebuild the belief in winning again.


His hard work paid off. He was elected Leader in 2003 and in 2004 more than doubled their seats to five MPs in British Columbia. In 2006, the NDP doubled its seats again, winning 10 ridings. The Party suffered a setback in 2008, losing a seat but rebounded in the most recent election climbing to 12 MPS from our province.

Under Jack's leadership, the NDP rose from third party status to become, for the first time in history, the official opposition in Canada. This would not have been possible without the support of Quebec, where Jack also led the NDP to an historic breakthrough.

Jim Sinclair, President of the B.C. Federation of Labour responded to the sad news by saying, "Jack leaves a legacy that is a challenge for all of us who believe, as he did, that Canada needed to be the best country in the world, to the benefit of all Canadians, not just a few."

On behalf of the Officers and members of the B.C. Federation of Labour, we again send our sincere condolences to his family, friends and colleagues. He will be missed by millions.

-30-

JS/mp

0500-11pr-js-layton

**B.C. Federation of Labour** www.bcfed.ca