

August 23, 2011

Our Friend Jack

The loss of a friend gives cause for reflection about life and what it can bring. Jack Layton was our friend and he had been so for many years. For as long as I can remember, he was always by our side.

Workplace Visits

Each year, Jack and his partner, Olivia Chow, made a point of visiting the South Central plant in Toronto and other postal facilities. Workers were happy to talk with them about what was happening in their lives. These encounters were friendly and an expression of solidarity. On Labour Day, who was always there to walk with us and shake our hand? Olivia and Jack. He was one of us.

Common Struggles

Jack was by our side in all labour and political battles we waged in recent years. He was there when we fought against Bills C-14 and C-44 on deregulating international mail. He was there to support our position during the strategic review of the postal service.

And he was there again, to the end, condemning Bill C-6, the back-to-work legislation. Let us remember his passionate speech against this unnecessary, unjust and anti-democratic legislation. His voice and that of all New Democratic Party MPs are still resonating with us. With their support, we shared the issues at stake in our struggle with everyone across the country. It was an unprecedented political victory.

We Will Continue The Struggle

We now owe it to Jack to remember. We must continue to fight for decent jobs, benefits and pension plans for all workers, now and in the future. That is our commitment.

In his last message to Canadians, Jack wrote:

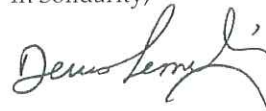
"My friends, love is better than anger. Hope is better than fear. Optimism is better than despair. So let us be loving, hopeful and optimistic. And we'll change the world."

We must never forget this message and cherish it because it is the very essence of our struggle. We fight not only for ourselves, but also for those who will come after us.

Thank you, Jack, and farewell!

The struggle continues.

In Solidarity,



Denis Lemelin
National President

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