

Making our communities safer

NDP **BACKGROUNDER**

Even with Canada's overall crime declining, upsetting trends in gang and handgun violence are threatening many people's most basic sense of security. But Stephen Harper's narrow focus on locking up offenders as long as possible has come at the expense of change that could prevent crime and make our communities safer.

More guns are being smuggled onto our streets from the US, and innocent bystanders have too often been their victims. While gang activity has festered, successive Prime Ministers have failed to address the poverty, despair and addiction that feed it. They have ignored crime prevention and haven't even ensured that there are enough police officers to respond day-to-day.

It doesn't have to be this way.

You and your family have a right to feel safe and secure—it's time for a Prime Minister who will make you his priority. A Prime Minister who will get guns off our streets and make sure our communities have the tools they need to prevent crime.

Jack Layton will be that Prime Minister.

Don't let them tell you it can't be done.

**Jack
Layton**
NDP



Stephen Harper can't be trusted.

- His very first federal budget cut \$55-million from employment programs that offer hope to young people—but increased spending on the care and custody of federal inmates by \$72-million.
- Despite flagging gun violence as a top national priority, he has not taken the firm steps needed to stem the flood of illegal handguns smuggled from the United States.
- After committing to put 2,500 more police officers on the beat in our communities, his delays have drawn criticism from three national policing organizations.
- He consistently pursues measures that are about enacting vengeance on offenders—not about instituting change that will actually make our communities safer.

Stéphane Dion is not the change we need.

- With Dion at the cabinet table, previous Liberal governments left the RCMP without enough trained officers to protect our communities; and they cut support for affordable housing, training, and other programs that build hope and make communities stronger. That's not the change we need.

Jack Layton's New Democrats: Safer, stronger communities.

This election, Jack Layton and his team of New Democrats will present a plan to strengthen our communities and make them safer. Layton's team has led the way in Parliament:

- Proposed a 3-point **National Youth Safety Strategy** to prevent youth crime, develop strong youth leaders, and provide care for children—especially by supporting proven local initiatives.
- Released a **plan to curb handgun violence** that includes more police officers, stronger witness protection, stable funding for proven prevention programs; and a Canada-US Summit on handgun smuggling.
- Challenged the Harper government to fulfill its promise to create **more spaces for RCMP recruits** in order to provide adequate community-based policing.
- Demanded funding for drug-treatment, counselling, training and community support to ensure **prisoners' successful re-integration** into society.
- Countered Harper's US-style war on drugs with a **"four pillars"** approach that blends education, treatment, enforcement and harm reduction.
- Forced a series of parliamentary hearings to lay groundwork for a **comprehensive anti-poverty strategy** that would address social causes of crime.