

# Dignity for Canada's seniors

NDP **BACKGROUNDER**

**Instead of retiring in dignity**, a quarter-million of the seniors who built this country are struggling in poverty—and more and more middle-income retired couples have trouble making ends meet. Knowing that seniors will soon form a quarter of our population, it's time for change to ensure real retirement security.

After years of broken commitments to make life more affordable, the average family's savings rate has collapsed and only a privileged few can count on employer pensions anymore. But despite the crisis in retirement security, no Prime Minister has undertaken a review of seniors' income needs in 40 years. Soaring costs for medications, housing and other essentials deepen the strain. And Ottawa's failure to expand long-term and home-care choices means too many seniors face devastating waits in acute-care hospital beds.

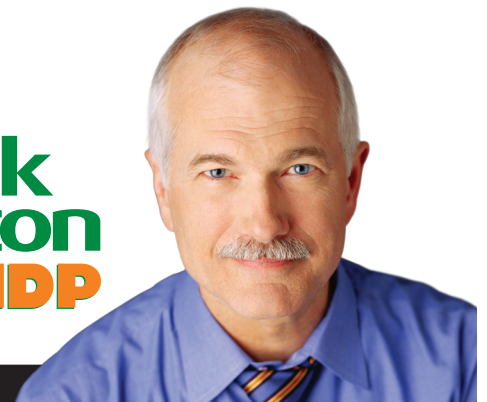
It doesn't have to be this way.

It's time for a Prime Minister who will put you and your family first. A Prime Minister who will ensure dignity and economic security for every senior in their retirement years.

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.

- Even after admitting that CPP/OAS pensioners were short-changed from 2001-2006 by \$1-billion due to an accounting error, he refused to repay seniors their missing pension amounts.
- Instead of investing in seniors' income security, he squandered \$50-billion on reckless corporate tax cuts—and the few measures he did implement disproportionately favour wealthier seniors.
- Even after Parliament voted to adopt the NDP Seniors Charter in June 2006, Harper refused to adopt its measures to help ensure secure housing, income and health care for retired Canadians.
- Even after Parliament voted to adopt the NDP Veterans First Motion in November 2006, Harper refused to implement its fixes to unfair pension restrictions imposed on Canadian Forces vets and their families.

## Stephane Dion is not the change we need.

- By instructing Liberal MPs to skip key votes, he rubber-stamped Harper's plan to squander \$50-billion on corporate tax cuts instead of investing to make life more secure for today's seniors.
- With Dion at the cabinet table, Liberal governments had years to invest in an income-security and long-term care strategy for Canada's seniors—but delivered record-breaking corporate tax cuts instead. That's not the change we need.

## Jack Layton's New Democrats: Dignity and respect for seniors.

This election, Jack Layton and his team of New Democrats will present a plan that honours the contributions that seniors make to this country. And Layton's team has been leading the way in Parliament.

- Led a national campaign for **fair repayment of \$1-billion withheld from CPP/OAS** pension cheques between 2001 and 2006 after an accounting error.
- Secured all-party support for the **NDP Seniors Charter** enshrining every Canadian senior's right to secure income, adequate housing and quality health care.
- Over Harper's objections, secured Parliament's majority approval for the **NDP Veterans First Motion** calling for an end to unfair rules preventing veterans and their widows from receiving hard-earned pensions and home-care benefits.
- To offer seniors dignity and comfort in retirement, promoted strategies to create more **long-term care** spaces and expand **home-care** coverage—and tabled motions to expand CPP/EI coverage to support those caring for family members at home.
- Tabled bills and motions to launch an **annual review of income security** for seniors, and to **protect pensions** by ending employer underfunding and securing pensions if employers go bankrupt.