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ARCTIC INFRASTRUCTURE KEY TO PROTECT SOVEREIGNTY

***Layton calls for a portion of surplus to be
invested in northern infrastructure***

IQALUIT – NDP Leader Jack Layton called on Prime Minister Harper to use a portion of the higher-than-forecast, multi-billion federal surplus to invest in much needed northern community infrastructure, such as a deep-water port in Iqaluit. Layton made the announcement following a meeting with Nunavut Premier Paul Okalik and a tour of the community with Iqaluit Mayor, Elisapee Sheutiapik.

“Yesterday, I was in Montreal where the downtown core was literally crumbling due to years of Liberal neglect and Conservative indifference toward infrastructure,” said Layton. “Today, I’m hearing first-hand from officials in Nunavut that economic opportunities are being squandered because of the lack of federal infrastructure investment. In communities right across Canada, there is a dangerous infrastructure deficit and it’s time the Harper Conservatives showed leadership on community investment.”

Layton endorsed the Northern premiers’ bold new vision for Canada’s Arctic communities. The report, A Northern Vision, calls on the federal government to help create a “prosperous, sustainable and secure North”.

“Nunavut is facing significant economic challenges in the coming years. Protecting our northern sovereignty means investing in our northern communities’ infrastructure. We have the fiscal capacity in Canada. All that is needed is the leadership to get the job done,” said Layton.

In the next four days, Layton will travel to five arctic communities with Northern Development Critic Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic) and Aboriginal Affairs Critic Jean Crowder (Nanaimo-Cowichan), meeting with political and community leaders, participating in traditional feasts and seeing first hand the challenges and opportunities facing the North.

***For more information:
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