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THE HONOURABLE SERGE JOYAL, P.C.

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONCLUDED

Speech by:

The Honourable Diane Bellemare

Wednesday, December 11, 2019

THE SENATE

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[Translation]

THE HONOURABLE SERGE JOYAL, P.C.

INQUIRY—DEBATE CONCLUDED

Hon. Diane Bellemare: Dear Senator Joyal, I will use the little time I have to speak about a few of your many and wonderful contributions by providing some personal anecdotes that I will remember for a very long time.

Our colleague, Senator Joyal, is a rather gifted orator. When Senator Joyal rises to critique a bill, he manages, most of the time, to sow doubt in the minds of his colleagues from all groups, and especially those who might vote in favour of a bill. You are a formidable debater. At one point in time, when I was a new senator, I was told several times, “above all, do not listen to him.” In fact, the courts often agreed with him.

A few weeks after I arrived in the Senate, Senator Joyal spoke to me and said: “You know, Senator Bellemare, the Senate of Canada was not always as partisan as it is today. There was a time when the senators of the two political parties enjoyed rather cordial relations.” And then you handed me your book entitled *Protecting Canadian Democracy: The Senate You Never Knew*.

I read and reread that book, which outlines your contribution and that of other experts who have explored the Senate as a subject. I see that book as part of the enormous contribution you’ve made to the Senate. It is a book that will continue to follow you, as it remains relevant to this day.

You’re also leaving the Senate with a number of material artistic contributions, as other senators have pointed out. Of course I’m thinking of the Salon de la Francophonie, as well as the collection of Indigenous works of art currently adorning the walls of the Senate. Those are the two most interesting collections. Every time I look at them, I can’t help but think of the special moments when you, Senator Joyal, personally presented those collections to my step-son, the artist David Altmejd, and I was lucky enough to be in attendance. That is when I saw you differently, as a passionate man who believes deeply in the influence of France and Indigenous people on our everyday lives here in our Canada.

I want to conclude by talking about your involvement in the Musée d’art de Joliette. You gave this city its very own tourist attraction, and this is dear to me because my family plot is there. Thank you, senator, for your generosity. I admire you a great deal. I know how passionate you are about the arts, culture and politics, so I’m sure that you will not be retiring any time soon. I wish you good health and, above all, I hope you continue to surprise us. I look forward to maybe having a coffee with you in the Marais, a neighbourhood of Paris that I love, just like you. Thank you.
