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THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

Tribute to Her Excellency Michaëlle Jean

Statement by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

Wednesday, September 28, 2005

THE SENATE

Wednesday, September 28, 2005

[*Translation*]

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

TRIBUTE TO HER EXCELLENCY MICHAËLLE JEAN

Hon. Claudette Tardif: Honourable senators, I rise today knowing that you will join me in extending our most heartfelt congratulations to the new Governor General, the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, on her installation as the 27th Governor General of Canada.

Madame Jean's personal background as well as her many talents and achievements as a teacher, frontline advocate for the less well-off and journalist make her an excellent choice for a position requiring that one represent Canadian society, forge links with all Canadians and build stronger identity and unity across Canada.

[*English*]

As a woman, I am proud of Her Excellency's nomination to the Governor General's position. She becomes the third woman to occupy the position, after the Right Honourable Jeanne Sauvé and the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson. As with these two great women before her, Her Excellency will utilize her numerous talents, realizations and experiences for the greater good of the Canadian people and the Crown.

I believe that Her Excellency, through her years of involvement in social issues, her extraordinary personal story and her talents, will fulfil remarkably well her functions as Her Majesty's representative in Canada and as head of state. She embodies the values Canada holds dearest to its heart: tolerance, equality of chances, cultural diversity and linguistic duality, and the respect of individuals' basic rights and freedoms.

[*Translation*]

As a French-speaking immigrant woman, she will represent and give a voice to the people of Canada in general, and to those who are vulnerable and marginalized in particular. I believe that she will be able to help strengthen ties between all Canadians and promote a greater sense of pride in our country and our Canadian identity and a greater sense of belonging.

I am sure that, as a francophone, a Quebecer and a Canadian, Madame Jean will provide a voice for francophones across the country as well as for the various groups that have added their voices over the years to that of our founding people.

Honourable senators, I believe that the appointment of Her Excellency reflects the values that all Canadians hold dear and ought to be applauded and supported by all.