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THE LATE JOHN BRIAN PATRICK “PAT” QUINN,
O.C., O.B.C.

Statement by:

The Honourable Larry W. Campbell

Tuesday, November 25, 2014

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THE LATE JOHN BRIAN PATRICK “PAT” QUINN, O.C., O.B.C.

Hon. Larry W. Campbell: Honourable senators, a British Columbia treasure who was born in Ontario died on Sunday night. John Brian Patrick Quinn left us way too soon. Pat Quinn was a teacher, a winner, a lawyer, a stay-at-home defenceman and a gentleman. He was born in Hamilton, Ontario, and epitomized a steel town boy. He told me once how proud he was of his family roots in Steel City and how his grandfather was a firefighter when the engines were still horse drawn. Most of all, he was proud of his Irish heritage.

Pat was a giant of a man who started his pro career with the Tulsa Oilers in the 1960s. A classic stay-at-home defenceman, he rarely scored, but you entered his zone at your peril. The great Bobby Orr learned this once when he came in with his head down, and the Mighty Quinn levelled him and stretched him out on the ice.

It was noted that afterwards, while in Boston for this same game, he was told by the team to go get beer because he was the rookie. So he went to a bar in Boston, after knocking out Bobby Orr, ordered a beer, at which time the people in the bar came over and he was afraid it was going to be fight night. But as he pointed out, it was an Irish bar in an Irish town, so everything went well for him.

After his playing days ended, he coached the Philadelphia Flyers, the Los Angeles Kings, the Vancouver Canucks, the Edmonton Oilers and the Toronto Maple Leafs. He took teams to the Stanley Cup playoffs twice. He coached Team Canada to gold

medals in the 2002 Winter Olympics, the World U18 and the World Juniors, but his greatest success was with the Vancouver Canucks. He took a franchise that was at the bottom, was probably going to be sold, and moved it from that point to losing in Game 7 against the New York Rangers in the Stanley Cup finals.

Pat Quinn loved the Vancouver Canucks, and Vancouver loved Pat Quinn. He coached almost all of today's stars at one time or another in international events, and he was simply incredible with young players. He believed that a coach should let the players play. He believed in the enjoyment and the fun of hockey, and I was honoured to know him. I was honoured to smoke the forbidden cigar with him on the golf course, sworn to secrecy until this time.

We, as Canadians, were honoured to have him in our midst. I want to thank his wife Sandra and his daughters Valerie and Kalli for sharing him with us.

I leave you with this:

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
And the rains fall soft upon your fields,
And, until we meet again,
May God hold you in the hollow of His hand.

Rest in peace, my friend.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.