



HONOURABLE JODY WILSON-RAYBOULD
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT *for* VANCOUVER GRANVILLE

April 2, 2019

Members of the National Liberal Caucus
c/o Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia, M.P.
Chair, National Liberal Caucus
413 Justice Building
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Colleagues:

Re: Commitment to the Values, Principles, and Priorities of the Liberal Party of Canada

I am writing to all of you, members of the Liberal Caucus, to share some of my thoughts and observations about recent events and what they mean for us as a Party. I hope they are helpful to you.

There were many reasons I ran for the Liberal Party of Canada in 2015, including commitments on addressing climate change, the challenges of our criminal justice system, Indigenous reconciliation, and building an economy that supported all Canadians. For me, and I believe for our Party, all of these progressive policy commitments had underlying them a firm belief in the need for a transformation in our political culture, and the pursuit of a more responsive, representative, and less partisan approach to the governing of the country.

This commitment to a changed politics was not just about specific policies, such as proportional representation, but about every aspect of how we organize ourselves to govern, and the responsibilities that each of us carry. We committed to break old and cynical patterns of centralizing power in the hands of a few unelected staffers, the marginalization of hundreds of Members of Parliament with expertise and insights to offer, and the practice of governing in the shadows, out of sight of Canadians. I believed we were going to uphold the highest standards that support the public interest, and not simply make choices to create partisan advantage.

As part of committing to this transformative and progressive path, we were also committing to a government and caucus that represented all Canadians. Diverse and inclusive, our Caucus was to be a microcosm of Canada – not just geographically, but demographically. Indeed, I believe we understood that to build a stronger Canada, we needed to reflect that Canada. This includes the challenges, opportunities, tensions, and insights that arise when seeking to forge a common path and understanding in a context of real diversity and difference. This is a vision that reflects the future. Young people identify in dozens of different ways before they identify with a political party – and they privilege diversity of experience, background, and belief and upholding the experiences of all, over simply following the paths laid out with those who claim to hold power.

I still believe all of these things as I know all of you do, too. I believe it is what the country needs, and I believe our collective future well-being as a country demands action on such a vision. And indeed, one of the main reasons I had no hesitation to stand up for what I believed to be right and necessary for the country since September 2018 regarding SNC-Lavalin was because of my belief in that vision.

In 2015, I believed the Liberal Party held such a vision, and I still believe the Liberals can and must advance such a vision. I do believe fundamentally that the Prime Minister also still shares this vision.

Now I know many of you are angry, hurt, and frustrated. And frankly so am I, and I can only speak for myself. I am angry, hurt, and frustrated because I feel and believe I was upholding the values that we all committed to. In giving the advice I did, and taking the steps I did, I was trying to help protect the Prime Minister and the government from a horrible mess. I am not the one who tried to interfere in sensitive proceedings, I am not the one who made it public, and I am not the one who publicly denied what happened. But I am not going to go over all of the details here again. Enough has been said.

Growing up as an Indigenous person in this country I learned long ago the lesson that people believing what they wish about you does not, and cannot ever, make it the truth – rather than letting authority be the truth, let the truth be the authority. Indeed, if I had succumbed to interpreting the beliefs of others to be the truth, I never would have been able to push forward in the face of the racism and misogyny that far too many Indigenous women, and others, still experience every day.

Ultimately the choice that is before you is about what kind of party you want to be a part of, what values it will uphold, the vision that animates it, and indeed the type of people it will attract and make it up.

If indeed our caucus is to be a microcosm of the country it is about whether we are a caucus of inclusion or exclusion; of dialogue and searching for understanding or shutting out challenging views and perspectives; and ultimately of the old ways of doing business, or new ones that look to the future.

As I have stated recently to the constituents of Vancouver Granville, it has been my great privilege to serve as their Member of Parliament over the past three and a half years and to continue to have their confidence. With the support, guidance, and participation of Canadians our government has accomplished much – and, of course, there is important work yet to be done. My nomination has been confirmed and it is my intention to stand for re-election as the Liberal candidate for the 2019 federal election and to continue with this work.

Respectfully,



Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould, P.C., Q.C., M.P.
Member of Parliament for Vancouver Granville