

Mr. Chancellor,
Members of the Board of Governors,
Distinguished members of the Senate and of the
Academic Council,
Dear Students,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am certain that I speak on behalf of Dr. Bastarache, Dr. Doiron, Dr. Fulton and Mr. LeBlanc when I express to you my gratitude for this privilege of receiving a Doctorate honoris causa, especially since this honour is being conferred by the University of Moncton.

In many respects, the University of Moncton symbolizes the vitality and determination of the Acadian people, who have never been so alive, so vigorous, so much the masters of their own destinies, and consequently, so assertive and so active as they are today.

The history of the University of Moncton has been intertwined with the history of Acadia, and is now one of its finest institutions. Back in the nineteenth century, through a spirit of dedication and sacrifice whose importance could never be overestimated, a network of institutions was established that has been the centre of gravity of Acadian society and the mooring-point of its élite. Let us not forget that the University of Moncton is their direct descendant. As it prepares to enter its third decade, we must gain an appreciation of its past in order to gain a clearer vision of its vocation.

The word "university" expresses this eloquently: a university must tirelessly seek to embrace the universal while pushing back the frontiers of the unknown with the three beacons of transmission of knowledge, development of new knowledge and the perpetual questioning of knowledge, to use the famous words of Descartes. The supreme function of every university is thus the search for truth, unfettered by conformism, pressure or prejudice from without.