

UNIVERSITY NEWSBEAT

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PRESIDENT TALKS TO NEW STUDENTS

The following are remarks made recently by York President H. Ian Macdonald to new students at a variety of orientation events.

The other day, I was introduced to someone who, upon learning that I was at York University, remarked: "Ohyes—I know that place — it's where the Canadian Open Tennis Championships are played". Ironically, through the medium of television, more people can learn about the location of York University in a single week of August when the tournament is played than during a whole year as the result of our principal activities.

However, I do not see many tennis rackets in this room. Therefore, I presume that you are here to join a bright and lively campus of 24,000 students, 1,000 faculty, and 1,200 support staff who together account for one of the great achievements in Canadian educational history — the creation of a world-class university in just under twenty years. Let me illustrate why that is so.

Achievements

●The scientists I met at the Rockwell Science Centre in Los Angeles a few weeks ago are highly familiar with the achievements of our Centre for Research in Experimental Space Science.

●The members of the critics' workshop, representing critics of the fine arts from across Canada, came here a year ago because of the splendid reputation of our Faculty of Fine Arts.

●The founding Dean of our Faculty of Environmental Studies is currently working in Nairobi on the establishment of such a Faculty there to serve the whole of the African continent.

●When I met a distinguished visiting Israeli scholar recently, he told me that walking through our Political Science Departments and looking at the names of our scholars on the doors was like looking at the shelves of a library of scholarship in that field.

●When John Diefenbaker died last month, the scholar invited immediately by the CBC to describe the historical significance of that era was Professor Jack Granatstein of our Department of History.

●Although all the forecasts suggest limited opportunities for teachers over the next two decades, applications continue to pour in for places in our Faculty of Education because the students believe they will receive an invaluable educational experience even if they never teach.

●If you examine the sources of coaching strength and guidance behind Canada's great achievements in gymnastics, you will find Professor Bryce Taylor, founding Director of Athletics and Physical Education at York, and others from York have played a central role. So it is with York's coaching staff in so many other areas, and I

predict it will be the case with track and field when we open our new Centre on October 13.

●Whenever I visit Quebec, I meet individuals who know, understand, and appreciate the contributions of Glendon College to the vital Ontario-Quebec relationship.

●When I represented Canada at an international conference on comparative federalism, my Australian counterpart immediately began to sing the praises of Osgoode Hall Law School.

●To attend meetings today where prominent business and governmental officials meet is to hear success stories from our Faculty of Administrative Studies.

●It is impossible to undertake a discussion about education anywhere without hearing references to the distinctive role and remarkable accomplishments of Atkinson College in providing degree education for part-time students, with its own full-time faculty.

That is a mere sampling of the cornucopia of opportunity available to you here — I urge you to use it well. But what about the outlook? Whereas I hope your thoughts are focused principally on the opportunities of the next three or four years here in order to enjoy the privilege of a voyage of self-discovery, I would be surprised if you were not also wondering about the opportunities when you leave here. To follow public commentary in the media today is to be told that you are virtually wasting your time: there will be no jobs for university graduates in the 1980's. That involves two assumptions:

- that the forecast is correct;
- that you should come to university in order to get a job.

Let me tell you, as emphatically as I can, that I reject both assumptions, and deplore the fact that your generation is being misled by an army of gloom-mongers whose single objective, it would seem, appears to be the fulfillment of their prophecies of doom.

Stories

Let me refer to three events reported in the press recently:

- we were reminded that World War II began exactly forty years ago on September 3;
- the *Globe and Mail* carried a picture of its headline of 25 years ago reporting the first successful swim across Lake Ontario by a 16 year old woman, Marilyn Bell, and that headline read: "After 21 hours, \$50,000 possible?"
- at the same time, a headline over a story of local interest read: "Strike Averted as York Staff Ratifies Pact."

What do those three stories have in common, and what significance have they for you, embarking today on a university education?

First, you face a world of greater opportunity than ever

before. In discussing the first story with my 18 year old son and his prospects for the next five years, I told him how my father spent the five years between 18 and 23 years of age as a stretcher-bearer, carrying in corpses and bits and pieces of human beings, day-after-day, week-after-week, year-after-year. We have averted that prospect now for the past 35 years.

Second, I know that when Marilyn Bell pounded through the waves mile after mile, enshrouded in the eerie darkness of a cloudy night, she was driven by a force greater than \$50,000 — as was Roger Bannister when I watched him break the 4-minute mile barrier, also 25 years ago, Edmund Hilary in his determined conquest of Mount Everest, or Neil Armstrong in making the final machine-correcting human judgment that brought the Eagle to the moon's surface.

Third, we have just concluded, under the Ontario Labour Relations Act, a highly normal, rational collective bargaining process with the York University Staff Association leading to an agreement which was approved by over 95% of the union members. That negotiation was one of good faith and, I believe, mutual determination to reach a reasonable agreement without a disruptive strike. However, the newspaper reports throughout all contained the doomsday style: strike likely, strike deadline, likely disruption, even though events moved reasonably and sensibly. The final headline was characteristic of that chronic negative flavour — not "95% approve contract at York", but "strike averted". The pre-occupation seems always with the worst possibility rather than the more cheerful prospect.

Outlook Brighter

What the three stories have in common is their relationship to the two assumptions which I rejected:

- that universities are designed only to prepare people for jobs;
- that the job outlook in the 1980's is gloomy.

The outlook for you is infinitely brighter than 40 years ago; you should not be here only to enhance your chances of earning \$50,000 a year, though I believe there is nothing wrong with having that objective as well; do not succumb to the negative bias and misleading gloom that pervades the media and public discussion today. If we all believe the 1980's will be an economic disaster, that will surely be the case. In fact, I believe the 1980's will be characterized by shortages of people to fill every conceivable kind of job — or could be if we work to fulfill the opportunities that exist for our creative ingenuity. I invite you all to join us in saying to the public, to governments and to the media, that we are unwilling to accept the gloomy forecasts and we want economic policies in

Canada that will ensure growth, development, and enlarging opportunity. As Churchill once said of the doomsters: "Any fool can tell you what's wrong. Only a wise man can tell you what's right".

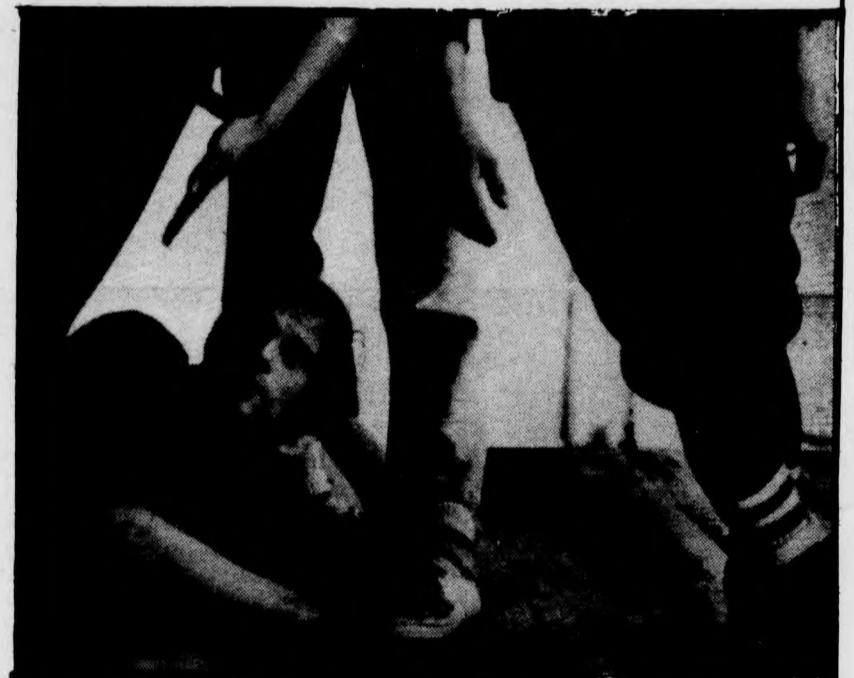
Not To Train

And that is why we have universities. Not to train for jobs, but to prepare men and women to be wise and to create a more humane world. Treat the university that way and you will not be disappointed.

One of my colleagues remarked to me recently that: "academic humour is no laughing matter." Neither is

discussion of universities today, for we do indeed face overwhelming financial difficulties. However, this is surely the time to test our fundamental belief and basic faith in universities. I believe that universities have never been more relevant or more necessary. Prepare a catalogue of all those national problems or ills that afflict us, and there is not one for which universities are unequipped to provide advice, assistance, or the eventual solution.

And so, I welcome you as the latest members of this university community, and I also welcome your family and friends. The university is a true community; your family and friends are welcome here at any time.



Douglas Dunn opens Edges Dance Series

DANCERS AT BURTON

Dance is big at Burton for the next two Wednesdays, featuring The Paula Ross Dancers on October 3, and Douglas Dunn on October 10.

The Paula Ross Dancers, a contemporary dance company who have performed widely in Canada since their formation in 1965, were most recently praised for their "ingenious display of personal involvement" during their performance at Simon Fraser University. All works presented by the troupe are choreographed by artistic director Paula Ross, winner of the

1977 Jean A. Chalmers Award for outstanding creative ability in dance.

Douglas Dunn opens the "Edges" dance series with the Canadian premiere of "Foot Rules," an experimental piece which has won critical acclaim in Europe and New York. Dunn combines an avant-garde, conceptual approach to dance with gymnastic and highly energetic performances.

Tickets, which are available from the Burton Auditorium Box Office, are \$6.50 for the general public, and \$4.50 for students. For reservations call 667-2370.

Sociologist Honoured at Atkinson Convocation

More than 400 Atkinson students will receive their degrees at the College's Convocation ceremony, which takes place this Saturday, September 29 starting at 10:30 a.m. on the podium level of the Ross Building.

At this same ceremony, an honorary Doctor of Laws (honoris causa) degree will be awarded to Professor Ralf Gustav Dahrendorf, noted sociologist and Director of the London School of Economics.

Prof. Dahrendorf, who graduated from the University of Hamburg and the London School

of Economics, has held many faculty positions in North American and European universities.

Prof. Dahrendorf, the author of many publications in the fields of sociology and administration, has served in the German government, and been decorated by Senegal, Luxembourg, Germany, Austria and Belgium.

Those attending the convocation should note that in the case of inclement weather, the ceremony will be moved to the Tait McKenzie Physical Education Centre.