



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Honorary Degree Citations The degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*, conferred on Dr. John Kerr Friday, October 6, 2000

Mr. Chancellor, it is my pleasure to present John Kerr, a distinguished British Columbian and visionary corporate executive whom many have called one of our most precious resources. We honour him today for his contributions to the economic, social, and cultural life of this province.

John Kerr's reputation as a creative and principled leader is reflected in his exemplary record of achievement. As Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Lignum Ltd., he has proven that corporations in the forestry sector can be efficient, profitable, and responsible. He has earned the respect of all who care about our environment. His cooperation with environmentalists, loggers, ranchers, and First Nations led to the historic Cariboo Land Use Plan, the first integrated plan in this province. In fact, Lignum's subsequent corporate leadership in this area earned the company an Innovative Forest Practices Agreement with the Province of British Columbia. John Kerr also understood early on that the wishes of First Nations people must be taken seriously by the forest industry. Since the 1960s, he has supported their aspirations to participate as equal partners in the harvest and management of British Columbia's forests, especially those that occupy traditional lands. His commitment led to several joint ventures between Lignum Ltd. and First Nations in the Cariboo.

All Canadians have benefited from John Kerr's business acumen. For more than two decades, he has advocated free access of our lumber to the United States market, brilliantly defending Canadian interests against countervailing duty actions taken by the United States. And to our great good fortune, he acted as Chief Negotiator in talks that resulted in the Softwood Lumber Agreement of 1996. Many attribute the resulting trade peace to the personal style and skill of our honoree, a style marked by dignity and substance.

John Kerr also believes in the value of community and education, quietly and unassumingly supporting institutions such as the Vancouver and Burnaby Art Galleries, the Vancouver Public Library, the Forestry Centre at IJBC, and our Centre for North American Business Studies, of which he served as Chairman.

Mr. Chancellor, John Kerr has been steadfast in his advocacy of a better British Columbia and Canada. His wise counsel, cool head, and easy humour have earned him the affection and respect of all who know him. In 1997 this province awarded him its highest honour—the Order of British Columbia. I now ask, on behalf of the Senate of this University, that we also recognize his many achievements and confer upon John Kerr the degree Doctor of Laws. *honoris causa*.