



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Honorary Degree Citations The degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*, conferred on Dr. Rafe Mair Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. Chancellor, the name Rafe Mair is synonymous with British Columbia. As a lawyer, politician, writer, and broadcaster, he has been a central figure in the public life of this province that he loves so dearly. He has challenged orthodoxies, championed common sense, and defended the well-being of all British Columbians.

He was born in Vancouver, studied law at the University of British Columbia, and ultimately founded Mair and Co., now Mair, Jensen, Blair, the largest law firm in the BC Interior. His sense of civic duty propelled him into politics, first as an alderman in the City of Kamloops, and then in 1975, as a Social Credit MLA. He held several key cabinet posts and worked tirelessly for the public good. One of his finest hours occurred when, as Minister of the Environment, he valiantly defended our province's interests against the United States and successfully negotiated the salvation of the Skagit River.

It is as a broadcaster and journalist that we now know him best. From 1981 until 2003, he was our most listened to radio commentator, and we tuned in daily to hear him address issues great and small. He fought courageously against Alcan Aluminum's Kemano Completion Project, gave voice to our concerns about the Charlottetown Accord, informed us about pressing health issues such as diabetes, and opened the airwaves to frank discussion about depression. Regardless of the guest, he is unfailingly respectful but also unafraid to speak truth to power.

His willingness to engage with ideas extends also to print. Over the years, he has written eight books as well as numerous columns for many papers, including the *Financial Post*, the *Globe & Mail*, and the *Georgia Straight*. Today, he hosts his own television show and continues his