

Doctor of Laws, honoris causa

July 21, 2005

David Watt

Treasurer, may I present to you and this Convocation the Honourable Mr. Justice David Watt and request that you confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.

As a practitioner, a judge, an educator and an author, David Watt has made immense contributions to the legal profession in this country. After his Call to the Bar in 1972, he soon made a name for himself as a counsel for the Ministry of the Attorney General of Ontario arguing criminal appeals and participating in special prosecutions. By 1977, he had become the Ministry's Senior Counsel (Criminal Law), a position he held for eight years.

In 1985, David Watt was appointed a judge of the Superior Court of Justice (Ontario). His career as a judge has been outstanding. He has presided over a significant number of murder trials and guilty pleas and leads the Toronto Homicide and Long Trial team. He is often referred to as "the most experienced trial judge in murder cases in this province." In addition to his vast experience, his sense of fairness, his subtlety and personable character have earned him the respect of both the Bench and Bar.

Cognizant of the fact that implementing the rule of law fulfils only part of his obligation to his profession, David Watt has worked tirelessly to also contribute to its growth and renewal by chairing the National Criminal Law Program since 1984 and lecturing extensively across the country. His written works have become definitive texts in Canadian criminal law.

The Honourable Mr. Justice David Watt is deserving of the highest honour this Society can give and I request you, Sir, to confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.