

1960 May 16

DEAN JOHN FRANCIS LEDDY

Citation

Right Reverend Vice-Chancellor:

I wish to present to you John Francis Leddy, Member of the Canada Council, Dean of the College of Arts and Science of the University of Saskatchewan, and Head of the Department of Classics of the same University.

History teaches us that human nature does not change, and that the problems of today are not basically different from those of two thousand years ago. For the solution of modern problems, guidance is gained from the lessons of history, from the teachings of our Saviour, and from principles to be found in the writings of the moulders of our western civilization - the philosophers, statesmen and lawmakers of ancient Greece and Rome.

Principles garnered from the past have enabled Dean Leddy to do much for the betterment of education in Canada. Born in Ottawa, and educated in Saskatchewan, he paved the way to his career by taking an honors degree in Latin and French. Thereafter, his road was that of research, learning more and more about less and less, until he delved down to the roots underlying current complex problems in national and international affairs.

Dean Leddy had done considerable postgraduate work in Latin, and had earned a Master of Arts degree, when he was chosen, in 1933, as the Rhodes Scholar for Saskatchewan.

On going to Oxford, Dean Leddy's qualifications led him naturally to Exeter College, famous for six hundred years for its library, rich in classical manuscripts, and noted, for three hundred years, for its proximity to the Bodleian Library, built in the gardens behind it. With the Bodleian at his back, Dean Leddy did readings in Ancient History. After two years of research, he took the degree of Bachelor of Literature from Oxford University, and, three years later, having fulfilled all the requirements, had the degree of Doctor of Philosophy conferred upon him by the same illustrious institution.

On his return to Canada, Dean Leddy joined the Department of Classics of the University of Saskatchewan, and rose rapidly. The fruits

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of his classical studies manifested themselves in administrative ability. As a consequence, he was appointed, in 1942, Director of the Summer School of the University of Saskatchewan, in 1945, a member of the Senate of the University, in 1946, Head of the Department of Classics and, in 1949, Dean of the College of Arts and Science.

Meanwhile, his understanding of the role of the humanities in world affairs was recognized outside the limits of his University. In 1943, he was made a member of the National Council of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs having, previously, won national renown when serving as President of the Saskatoon Branch of the same Institute. In 1945, he was appointed Chairman of the Educational Council of the Province of Saskatchewan. He was twice chosen as Chairman of the Humanities Research Council of Canada and was, for two years, Chairman of the Humanities Association of Canada. He has been President of the Classical Association of Canada, of the Canadian Association of Rhodes Scholars, and of the English Section of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association.

He was for nine years a most active member of the Executive Council of the National Conference of Canadian Universities. During three of these years, he acted as Secretary-Treasurer. This was at the time when the Conference was asking the Government of Canada to establish a Canada Council, to do for the Humanities what the National Research Council does for Science. The yielding of the Government to the plea of the Conference was in no small measure due to the efforts and eloquence of Dean Leddy.

Ten times, in the past seven years, Dean Leddy has represented Canada, with distinction, as an official delegate at important International Conferences on diverse academic matters. His attendance at these meetings brought him to England, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Australia and California. And, in the summer of 1958, he found time to be Canadian Co-Director of the WUSC Seminar in Yugoslavia.

Dean Leddy's career would seem to suggest the slogan: "Study Latin, and see the world". But, to study is not sufficient. Dean Leddy's wisdom and judgment are not purely natural. His learning is matched by his piety. It has been with the aid of Divine guidance, sought in prayer, that he has crystallized a Christianized form of the Classical Tradition.

His contributions to the Christian way of life have not gone unnoticed. In 1953, he received the Human Relations Award of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews. In 1956, Pope Pius XII decorated him with the Medal "Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice", and in that same year, he was admitted to the Order of Malta, with the rank of a Knight of Magistral Grace. In 1958, he received the Cardinal Newman Award from the Canadian Federation of Newman Clubs and, last year, with the approval of the Holy See, he was created a Knight of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.

Therefore, Right Reverend Monsignor, without further apology, I present to you, for the degree of Doctor of Civil Law, honoris causa, Canada's most distinguished educator of Irish ancestry: JOHN FRANCIS LEDDY.

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