

**TRIBUTE TO R. JOHN LAWRENCE  
AT A SERVICE OF WORSHIP  
AND REMEMBRANCE**

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**ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH  
TORONTO**

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Last Tuesday morning, I was about to board a flight from Ottawa to Toronto when I received an urgent call from my wife Susan. In a shaking voice, she said that Jack Lawrence had died in a crash of his airplane seconds after takeoff in Muskoka. Like each of you in this church today, I was stunned and overwhelmed by the cruelty of this news. That very day, Jack and I were to have had lunch together.

Our thoughts turned immediately to Jack's family, to that of Carol Richardson, and to the unspeakable sorrow that engulfed them.

Since the tragedy, and in eloquent and moving words today, we have heard about the life and character of our friend Jack -- about his devotion to his family, about his legendary business career, about his passion for fitness and sport, about his poker-faced wit and sly sense of humour, about his idealism and integrity.

I would like to add a few words about Jack's enduring passion to help shape good public policy in this country -- a pursuit that brought the two of us together in the early 1980s when he joined what today is the Canadian Council of Chief Executives. The Council is well represented here at St. Andrew's and has publicly expressed its grief at the loss of a greatly valued comrade. Chairman Gordon Nixon is with us as are many current and past members including Ted Newall, a former Chairman and an old friend of Jack's.

Jack's engagement in public policy issues over more than three decades was impressive. As former Bank of Canada Governor John Crow who is here today will attest, he was in the front ranks in the fight against inflation. He played a key role in the Council's work with Professor Michael Porter on Canada's competitive future. He was ready to be counted in our support of Finance Minister Michael Wilson, who also is here, in the tough battle to reform our tax system and bring in the GST.

He kept a steely eye on Queen's Park as well as Ottawa. Premier after Premier benefitted from his unvarnished counsel. Premier Harris who is with us will readily acknowledge Jack's tenacity.

Jack's interests transcended economic issues -- witness his involvement in the national unity debates aimed at reconciling our English and French speaking communities and building a strong and diverse Canada. On that tense evening in 1995 when the Quebec referendum was so narrowly won, he said "thank God, my kids still have this beautiful country!"

Jack was there when we first broached the idea of a Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement with the senior most levels of the American Administration. It was at a meeting in Ottawa in 1983 with then Vice President George Bush. Jack would tell you how surprised, but intrigued, the future President was by this approach. In the years of controversy to follow -- until the Agreement took effect in 1989 -- Jack stuck to his guns through thick and thin. He knew that Canada would be stronger for this Agreement; indeed, that it would change the face of Canada forever.

In the early 1990s, Jack again donned his armour in the battle to arrest Canada's descent into fiscal chaos. I remember well how we travelled across the country. We met with the Prime Minister, with Premiers, with Ministers of Finance, with anyone who was prepared to listen. Jack, always a man of few words, summed up the message with a terse "fix it or we all go over the cliff!" It took some time, but policy makers eventually did get Jack's blunt and brutal message. Deficits turned into surpluses, debt plummeted and with the benefits of free trade, the foundations for prosperity were re-established.

As many of you know, Jack was restless; Jack was persistent. Canadians had to do more, much more to achieve our full potential, he argued. Just a few weeks ago, he sent me a copy of a letter to the Prime Minister requesting a meeting to discuss a new initiative aimed

at improving Canada's competitive performance. He knew that one can never declare victory in public policy. In short, Jack never gave up and the country is the better for it.

This same spirit led him to create the Lawrence Centre at the Richard Ivey School of Business. The whole idea of the Lawrence Centre is to integrate public policy issues into the business strategy curriculum -- to bridge the two solitudes of public and private. This vanguard idea has been warmly embraced by Dean Carol Stephenson and Director Dianne Cunningham, and most significantly by the students, our leaders of tomorrow.

Friends, the world of business and public policy lost a tireless champion last Monday. We mourn his passing. Jack's example, and his ideas will live on, and will continue to be a force for good in our great country.

In business circles, in the corridors of political power, in the halls of academe, in public policy forums, the name Jack Lawrence will say to people -- here was a man who believed that economic progress is the essential means to a better life for all.

This he wanted for his country. This he wanted for his province. This he wanted for his family. With them today, we say adieu to Jack Lawrence. Adieu to a man I deeply respected and will sorely miss. Adieu to a dear friend I deeply valued.