

Francis Leddy

1911 - 1998

Francis Leddy was president and vice-chancellor of the University of Windsor during important years of its growth (1964-78). He had also earlier played a wide-ranging role in the creation and growth of several Canadian organizations involved in international development. In particular, Ian Smillie in his book *The Land of Lost Content* calls him “CUSO’s midwife” because he brought together university presidents and representatives of 21 organizations in June 1961 and chaired the stormy meeting at which the Canadian University Service Overseas was established and soon absorbed earlier volunteer ventures. He



became chair of its board and secured its first government grant that allowed the sending of 250 volunteers in 1965.

Born in Ottawa, Ontario, he studied Latin and French at the University of Saskatchewan, where he received his B.A. and M.A.. He did graduate work in Latin and Greek at the University of Chicago (1932-3) and as a Rhodes Scholar studied ancient history at Oxford University and received his D.Phil. in 1938. From 1936 to

1964 he taught Classics at the University of Saskatchewan, becoming Dean and then Vice-President (Academic).

His time abroad turned him into an inveterate traveler and internationalist: he led the WUSC seminar to Yugoslavia in 1958 and was vice-president of the WUS international executive (1964-8), chaired the Canadian UNESCO Commission 1960-2 and was a delegate to its East-West conference in Calcutta. He was president of the World Federalists of Canada (1979-81) and later council chair of the World Association of World Federalists, based in the Netherlands. He was also on the advisory board of CARE Canada, and chaired the organizing committee of the Company of Young Canadians.

As the second president of the University of Windsor he oversaw its growth from fewer than

1,000 students to 6,200 students and the increase of faculties from three to nine, while the main physical structure of the campus took shape. He became president of the Canadian Service for Overseas Students and Trainees (today renamed CBIE). He received many honorary degrees during his lifetime. In 1972, he was made an Officer of the Order of Canada.

One of Dr. Leddy's proudest achievements was his founding membership, and long-term service on, the Canada Council. He was its vice-chairman in 1964-9. As well, he was active in many organizations of the Roman Catholic Church and in 1969 was appointed to the Papal Household by Pope Paul VI, the highest honour accorded to a lay person.