

PRESENTATION FOR DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY

THE HONORABLE SAMUEL JOSHUA JACOBS

Graduation Ceremony, University of South Australia

25 March 1997

Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, Honorable Samuel Jacobs, Colleagues, Graduands and Friends

I first had the pleasure of meeting the Honorable Samuel Jacobs in 1969 when I became a member of the Council of the University of Adelaide as one of the first two undergraduate students ever elected to that body. You, sir, took a lead in Council accepting elected students as full members of that body.

Samuel Jacobs' work has been characterised by a commitment to developing the fabric of a just society. He was educated at Scotch College and the University of Adelaide where he graduated in law. Since serving as a Captain in the AIF in the Middle East and the Northern Command in Australia, he has been deeply involved in many professional and community activities in South Australia to develop that fabric.

Samuel Jacobs has made a major contribution to the well-being of the South Australian community through the administration of justice, through leadership in the legal profession, through his involvement at all levels of the education system. Also, through other community activities such as chairing the Royal Adelaide Hospital Board of Management. His work was recognised by his appointment as an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1982.

In education, Samuel Jacobs served as a member of the Council of the University of Adelaide for over thirty years from 1961. He was Chairman of the Finance Committee from 1965-1992 and Deputy Chancellor from 1984-1992, and in these positions was involved in changes to structures of governance in that University. At the same time he was a member of the Board of Management of the Kindergarten Union from 1965-1970 and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Governors of Scotch College from 1970-1987. Through these activities, he has had a major influence on education at all levels in South Australia.

Samuel Jacobs' contribution to the development of the fabric of a just society through his work in the legal profession and in the administration of justice has been immense. He was appointed Queens Counsel in 1965. From 1970-1973 he was a member of the Law Council of Australia, and President of the Law Society of South Australia from 1971-1973. In 1973 he was appointed a judge of the Supreme Court of

South Australia, a position he held until 1990. For some of this time, he was a member of the State Law Reform Committee. Not long after retiring from the Supreme Court, Samuel Jacobs accepted the position of Royal Commissioner of the Royal Commission into the State Bank of South Australia, a demanding commission which he held from 1991-1993. I, sir, began my working life as a clerk in the 'people's bank', the 'penny bank', the former Savings Bank of South Australia.

The University of South Australia's mission is *Educating Professionals, Applying Knowledge and Serving the Community*. The work of Samuel Jacobs has contributed, and is continuing to contribute to this mission. In 1991, he accepted the position of Chair of the Board of Management for the Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice. He was the first Chair of this Board which was established to ensure that the University of South Australia was adequately supported in coping with the explosion of law graduate students who were seeking admission to this course so that they could be admitted to the Bar. As the Chief Justice's delegate on this Board and as Chair, Samuel Jacobs assisted the University in accessing the views of judges, the Law Society and students about this Diploma that was the preferred qualification for lawyers to be admitted to the Bar.

Having finished his work as Royal Commissioner, Samuel Jacobs accepted an appointment as President of the South Australian Justice Administration Foundation in 1993. He saw that the objectives of the Foundation, which included general community education, provided an opportunity for the Foundation to make a contribution to community understanding of the administration of justice. This included topics which were then seldom discussed in public by those involved. These were areas such as how the courts work, ideas underlying sentencing and how judges think and act. As a result of Samuel Jacobs leadership, the Foundation created forums in the community for discussion of these issues. This included forums in communities which often cannot access such opportunities for judges to talk about their work and the work of the courts. The goal of these forums was to provide the public with an opportunity to be better informed on issues of justice.

These initiatives broke new ground in the relationship between the community and the administration of justice in South Australia. It is now not uncommon for a judge to speak in public about justice issues. The work of the Foundation is now developing a new emphasis under Samuel Jacobs' leadership to provide opportunities for the public and professionals to understand the work of the police and those involved in corrections, as well as to understand the general administration of justice, including juvenile justice. Since so many aspects of our lives are touched by legislation, it has been your view that we should have an understanding of the system of justice.

Your vast experience and understanding of the justice system has enabled you to build bridges between all those who are involved in the justice system, and between the justice system and the community. Through your work in the legal profession, in

educational institutions, and in the community, the fabric of a just society has been more clearly developed and understood.

Chancellor, I now present Samuel Joshua Jacobs for the Honorary Degree of Doctor of the University.

Adrian Vicary
Head: School of Social Work and Social Policy

25 March 1997

I wish to acknowledge the enthusiastic assistance of Sue King from the School of Social Work and Social Policy in the preparation of this speech.