

100-1982

Richard K. Taylor
Nov. 8, 1982

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

John A. Weir says graduates

best prepared to meet world

John A. Weir, installed Sunday as president of Wilfrid Laurier University, told the graduating class that not only did that have excellent academic credentials but also possessed an unusually high degree of work experience.

He was speaking to the
"You possess ~~an unusually high percentage of work experience,~~" he told the class of about 350 graduates, their parents and friends at convocation at the Kitchener Auditorium, East Ave.

"Approximately half of you are adult students and, of course, were working while attending Wilfrid Laurier University," *he said,* "Those of you who are graduating from social work have had at least two terms of related work experience through your "practicum" sessions (in social agencies)."

He added that many graduates from the school of business and economics experienced three terms in related work assignments during their co-op terms. Many arts and science students spend their summer internship terms in work related to their studies. Music students, too, had practical field experience.

"In the midst of a recession it is worth remembering that in the past, periods like these have been followed by period of explosive growth and labor shortages.

-more-

He said graduates should take heart from the fact that university graduates have always had a far lower rate of unemployment and when recovery comes "you will be prepared to take advantage of it."

He added that universities do much more than prepare their students to make a good start in the working world.

"Universities play a unique role in society," Dr. Weir said. "Their purpose is not just to teach specific skills but to prepare people to cope with a world that is ever-changing and largely unpredictable.

"It is not our job to train you specifically in the skill required for a particular job but to create within you a critical ability and flexibility that will provide you with the means to cope with the unexpected in all facets of your life.

"We hope we have taught you a respect for intellectual integrity and for scholarship and have instilled in you the courage to stand on principle."

Before he spoke, Dr. Weir was officially installed as president of the university in a ceremony presided over by Lieutenant-Governor John B. Aird, chancellor of Wilfrid Laurier University.