

## GRADUATION 2012

### **Presentation speech for Lady Barbara Judge for the honorary degree of Doctor of Science of the University *honoris causa***

Chancellor, many people believe that our honorand today, Lady Barbara Judge, is the best connected woman in Britain. A recent article declared ‘At the heart of the British Establishment resides a wraithlike American blonde called Barbara Thomas Judge. Lady Judge, a lawyer, has more jobs than seem possible. Name a board and she is on it; find a charity and she will be associated with it.’ Her many roles have included: a partnership in a major US law firm; commissioner of the US Securities and Exchange Commission; Chairman of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority; Member of International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants; Chair of the Energy Institute at University College London; Chairman of the governing body of SOAS; and Trustee of Wallace Collection; Chairman of the UK Pension Protection Fund; non executive director of Statoil (Norway); Business Ambassador for the UK. I would stress that this is no more than a sample of the total – although I would add in passing that some of us think that one of the most urgent necessities facing this country is yet on with a proper programme of nuclear power.

Of course, there are those who wonder how she gets all these jobs, whether she deserves them and how can she possibly be doing all of them well? There are some who put it all down to networking, but Lady Judge disagrees: ‘I hate the word. I never use it. People call it networking when you meet someone you want something from. I never want anything from anyone I meet at a party – except maybe charity.’ I suspect Lady Judge is right. Today you are not appointed to important jobs unless you have a reputation for getting things done. And that means ambition and work, lots of it. She was encouraged by her mother to believe that if you were clever and worked hard there should be no limits to achievement. It is an example I commend to our own graduates today. Her experience is especially relevant to our women graduates, not least on what to wear:

One day I got called in by the bosses and they said, 'Barbara we are going to fire you' And I said 'Why?' And they said, 'Because you don't look like a lawyer.' .... So I took my long blonde hair and put it up in the style you see today. And I took my short skirts and made them knee length. I basically think there is no second chance after the first impression. And when you walk into a room, you want to look professional. If you look like a professional, people will assure that you are.

Chancellor, in Buckingham we like to think that we combine commitment to hard work with a feeling for tradition and culture. These qualities also inform the life of our honorand. I was especially pleased to learn of her links with the Wallace Collection – our partner in our Art History Courses led by our colleague Jeremy Howard. I was also struck by her appreciation of the subtle differences between England and America. When her son was at Eton, she offered to fund raise to provide computers. 'Frankly I could have said, I will buy the computers but that is not the English way.'

There is really only problem with Lady Judge – and that is to decide on what degree to bestow upon her. Her achievements in law, business and public life are so varied that almost any subject would be appropriate. But we have to make a choice.

Chancellor: I call upon you to confer upon Lady Barbara Judge the degree of Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*.

**Professor John Clarke, MA, DPhil**

**17 March 2012**