Mr. Chancellor, it is my privilege to present Edward Broadbent, one of Canada's most distinguished public intellectuals and ardent advocate of human rights and equality. We honour him today for his steadfast perseverance and courage in promoting the ideals of justice, fairness, and equality, not only in Canada but around the globe.

A former professor of political science at York University, he entered politics in 1968, and seven years later was elected leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada. The hallmark of his tenure was his work for an equitable tax system, equality for women, and the constitutional entrenchment of aboriginal rights. As leader of the NDP he earned the admiration of people from across the broad political spectrum. The 1980s national opinion polls frequently identified him as the individual most Canadians preferred to see as prime minister.

After leaving politics, Edward Broadbent was appointed as the first President of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development. In that capacity, he strove to show the relationship between human rights, democracy and development, and was directly involved in the struggle for democracy in Haiti and Myanmar, formerly known as Burma. As President he also played a key role in linking human rights with international trade agreements and defending the rights of refugee women.

We at Simon Fraser University were fortunate indeed when Edward Broadbent served as J.S. Woodsworth Chair in the Humanities. He challenged and inspired his students and participated in many public lectures and seminars. He unfailingly represented his values and this University's position with enthusiasm, energy, and penetrating intellect. Our whole community benefited. During his time here, he also served as Chair of the Panel on Accountability and Governance in Canada’s Voluntary Sector, a sphere that touches the lives of all Canadians.

Edward Broadbent is a thoughtful humanist and an articulate defender of human rights. He has been recognized for his work with numerous honours, including the Order of Canada. In 1991, he was the first recipient of our University's Thakore Award, inspired by the life and legacy of Mahatma Gandhi. All Canadians owe Edward Broadbent a great debt, for his presence on the national and international stages has made the world a better place for all. It is fitting, then, that this University again honour him. Mr. Chancellor, on behalf of the Senate of this University, I ask that you confer upon one of Canada's most beloved citizens the degree Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.