Mr. Chancellor, it is a great privilege to introduce the Honourable John A. Fraser, a distinguished parliamentarian and conservationist, who has earned the gratitude of all Canadians for his devotion to his country.

John Fraser was elected to the House of Commons in 1972, and for twenty-one years served the people of Canada with distinction in several portfolios, including Environment and Fisheries and Oceans under the Conservative government. Such was his reputation for fairness and insight that he was elected Speaker of the House of Commons by secret ballot, the first Speaker in our history to be so elected. His accomplishments in that capacity included the establishment of the Central and Eastern European Parliamentary Co-operation Program and the House of Commons Public Information Office.

It would be difficult to name a Canadian who is more committed to the maintenance of Canada’s, and especially British Columbia’s environment, than John Fraser. Canadians have relied on his experience and wisdom many times. As Minister of the Environment he launched an aggressive campaign for a Canada - United States agreement on acid rain abatement. He served as Chairman of a public review board struck to consider the growing crisis in management of the Fraser River sockeye fishery. Again, we looked to John Fraser to lend his expertise to the Pacific Salmon Treaty negotiations. In 1994, Prime Minister Chrétien appointed him Canada’s Ambassador for the Environment. In that capacity, John Fraser advised the government on key issues and provided leadership in defending and promoting our country’s interests in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Recently, he was appointed Chair of the Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council. In the past few years, he has made a valuable contribution to a number of public forums on fisheries conducted through our university’s Continuing Studies in Science Program.

John Fraser has received many awards for his steadfast commitment to this country and its environment, among them the Fred Packard International Parks Merit Award for his role in the preservation of South Moresby and the Roland Michener Conservation Award. He is an Officer of the Order of Canada, a Member of the Order of British Columbia, and holds the Canadian Forces Decoration.

Mir. Chancellor, in his life and work, and with his friends and his family, John Fraser has consistently demonstrated those qualities we associate with being Canadian—grace, compassion, and honesty. I now present the Honourable John Fraser for the degree Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.