Mr. Chancellor, I am proud to present John S. MacDonald, an innovative engineer, visionary entrepreneur, and dedicated educator who has greatly enhanced British Columbia’s reputation as a centre of high technology research and development.

A graduate of the University of British Columbia and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he earned his Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering, John MacDonald works in the areas of advanced digital systems engineering, remote sensing, image processing, and machine vision. In 1969 he co-founded MacDonald Dettwiler and Associates Ltd., which began its operations out of his basement. Today, as MDA’s Chairman, he presides over a company that employs 1400 people and is a world leader in remote sensing and imaging technology.

John MacDonald is a man motivated by the search for knowledge. He has gladly shared his ideas with hundreds of students, first as an Assistant Professor of Electrical Engineering at MIT and later as an Associate Professor at the University of British Columbia. Since 1983 he has been an Adjunct Professor in our School of Engineering Science and in this capacity provides valuable guidance to our students. Believing in the importance of hands-on experience, he has always been a strong supporter of our co-op and internship programs and of research collaboration with faculty. Indeed many of our Engineering Science graduates have gone on to rewarding careers at MacDonald Dettwiler and Associates.

He also shares his considerable knowledge and entrepreneurial expertise with the broader community. Throughout his long career, he has always worked hard to improve the policy environment within which industry and science work together. Toward this end he has served as a member of several national and provincial scientific organizations, including the Eminent Persons Group of Asia Pacific Co-operation, the Science Council of Canada, the National Research Council of Canada, and the British Columbia Premier’s Advisory Council on Science and Technology.

John MacDonald has received many awards for his outstanding contribution to science, education, and society. An Officer of the Order of Canada, he also holds honorary degrees from several Canadian universities.

Mr. Chancellor, John Spencer MacDonald has dedicated his time and talent to making British Columbia a leader in high technology. He is a distinguished British Columbian of whom we are all proud. I am pleased to present John MacDonald for the degree Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.