Madam Chancellor, it is my privilege to present Martin Cornell, corporate leader and international ambassador for the needy. Between privilege and poverty, between concern and action, there are differences of kind and degree. What sets Martin Cornell apart is his capacity to take strength from contradiction and turn idealism to the practical benefit of others. In giving freely of time and substance, he has found both a gift and a vocation through which his compassion finds full exercise.

Martin Cornell was born in Brantford, Ontario, in 1941. Thirty-three years later, Martin's competitive drive and business acumen carried him to the presidency of Conwest Exploration Company Limited - a natural resources enterprise with assets in mining, oil and gas now approaching half a billion dollars. With his great and early success in commerce came an equally great sea change in his inner life: an inner transformation which sparked him to service not simply as a man of philanthropy and conscience, but as a self-proclaimed "social entrepreneur."

The Calmeadow Foundation - established by Martin Cornell in 1983 as a private, nonprofit organization built upon the microenterprise credit movement - creates "borrowers' circles" among the entrepreneurial poor, bringing them the prospect of dignity through access to affordable credit where no credit can otherwise be obtained. In native communities across Canada or in impoverished Bolivian villages, Calmeadow extends the hand of hope to those who share its founder's zeal for self-reliance and personal industry.

As Vice-Chairman of the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy and as founder and Chairman of the Centre's strategic "Imagine" program, Martin Cornell works with tremendous commitment to inspire greater generosity in our society and its corporations.

Through his own example, through public education, through national speaking tours and in print, he encourages Canadian companies and private individuals to undertake more expansive giving in time and in resources. Within this demanding schedule, he maintains the Chairmanship of Conwest Exploration and finds time to serve as Vice Chairman and Chairman respectively of the Salvation Army's Territorial and Metro Toronto Advisory Councils.

There is a proverb of the plains Indians that runs: "In the beginning God gave to every people a cup of clay, and from this cup they drank their life." Martin Cornell has chosen to enrich his life through service to others and in doing so has enriched us all. On behalf of the Senate of this University, Madam Chancellor, it is my honour to present Martin Cornell for the Degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.