There are crucial moments in the history of a nation that call for the man of vision, energy and a certain je ne sais quoi of the human spirit. That person must be the Right Person, who is often the Only Person, at the Right Time for the Right Need. Mr. Chancelllot, in the case of Canada, circa 1930, Mr. Graham Spry was the man of whom I speak, who honours us today in accepting this honorary doctorate as we pay tribute to him. The Right Need was to establish in a few years of intense intellectual effort and whirlwind activity, the primacy of public ownership in broadcasting. It was a need nurtured by Mr. Spry's acute perception, to quote him, "That of all areas of public policy, communication policy is the most vital. It forms the central nervous system of a nation. Who controls the system controls the nation."

In the late 20's control of a revolu-
tionary, new medium called Radio seemed to be passing into the hands of the money-changers, the privateers and possibly the Americans - this despite the recommendation of a Royal Commission for a publicly-owned system. To counter the efforts of the power elite seeking private ownership, two young Rhodes scholars, Graham Spry and Alan Haunt, formed the Canadian Radio League in 1930. Its policy brilliantly undermined the opposition by providing for low-powered local stations, privately or community-owned, but part of and subordinate to the public system of high-powered stations.

As National Secretary of the Canadian Clubs, Mr. Spry crossed the country many times to mobilize public opinion on this policy. When he came finally to the special parliamentary committee of 1932, the combined membership of supporting organizations totalled one million.
35,000. The day was won and on May 26, 1932, parliament voted for the
priacy of public broadcasting.
It was not, of course, the only great moment in Mr. Spatly's remarkable career. In the years following he served in Canada as author, journalist, organizer and CCF candidate; in England as executive, war correspondent and Agent-General for Saskatchewan. During World War II he was personal secretary to Sir Stafford Cripps and went with him in 1942 to lay the groundwork for the independence of India. That would give him one more distinction: Liberator! He obtained a B.A. degree at the University of Manitoba and a B.A. and M.A. from Oxford. He was born in St. Thomas, Ontario, two months after the turn of the century: February 20, 1900. Mr. Chancellor, I present to you this distinguished Canadian for the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.

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