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Vice-Chancellor, My Lords, Members of the University, Ladies and Gentlemen ...

I am flattered in the extreme and especially delighted that the Court of the University considers me worthy of this exceptional honor. Needless to say, this is a very special day in my life. It formalizes my relationship with one of Britain's most celebrated schools of higher learning. And it helps fulfill me personally in an aspect of my life that I have wanted to elevate for some time.

I feel all the more fortunate in that this day also gives the university an opportunity, at my behest, to recognize two extremely talented people: Julia Cleverdon, chief executive of Business in the Community; and Robert Dover, managing director of Land Rover and chief operating officer of Aston Martin Jaguar Land Rover.

It increases my enjoyment of the day immeasurably to share it with these very dear and deserving colleagues.

One of my first thoughts upon being offered the chancellorship was of the company I would soon join. And in consideration of the gentlemen whom I follow in this post, I have to tell you that I am more than a little awestruck, and truly humbled.

Many of you – perhaps most of you – have had the honor of personal acquaintance with my immediate predecessor. Nelson Mandela characterized Sir Shridath Ramphal as “one of those men who have become famous because in their fight for human justice they have chosen the entire world as their theatre.”

Sir Sonny's actions throughout his life prove that statement. Many of us would feel vindicated if we stood just one time for human dignity, for the right of national identity, or for such farsighted policies as sustainable development. But Sir Sonny has stood for them all his life.

He has been politician, ambassador and peacemaker. He is an accomplished author. He holds 27 honorary degrees, including an Honorary Doctor of Laws (LLD) from Warwick in 1988. In addition to his service to Warwick, he was Chancellor of the University of Guyana from 1988 to 1992, and he remains Chancellor of the University of the West Indies.

And during his time here, Sir Sonny has set standards of excellence, dedication and leadership that are more than worthy of emulation by anyone who follows. I can only say ... I will give it my best.

Healthy organizations grow, and the history of the University of Warwick shows us that this institution is very healthy, indeed. Enrollment has increased from 7,000 students in 1989 to more than 18,000 today. One of the first graduate schools in the United Kingdom was established here in 1991, and it paved the way for a major change in the complexion of the student population – approximately 40 percent of the student body is presently involved in graduate study.

The physical growth of the university was facilitated in the late 1990s by a £100 million building program, funded mostly by non-government sources. During the same time, the university established a presence in the heart of Westminster, giving busy Londoners access to Warwick resources.

The Leicester Warwick Medical School, established in cooperation with the University of Leicester, is just one example of how Warwick has remained attuned to the society that it serves. More than 300 students are currently

enrolled in an accelerated four-year graduate program, enabling Warwick to respond efficiently and highly competently to the United Kingdom's pressing need for more doctors.

I am especially heartened by the many gates that Warwick has opened into the community. This is the only top-rated university to have launched two of the government's new Foundation degrees, offering career-enhancing opportunities to those who might otherwise have never considered higher education.

The Warwick Graduates' Association has set a powerful example for alumni associations elsewhere with its generous series of undergraduate scholarships for qualified young people in need. And earlier this year, Warwick was selected to work in partnership with Johns Hopkins and the Research Center for Able Pupils Oxford Brookes in the creation of the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth. This opens our resources to especially promising children, regardless of their financial circumstances. And it is a cause very dear to me.

The American architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, once said that "a house should not be on the hill; it should be of the hill." By the same excellent logic, it is absolutely right that organizations – be they universities, corporations, or institutions of any sort – should not simply be in the communities that surround them. They should be of those communities.

I am pleased that Warwick lives by that philosophy. The university is one of Coventry's main employers, more than 5,000 university students live in postal area CV4, and the university has in excess of a £700 million impact on the regional economy.

The University of Warwick Science Park is home to 70 percent of the fastest growing businesses in Coventry and Warwickshire. Hundreds of Warwick

students and staff are involved in volunteer service to the community. And judging by the number of community leaders present here today, I find it a safe assumption that the community appreciates this institution, and is pleased to have it here.

My own acquaintance with Warwick reaches back many years, and my impression has always been overwhelmingly positive. I have always been fond of our English heartland; not only for its beauty, but for its deep-rooted history, a history that is open-ended, with many chapters left to be written.

It was more than a thousand years ago that the daughter of Alfred the Great ordered the construction of earthen ramparts to protect a small but growing community here. Shakespeare undoubtedly walked here. And it was from here, in the green heart of England, that modern industry first began to take shape.

In many parts of the world, perhaps even in many parts of Britain, such a place as this would have become a museum at some point. But while Warwick treasures its past – Warwick Castle is simply the first of many examples that comes to mind – this community remains forever young in its outlook, in its enthusiasm, and in its eagerness to create new and vital enterprise.

I became most keenly aware of the University of Warwick during my tenure at Jaguar, just a very few miles from here. Like many people working in industry, I knew the University of Warwick for many things – its business school, which is known and respected throughout the world; its mathematics and arts programs; its prominence in law.

But one thing that distinguished the university, given the work I was doing at the time, was the internationally respected Warwick Manufacturing Group.

In the latter years of my time at Jaguar, manufacturing came to be something almost shunned – at least among the investing public, which had become much more enamored with information technology and its associated enablers. It was akin, thankfully on a smaller scale, to the tulip mania described in Charles Mackay's *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*.

In the midst of that frenzy to purchase virtually anything associated with “dot-com,” the concept of a center devoted to the refinement of manufacturing seemed to some to be antiquated or quaint. And as we worked to revitalize one of the most heritage-steeped marques in British motordom, I remember thinking how shortsighted was any business philosophy that failed to grasp the importance of manufacturing.

IT and e-business must be given their respectable due – both are essential elements of modern business and powerful technologies. But in the 21st century, just as it was throughout the 20th century and much of the 19th, manufacturing remains one of the primary engines of commerce. We live in societies in which the demand for goods remains an underlying foundation to our economies. And we must be able to produce those goods with ever more efficiency and reliability if those economies are to flourish.

Warwick was and is longsighted in its dedication to manufacturing, but also in its thoroughness in including all of those elements that make the university a fully functioning academic organism. As evidence of its well-rounded nature, look no farther than the Arts Centre – the largest such center in the UK outside of London. Some 1600 Arts Centre performances a year attract more than a quarter of a million visitors.

If you glance through the “University Authors” section of the bookshop, you'll find titles on subjects ranging from microprocessor technology to

architectural inscription to Bible translation – more proof of the wide-ranging spectrum that is produced by this single bright light. And when I looked over the university calendar for this month, I was interested to see that the special-effects specialist from the movie *Die Another Day* was appearing on campus to explain and demonstrate the chemistry of cinematic pyrotechnics. That's an experience that gives the expression "the knowledge explosion" an entirely new meaning. Dry and dusty, Warwick is not.

It was not so very many years ago that – if you had stopped students on any major campus, anywhere in the world, and asked them what they were pursuing in their academic careers – most would have replied, “a degree.”

There were always those who, like Chaucer's Student, would gladly learn and gladly teach. But for many, it was a climate in which the certification for having received an education was viewed as far more important than the knowledge itself. One's time on campus was generally perceived solely as the ticket of admission to a promising career.

That doesn't seem to be as much the case anymore. Certainly, the students I meet on my campus visits these days are interested in what comes next. But they also seem more aware than earlier generations that their days at university are a part of their lives, not just prelude to it. And that is a promising sign.

We live in a time when information proliferates at a rate far in excess of the human capacity to absorb it all. So we need to emerge from university with a base for assimilating further knowledge, rather than a finished skill-set. And we need a recognition that values, judgment, ethics and fairness are critical parts of what we must develop during these years; that they are every bit as important to own and understand as textbook theorems and principles; and that they cannot

be adequately developed if higher education is approached simply as the conduit to your "real life."

It helps to have universities that breathe in the essence of the societies around them, and breathe out well-rounded human beings, equipped to lead and to live in those societies. Universities that recognize this purpose are universities that lead. And in light of that, it is little wonder that the University of Warwick is a top-ten institution.

In times of change and uncertainty – in other words, in our times – the first instinct of those who lead is often to change the very fundamental values and principles upon which an institution was built, and upon which it grew. The flaw in such thinking ought to be obvious, but too often is recognized only in hindsight.

I believe one reason for Warwick's excellence has been its leaders' attention to building on the works of their predecessors. That is the sort of thinking worthy of an organization that is dedicated to the propagation of wisdom. And it is a path I expect to follow.

Since 1965, nearly 90,000 men and women have studied here and received degrees. Each decade's classes have had at their fingertips academic resources unknown and perhaps undreamed of by their predecessors. Warwick is constantly equal to the task of preparing people for an increasingly complex world. It's a challenge that is more difficult every year, but a challenge that is always met. And for that we should be very grateful.

Thank you again for my appointment and for the honor of serving in stewardship for an institution that exists ultimately for the betterment of human lives.

To all who pass through Warwick's doors during my tenure, I will strive to make this not only the place in which you were educated, but your philosophical home, as well. And if you emerge, as I sincerely hope you will, with not only an education, but with the desire to improve the lot of people everywhere, then I will consider my time here very well spent, indeed.

Thank you.

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