

**Regional Meeting of The Philadelphia Society  
The Ethics of Rhetoric in a Digital Age**

*Remarks upon Induction as Distinguished  
Member into the Philadelphia Society*

**Edwin J. Feulner, Ph.D.  
President  
The Heritage Foundation**

**Loews Atlanta Hotel  
Atlanta, Georgia  
September 25, 2010**

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.

Let me begin by thanking my very good friend and colleague Lee Edwards for that humbling introduction. For all that you do for our cause and our country, Lee, I am so very grateful.

I also thank tonight's co-sponsor, Ken Cribb and everyone at the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, for your vital contributions to the enduring conservative intellectual tradition. You are a source of blazing scholastic fire without which American academia would surely be left dark and cold.

And to all of my colleagues in The Philadelphia Society, I thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for the honor that you have conferred upon me tonight.

My respect and appreciation for this organization is unbounded. I often cannot help but wonder: without The Philadelphia Society, where would the conservative movement be? Frankly, I do not know that there would even be one.

Having stood with the Society from the very beginning, I have had the honor, of watching it grow in scope and stature while carrying on its back the intellectual heft of the American right. As one grew stronger, so did the other.

Indeed, behind every trial and triumph of the modern conservative movement, there has been The Philadelphia Society.

That is because we, wearing our Philadelphia Society hats, are dedicated to the power of ideas, and it is ideas that fan the flames of our movement's intellectual fire.

This evening's dinner is being held in honor of the recipients of the Richard M. Weaver Fellowship, with which I am intimately familiar. I had the privilege of being among the first group of Weaver Fellows many years ago. As a result, I was able to spend two terms in graduate studies at the London School of Economics with Hayek, Bauer, Minogue, and the IEA. To all of my fellow Weaver Fellows here tonight, I offer my sincere congratulations, and to ISI and the Earhart Foundation—thank you!

Richard Weaver believed that *Ideas Have Consequences*—they can build up or tear down, preserve or destroy. He argued that ideas like nominalism, rationalism, and materialism led to the “moral dissolution” of the West. Alas, they led man to turn away from true knowledge and the first principles of our nation's origin.

America was founded on a powerful idea:

“...that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.”

In the last century it was our commitment to that idea that saved the world from tyranny and kept our nation the last best hope of man on earth. The battles of this new century demand that we now do the same.

At home we face the forces of a radical leftist progressivism that seeks to redefine our government and remake our society. Abroad we face the nihilistic threat of Islamofascism which seeks to destroy our civilization.

If we are to preserve America as the land of the free now and into the future, we must remain resolutely committed to our ideas—and to defending them and advancing them, as we at The Heritage Foundation do every day.

And so much of our inspiration continues to be derived from The Philadelphia Society.

It is here that we exchange, debate, and refine our ideas for the sake of strengthening our indispensable cause of ordered liberty.

Simply put, there is no greater meeting of the minds that gathers regularly in America, on the Right, on the Left or in the middle, quite like that of The Philadelphia Society.

It was christened in the hour of what Bill Middendorf called in his wonderful book the “glorious disaster” of 1964 and Barry Goldwater—and like a platoon to the beat of a perpetual drum, it has marched on ever since.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you once again for this honor.

May The Philadelphia Society continue to fan the intellectual fire of our movement and light the course ahead for years to come!

Thank you!