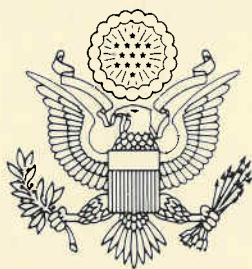


The Heritage Lectures

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**Keynoting the
Conservative Decade**

**A Speech by
Ronald Reagan**



**at
The Heritage Foundation
10th Anniversary Banquet
October 3, 1983**



The Heritage Foundation

The Heritage Foundation is one of the country's leading public policy research institutes. With offices just two blocks from the United States Capitol, The Heritage Foundation's research and studies programs are designed to make the voices of responsible conservatism heard in Washington, D.C., throughout the United States, and in the capitals of the world.

The key to Heritage's research effort is timeliness—providing the policy-making community with up-to-date research on the important issues of the day. Heritage publishes its findings in a variety of formats for the benefit of decision makers, the media, the academic community, businessmen, and the public at large. Over the past five years The Heritage Foundation has published more than 400 books, monographs, and studies, ranging in size from the 1,093-page government blueprint, *Mandate for Leadership: Policy Management in a Conservative Administration*, to more frequent "Critical Issues" monographs and the topical "Backgrounders" and "Issue Bulletins" of a few thousand words. Heritage's other regular publications include *National Security Record*, *Policy Digest*, *Education Update*, and *Policy Review*, a quarterly journal of analysis and opinion.

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In addition to the printed word, Heritage regularly brings together national and international opinion leaders and policy makers to discuss issues and ideas in a variety of formal and informal settings. Through a continuing series of seminars, lectures, debates, and briefings, The Heritage Foundation provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and a laboratory for developing these ideas into practical public policy proposals.

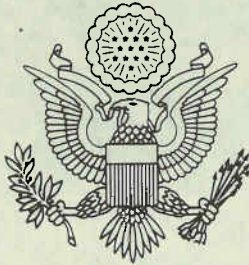
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Introduction

November 19, 1983, at 8:00 P.M. - 10:00 P.M. - The Heritage Foundation, The day will be a celebration of the old and the new. A special dinner will be held at the end of the night.

Keynoting the Conservative Decade

A Speech by Ronald Reagan



at
The Heritage Foundation
10th Anniversary Banquet
October 3, 1983

The name of the address follows.

David J. Phillips, Jr.
President



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Heritage Foundation



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Introduction

No matter how you look at it, October 3, 1983, was an historic day for The Heritage Foundation. The day was a heady mixture of the old and the new. It was Heritage's 10th Anniversary—marking the end of a decade of rapid and dramatic change, both for The Heritage Foundation and the nation. It also marked a new beginning—the beginning of what we hope will be viewed ten years from now as America's greatest Conservative Decade: The Heritage Decade. We celebrated the official opening of our new headquarters, an eight story building just a few minutes walk from the U.S. Capitol. Friends from Washington and from around the world were on hand as Vice President George Bush and Senator John Warner helped members of The Heritage Board of Trustees cut the ribbons.

In 1973, The Heritage Foundation was just a dream. Today, thanks to the loyal support of tens of thousands of Americans, it is a dream come true, the keeper of the conservative flame in the Nation's Capital. *National Review* Publisher William Rusher called Heritage "probably the biggest development in the conservative movement during the decade of the 1970s . . . absolutely indispensable." *The Washington Post* acknowledged in an October 3 anniversary feature that "the growing impact of Heritage has been stunning."

Said Vice President Bush at the dedication ceremonies: "I think what we see here is an illustration of the fact that ideas do have consequences . . . 1980 was simply the most dramatic manifestation of the growing conservative tide in this country. And it was ideas that did it—many of them originating in the (Heritage) Foundation or first finding a wide audience through its *Backgrounders* and *Issue Bulletins* and the Foundation's excellent magazine, *Policy Review*." It was ideas, the Vice President noted, that brought about the change in America's political climate.

October 3 started on a high note and ended on a high note as 1300 friends of The Heritage Foundation—government officials and political figures from the four corners of the world, business executives, scholars, journalists, statesmen—helped us celebrate our 10th Anniversary at a gala dinner, which also marked the official beginning of "Heritage 10," our first-ever major fundraising campaign. The theme: "Heritage 10: Funding the Conservative Decade."

President Reagan was the keynote speaker at the 10th Anniversary banquet. The text of his address follows.

Edwin J. Feulner, Jr.
President

Keynoting the Conservative Decade

RONALD REAGAN

It is a great privilege to be here tonight at an extraordinary moment, not only in the history of The Heritage Foundation but, I firmly believe, in the intellectual history of the West. Historians who seek the real meaning of events in the latter part of the 20th century must look back on gatherings such as this. They will find among your number the leaders of an intellectual revolution that recaptured and renewed the great lessons of Western culture—a revolution that is rallying the democracies to the defense of that culture and to the cause of human freedom, a revolution that, I believe, is also writing the last sad pages of a bizarre chapter in human history known as communism.

We have been living in an age when the cult of overwhelming Government power was the reigning ideology. It dominated our intellectual thought and claimed some of the best minds of our society and civilization. Now, all of that is changing. The evidence is before us in this room and in the astonishing growth of a remarkable institution called The Heritage Foundation.

There is no better evidence that the time of the conservative idea has come than the growth of The Heritage Foundation. Back in the mid-70's this foundation was begun by Paul Weyrich and Ed Feulner with only a few staff members, some modest offices and not very much in the way of funding. Today Heritage has more than 100 staff members, many more associates and consultants, a brand new office building and a budget that has gone from \$3 million to \$10 million in 5 years. But it's not the money or numbers of people or size of the offices that measure Heritage's impact. Your frequent publications, timely research, policy papers, seminars and conferences account for your enormous influence on Capitol Hill and—believe me I know—at the White House.

Ed Feulner likes to say that not too many years ago a phone booth was just big enough to hold a meeting of conservative intellectuals in Washington. I know what he means—Washington has a way of being the last to catch on. Just as the growth of Heritage has stunned the pundits, the conservative cause itself—the Goldwater nomination in 1964, the growth of the New Right in the 1970's, the conservative victory in 1980, and the tax cut victory of 1981—all of these have come as a huge surprise to the Washington technocrats who pride themselves on knowing what's going on in politics.

The reason is plain. Many people in the power structure of our capital think that appealing to someone's narrow self-interest is the best way to appeal to the American people as a whole. And that's where they're wrong.

When the American people go to the polls, when they speak out on the issues of the day, they know how high the stakes are. They know the future of freedom depends not on “what’s in it for me,” but on the ethic of what’s good for the country, what will serve and protect freedom. Success in politics is about issues, ideas, and the vision we have for our country and the world. In fact, the very sum and substance of the work of The Heritage Foundation.

Don’t take my word for it. In a book called *The Real Campaign*, a study of the 1980 campaign, commentator Jeff Greenfield argues that gaffes or polls or momentum and all those other issues Washington experts thought were important in the election of 1980 were not. Mr. Greenfield argues that issues and ideas did count, that the electorate voted the way they did in large part because they rejected what liberalism had become and they agreed with the coherent conservative message they heard from our side.

This point about politics and elections is reflected in what some have been saying about our economic system. As George Gilder points out, it isn’t just self-gain or personal profit that drives the free market and accounts for the entrepreneurial spirit. There are larger issues involved: faith, a clear vision of the future, a hidden altruism, that simple human desire to make things better.

One current best seller, *In Search of Excellence*, has caused a great flurry in the business management schools because it argues that intangibles like “shared values” and a sense of mission are the great overlooked factors in accounting for success of business institutions.

This is true of nations as well. The American electorate seeks from its national leadership this sense of shared values, this reaffirmation of traditional American beliefs. They do not want a President who is a broker of parochial concerns; they do want a definition of national purpose, a vision of the future. And I believe that we conservatives have provided that vision during the past few years. When this Administration took office, we declined to go with patchwork solutions and quick fixes. We delivered instead on the promises we had made to the American people, promises that were part of a consistent and coherent view of this Nation’s needs and problems. We had a policy, we put it into effect. We made our promises and we kept them.

We said we would stop the juggernaut—built up over 40 years—of increased Federal spending—and we did. Despite the momentum accumulating from a host of new social welfare and entitlement programs, we still managed to cut the growth in Federal spending by nearly 40 percent. For the first time since 1964, all personal income tax rates have been cut—and by a hefty 25 percent across the board. And we made the most important reform of them all: In 1985, your income taxes will be indexed so never again will

you be pushed into higher tax brackets by inflation.

The story is the same for our efforts to deregulate the American economy. It was only a few years ago that every time you turned around some Government bureau had slapped on more restrictions on our commerce, our trade, our lives. We were at the point where we could hardly adjust our thermostats or use our credit cards without checking first with Washington. Our regulatory task force has already cut the number of final regulations issued by almost 25 percent, and saved American industry from 300 million hours of filling out forms.

And now that inflation has been reduced to 2.6 percent, and the economy is on the move again, I'm just wondering: where are all those folks who kept insisting Reaganomics would lead to crippling recession or runaway inflation? In fact, how come no one calls it Reaganomics anymore? Is it because our program is doing what we said it would—making America prosperous and strong again?

I think the picture on the foreign front is very much the same. You can all remember the days of national malaise and international humiliation. Everywhere in the world freedom was in retreat and America's prestige and influence were at low ebb. In Afghanistan, the liberty of a proud people was crushed by brutal Soviet aggression; in Central America and Africa, Soviet-backed attempts to install Marxist dictatorships were successfully underway; in Iran, international law and common decency were mocked as 50 American citizens were held hostage; and in international forums, the United States was routinely held up to abuse and ridicule by outlaw regimes and police state dictatorships.

Verifiable and equitable arms control agreements were nowhere in sight and our own military might had sharply declined. Even friendly Governments were toning down their pro-American rhetoric, abandoning their anti-Soviet declarations, withdrawing support for our diplomatic initiatives and beginning to be influenced by Soviet diplomatic and commercial programs they had previously dismissed outright.

All this is changing. While we cannot end decades of decay in only 1000 days, we have fundamentally reversed the ominous trends of a few years ago. First, our economic program is working and as our recovery sets the pace for the rest of the world, we strengthen the hand of other democracies. Second, the willingness of the American people to back our program for rebuilding America's defenses has added to the respect, the prestige and deterrent capability we need to support our foreign policy goals. Third, we have slowed significantly the transfer of valuable free world technology to the Soviet Union. Fourth, throughout the world today the aspirations for freedom and democracy are growing. In the Third World, in Afghanistan, in Central America, in Africa and Southeast Asia, opposition to totalitarian

regimes is on the rise. It may not grab the headlines, but there is a democratic revolution underway.

Finally, our new willingness to speak out forthrightly about communism has been a critically effective foreign policy step. We are making clear that the free world—far from plunging into irreversible decline—retains the moral energy and spiritual stamina to tell the truth about the Soviets, to state clearly the real issues now before the world. That issue is not, as our adversaries would have us believe, the choice between peace and war, between being “dead” or “red,” but rather the choice between freedom and servitude, human dignity and state oppression.

Now let me speak for a moment about a matter that needs to be cleared up. There are a number of Congressmen on the Hill including conservatives, who, while being inclined to vote for our defense policies, want to be absolutely sure of our desire for arms control agreements. I hope that my recent speech at the United Nations has helped to clarify this. But let me just add a personal note and this is a matter of conscience: Any American President, anyone charged with the safety of the American people, any person who sits in the Oval Office and contemplates the horrible dimensions of a nuclear war must in conscience do all in his power to seriously pursue and achieve effective arms reduction agreements. The search for genuine, verifiable arms reduction is not a campaign pledge or a sideline item in my national security agenda. Reducing the risk of war and the level of nuclear arms is an imperative, precisely because it enhances our security.

In our relations with the Soviet Union, we are engaged in a comprehensive agenda of major arms control negotiations. And for the first time, the Soviets are now talking about more than nuclear arms ceilings—they're talking about nuclear arms reductions. And tomorrow I will be meeting with Ambassador Ed Rowny to give him the new instructions he will carry back to the START talks in Geneva on Wednesday.

In fact, let me take this a step further and explain why it is our willingness to be candid about the Soviet Union—about its nature and expansionist policies. It improves the chances of success in the arms control area.

History shows us what works and doesn't work. Unilateral restraint and good will does not provide similar reactions from the Soviet Union. And it doesn't produce genuine arms control. But history does teach that when the United States has the resolve to remain strong and united, when we stand up for what we believe in, and when we speak out forthrightly about the world as it is, then positive results can be achieved. Weakness does not offer the chance for success; strength does. And that strength is based on military capability, strong alliances, a willingness to speak the truth, and to state our hope that someday all peoples of the world will enjoy the right to self-government and personal freedom.

You can remember one administration that tried to minimize the differences between the Soviets and the democracies. They lectured us on our "inordinate fear of communism." Under that administration arms control efforts not only failed but the hope of improved East-West relations ended in Soviet expansionism on three continents, the invasion of Afghanistan and an actual discussion by an American President before a joint session of the Congress about "acts of war."

We must never be inhibited by those who say telling the truth about the Soviet empire is an act of belligerence on our part. To the contrary, we must continue to remind the world that self-delusion in the face of unpleasant facts is folly, that whatever the imperfections of the democratic nations, the struggle now going on in the world is essentially the struggle between freedom and totalitarianism, between what is right and what is wrong. This is not a simplistic or unsophisticated observation, rather it is the beginning of wisdom about the world we live in, the perils we face and the great opportunity we have in the years ahead to broaden the frontiers of freedom and to build a durable, meaningful peace.

Let us never underestimate the power of truth. Not long ago, Alexander Solzhenitsyn reminded us that righteousness, not just revolutionary violence, has such power. Indeed, that is why I believe the struggle in the world will never be decided by arms but by a test of wills, a test of Western faith and resolve.

And this brings me to a second point. The goal of the free world must no longer be stated in the negative, that is: resistance to Soviet expansionism. The goal of the free world must instead be stated in the affirmative. We must go on the offensive with a forward strategy for freedom. As I told the British Parliament in June 1982, we must foster the hope of liberty throughout the world and work for the day when the peoples of every land can enjoy the blessings of liberty and the right to self-government.

This then is our task. We must present to the world not just an America that is militarily strong, but an America that is morally powerful, an America that has a creed, a cause, a vision of a future time when all peoples have the right to self-government and personal freedom.

I think American conservatives are uniquely equipped to present to the world this vision of the future, a vision worthy of the American past. I have always had a great affection for the words of John Winthrop delivered to a small band of pilgrims on the tiny ship *Arabella* off the coast of Massachusetts in 1630: ". . . we shall be a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us, so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be made a story and a byword through the world."

Well, America has not been a story or a byword—that small community

of pilgrims prospered and driven by the dreams and, yes, by the ideas of the Founding Fathers went on to become a beacon to all the oppressed and poor of the world.

One of those early founders was a man named Joseph Warren, a revolutionary who would have had an enormous impact on our early history had his life not been cut short by a bullet at Bunker Hill. His words about the perils America faced then are worth hearing today. "Our country is in danger," he said, "but not to be despaired of . . . on you depend the fortunes of America. You are to decide the important question on which rests the happiness and liberty of millions yet unborn. Act worthy of yourselves."

Let his idealism guide us as we turn conservative ideas into political realities. And as I urged in those closing days of the 1980 campaign, let us remember the purpose behind our activities, the real wellspring of the American way of life. Even as we meet here tonight some young American coming up along the Virginia or Maryland shores of the Potomac is looking with awe—for the first time—at the lights that glow on the great halls of our Government and the monuments to the memory of our great men.

We are resolved tonight that young Americans will always see those Potomac lights; that they will always find here a city of hope in a country that is free. So that when other generations look back at this conservative era in American politics and our time in power they will say of us that we did hold true to that dream of John Winthrop and Joseph Warren, that we did keep faith with our God, that we did act "worthy of ourselves." That we did protect and pass on lovingly that shining city on a hill.