

## [An honorary D.Litt for Eamonn Butler](#) [1]

Written by [Dr Madsen Pirie](#) [2] | Tuesday 19 June 2012



In a signal honour for the Adam Smith Institute and especially for Eamonn personally, he is today awarded an honorary D Litt from Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh.

In presenting Dr Butler for the degree, the Head of the Business School described Eamonn as "following in Adam Smith's footsteps." Just as Scotland's most famous economist had opposed vested interests which used government power to distort markets and promote anti-competitive regulations, so Eamonn has campaigned to have whole areas of government activity carried out more efficiently by free market activity:

*"In his many publications in newspapers and magazines, in his many broadcasts on radio and television, and in his many meetings with leading politicians, Dr Butler argued for contracting out of many local government services, he argued for the privatisation of companies and utilities, he advocated internal markets in health and education. Internationally, he advised governments on economic reform, anti-corruption policies and administrative reorganisation. To support his policy recommendations, he wrote many books on the contributions made by leading free market economists including Friedrich Hayek, Milton Friedman, and Adam Smith."*

The address went on to point out that Eamonn persuaded Edinburgh City Council to allocate the prime site outside St Giles' Cathedral for a statue to honour Adam Smith, hitherto bereft of adequate recognition in his own country. Eamonn went on to organize the creation and the funding of the magnificent statue of Smith which today adorns that site, dominating the High Street.

And when, three years ago Adam Smith's residence for the last twelve years of his life, Panmure House, came on the market, the Edinburgh Business School purchased it. Eamonn has been a leading supporter of the campaign to restore that property as a further memorial to Smith and his work.

In recognition of Dr Butler's outstanding contribution to the advancement of public policy and economics, the Head of the Business School asked the Vice-Chancellor by the authority of the University Senate to confer the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Letters on Eamonn Butler. It is an honour well-earned over decades of contribution to public policy, and is richly deserved.

The ASI and Eamonn's many admirers join together today in offering Eamonn heartfelt congratulations.

Update: Read the commencement address given at the ceremony [here](#) [3].

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