

Parkveien 45

Med forbehold om endringer
SPERRET til

Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland

SPEECH AT DINNER IN HONOUR OF SECRETARY OF STATE AND MRS SHULTZ
14 DECEMBER 1987

Secretary and Mrs Shultz,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure and an honour for me, Mr Secretary, to welcome you, Mrs Shultz and your party to Norway and to dinner this evening.

It is a particular pleasure not only because we regard you to be special friends of Norway, but also because we know that you, Mr Secretary, deserve a great deal of the credit for the successful conclusion of the INF Agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union signed in Washington last week.

The elimination of a whole category of nuclear weapons, represents a breakthrough in arms control negotiations of historic dimensions. This is an agreement that NATO countries have been working for since 1979. It will be of great benefit to the whole international community, and gives new hopes for constructive cooperation in an interdependent world.

The Summit in Washington reflects the importance not only of a broad and regular dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union at the highest political level, but also the importance of bold and visionary political leadership.

We are all encouraged by the signs of reexamination in Soviet thinking, not only about security and disarmament issues, but also in other fields. We must continue to explore the

potential in new Soviet proposals and constructively counter those that fail to meet our own goals and intentions. A careful, concerted and constructive Allied approach offers the best prospects for influencing Soviet behaviour in a positive direction, in the best interest of international peace and security.

Mr Secretary,

Norwegians and Americans have a long history of friendship. We are linked together by close ties. We share political ideas, institutions and cultural heritage. The ideals upon which the United States was founded have influenced the development of democracy in Norway. Your Constitution, which celebrates its 200th anniversary this year, was one of the models for our own Constitution of 1814. Human Rights, sovereignty of the people and the division of power are still key concepts in both our democracies.

Norway and the United States have been allied in War. We have not forgotten the decisive role of your country in the Allied campaign that brought liberation to Norway.

Nor have we forgotten the generous American assistance during postwar years of reconstruction which contributed to building a strong, democratic and viable Western Europe.

When discussing the close relationship between Norway and the United States, we should not only look to the past. The many interests we have in common in the present and the hopes and aspirations we share for the future add to the dimensions of our relationship.

Today we are allied in Peace. Our political ties are close. Our economies are interwoven in a broader international economic cooperation. Our defences are integrated in the Atlantic Alliance. My Government attaches the utmost importance to the efforts of our Alliance to consolidate its defences, to preserve

peace and security and to further pursue the process of East-West cooperation.

Membership of NATO has successfully safeguarded Norwegian security interests for nearly four decades. It has given us a platform from which we can contribute constructively to the necessary dialogue between East and West. NATO membership enjoys broad political support in my country. The support is actually increasing, not least among young people. Let me in this connection also express our deep appreciation of the continued American commitment to the defence of Western Europe, a commitment which represents the backbone of our Alliance.

As members of the United Nations, NATO and the OECD, Norway and the United States work closely together in political, military and economic cooperation. We also cooperate closely in other international bodies covering most fields of human activity. In these fora we seek not only to solve the acute and pressing international issues of the day. We also address the broader, long-term problems ahead. We face new challenges to promote a more equitable distribution of resources, economic stability, environmental protection, human rights, peace and security. These are fundamental challenges that can only be solved through comprehensive and binding cooperation based on mutual trust, within and across traditional affiliations in a world of increasing interdependence among nations. The Norwegian government will continue to participate actively and constructively in those endeavours.

Mr. Secretary,

This morning we had the opportunity to continue the discussions we had in Washington last April of issues of mutual and international concern. The profound understanding and community of interests between Norway and the United States was once again confirmed.

Our relationship is based not only on a community of real interests, but also on strong feelings of kinship and friendship.

The 19th Century saw a great wave of Norwegians leave their homeland for that dream of opportunity and prosperity that was America. Succeeding generations of Americans of Norwegian descent have kept close and strong ties with their family roots in Norway. Many Norwegians have had the opportunity to visit and study in the United States and have brought home valuable impulses.

And when analyzing Norwegian-American relations, we should not forget the very special category, to which you Mr Secretary and Mrs Shultz belong, of Americans of non-Norwegian descent who none-the-less have grandchildren who are half Norwegian.

Secretary Shultz, we deeply appreciate your choosing to celebrate your birthday in Oslo yesterday and for the opportunity that your visit has given also for useful bilateral political exchanges today. We also hope that Oslo has provided a congenial environment for the meeting of American ambassadors that you have assembled.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I ask you to raise your glasses and join me in a toast to Secretary and Mrs Shultz and to the continuing friendship and close affinity between Norway and the United States.