

THE PRIME MINISTER'S ACCEPTANCE ADDRESS ON BEING AWARDED
AN HONORARY DOCTORATE OF LAW AT ST.OLAF COLLEGE, NORTHFIELD,
MINNESOTA, USA, 15, FEBRUARY 1983

Permit me to begin by expressing my heartfelt
gratitude to St. Olaf College, to you, Mr. President, and
to the staff and students, for your warm welcome to my
wife and me here at the College.

Next, I would like to say how very happy and proud I
am to have been awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Law by
St. Olaf College. The simple and dignified ceremony in
the Boe Memorial Chapel has made a deep impression on me.
While offering warm thanks on my own account, I should,
however, like to add that I also regard this award as
expressing the sincere wish of the University to call
attention to the close ties and the extensive contacts
between our two countries; ties and contacts which this
University has done so much to preserve and develop.

I now have the honour of responding to my high
academic title with an address in which I shall take up
important aspects of Norway's cooperation with Western
nations, a family in which the United States plays a
leading part. I will first make mention of our joint
participation in the Western defence alliance, and its
dedication to arms control and disarmament in both East
and West. I shall then deal with our relations with the
countries in The European Communities, and our endeavours
to bring about a better coordination of Western economic

policies to overcome the present difficulties, with the particular aim of coping with mass unemployment. In conclusion, I shall say a few words about international cooperation at what might be called our local level, that is to say between the Nordic countries.

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The paramount goal of any Norwegian Government's policy is to ensure the country's peace, security and national independence. Such external freedom is a prerequisite to enable us to realize the ideas and values for which we stand: the Christian basis of our national culture, the rule of law, and government by the people. At the same time, and in order to maintain this national independence, it is necessary to have a harmonious social and political internal situation as a basis for a strong will to defend ourselves, as well as an economic situation which will sustain a good defence capability.

However, Norwegian foreign policy is not restricted to the purely physical protection of Norwegian independence and integrity. Its endeavours also comprise our more general efforts in an international context to help creating a safer world, through the settlement of disputes, it includes detente and arms control measures, as well as attempts to remove social unrest and economic distress. Thus, by means of considerable Government aid to developing countries, we are trying to contribute to a peaceful solution of their economic and social problems. The disagreement in Norway as regards the latter question is

largely confined to whether the Governmental assistance ought to amount to 1 percent of the gross national product or more. This year, official Norwegian development assistance will probably reach 1.1 percent of the Gross National Product, that is 3 times the average level for Western industrial countries.

Participation in binding international cooperation means relinquishing the right to certain forms of action. It also means assuming obligations. In our experience, however, the burden of self-imposed restrictions on national freedom of action is by far outweighed by the advantages and rights which we have gained from such cooperation.

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For Norwegian foreign policy, the starting point must be our geographic position, which will be of strategic importance and therefore exposed so long as there exists tension between East and West. Understandably our foreign policy is, therefore, particularly affected by the relations between the United States and The European Communities and the Soviet Union, and by our relations to each of these three.

Our relationship with the United States is in a special position. Norwegians are fully aware of how immeasurably important it is for us that there are so many Americans with roots in our country. The very large emigration of Norwegians to the United States means, for

instance, that most families in my country have relatives in the USA. The close connections between the two countries are well founded in personal friendship and family ties. At the same time, the United States is our most important ally in security policy matters. It can safely be said that our relationship with the United States is the very lifeline of Norwegian foreign policy.

Traditionally, our links with the Soviet Union have been fewer. Historically, peace has reigned along our common border. However, the growth of the Soviet Union into a superpower, and particularly the development of its colossal military strength in the northern regions, have inevitably increased our security problems considerably. This does not imply that the build-up of the Soviet military complex on the Kola peninsula in the north is chiefly directed at Norway. But we can not underestimate the significance of the fact that these overwhelming military forces are in our immediate neighbourhood. There is no reason to deny that control of Norway would be of great strategic value to the Soviet Union. And we also know that our neighbour has availed himself of opportunities which have presented themselves in other parts of the world to secure strategic advantages, when this could be done without too much expense.

Substantial finds of oil and gas on the Norwegian continental shelf constitute a new factor of importance also to our relations with other countries.

The circumstances I have mentioned, have strengthened the motives which led Norway to join the Western defensive alliance in 1949. Cooperation in NATO has several objectives: Through the commitment to mutual and collective defence, our primary aim is to deter any potential aggressor. In this way the Alliance serves its most important purpose, that of trying to avoid war altogether. And it has indeed proved possible to maintain peace in our part of the world throughout the years of NATO's existence. Moreover, it must be perfectly obvious to everyone that member countries of the Alliance will never start a war, whether with conventional or nuclear weapons.

However, to prevent war, a potential aggressor must be convinced of the unity in the alliance, and of its determination and ability to defend the territory of the member countries. My own country - with its limited resources - would never be able to build up sufficient forces of its own to prevent an aggressor's attempt on our territory. Should Norway be attacked, we would, therefore, be dependent on help from outside. This is already being prepared for and tested in peacetime. We regularly hold military exercises in Norway in which Norwegian and allied forces train together. For this purpose, we have also entered into agreements with several members of the Alliance concerning stockpiling of heavy military equipment and supplies. Such plans, manoeuvres and advance stockpiling of materiel are also necessary so as to avoid having foreign forces permanently stationed, or to have nuclear arms, on Norwegian territory in peacetime. The fact that we do not

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have and do not want to have such bases should also serve to reassure the Soviet Union and underlines that we have no aggressive intentions.

Despite the economic difficulties that have also affected my country, we shall keep to the agreement between the NATO countries to increase defence spending by at least 3 percent annually in real terms. In fact, in view of the Soviet build-up, we intend to increase our defence budget by more than this rate of growth.

An Alliance with the important task of preserving peace will always strive to achieve détente and disarmament in the East-West relationship. The Alliance must be as strong as its counterpart, but should not seek to be stronger, and should secure the balance of forces at the lowest possible level.

The talks on intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe call for particular attention also on Norway's part. Through its so-called two-track decision of December 1979, the Alliance has offered to refrain wholly or in part from an otherwise essential modernization of its forces provided that the Soviet remove or at least substantially reduce the large number of its landbased SS 20 missiles that have been deployed in recent years and which can reach targets all over Western Europe.

Under its new leadership, the Soviet Union now has a historic opportunity to demonstrate in practice the

seriousness of its repeated expressions of a desire for disarmament. At the same time, in order to convince the Soviet Union that it must reduce its forces, the Western countries must stand firm in their continued support of the two-track decision. If we do, there will be a reasonable prospect of achieving results. But if the Soviet Union should get the impression that because of domestic opposition in member countries, the West will under no circumstances modernize its forces, then there is no reason to assume that the Soviet Union will make any concessions to achieve what they can expect to achieve just as well without concessions.

In public debate both in Europe and the United States, the question has arisen of freezing present stocks of nuclear arms on both sides. In today's situation in Europe, such a freeze with regard to intermediate-range weapons would also constitute a freeze of the existing imbalance between East and West. Therefore, Western support for such Soviet wishes will not serve the purpose of disarmament in Europe. This "freeze proposal" means accepting a Soviet superiority which they would therefore see no point in changing in subsequent negotiations. There are numerous examples in history of how an absence of balance can tempt one side into trying to apply political and military pressure and thus increase the risk of war. Therefore, to ensure a balance of forces and peace, we are standing by the negotiating policy agreed in 1979 among all the NATO governments.

Geographically, politically, economically and culturally, Norway is an integrated part of Western Europe. We are in no respect placed in a position between East and West. When the Norwegian people in a referendum in 1972 voted by a narrow majority not to join the European Communities, this did not constitute a Norwegian no to Europe. Opponents as well as supporters of Norwegian membership of the EC both agreed on that. The question of membership remains shelved. Meanwhile, we have noted a growing interest among Norwegians in a broader cooperation with Western Europe, and not least with the EC countries. The chief instrument governing our economic dealings with The European Communities is a trade agreement. We also maintain contact with the EC on all matters of importance to our economic and trade relations.

The significance of the EC to Norway is not, however, purely economic. This can clearly be seen in regard to the cooperation on foreign policy that has been instituted in the EC, the so-called EPC (European Political Cooperation). It is most important, not least to Norway, that the EC countries are now discussing and formulating common views on matters which are due for subsequent discussion in NATO. If most European member countries should already have taken their stand before the NATO meetings, these meetings could develop into a dialogue mainly between the United States and the EC. This would be an unsatisfactory situation for us, particularly if the matters being dealt with affect important Norwegian interests.

For these reasons, arrangements have been established, on Norwegian initiative, for contact with the EPC, to enable us to be kept informed about the cooperation going on, and also to present Norwegian views and positions on matters that are coming up for discussion. It is now up to us to make the most of the possibilities which this arrangement offers. At the same time, we hope in due course to establish more formalized contacts with the EPC.

Relations with the Soviet Union and the other Eastern European countries also form part of Norwegian European policy. As the ally of one superpower and neighbour to the other, we have a particular interest in détente and East-West cooperation.

The Government wants good neighbour relations with the Soviet Union, and in that connection attaches importance to keeping our relations as correct and businesslike as possible. We have the impression that this is appreciated on the Soviet side. Cooperation between our two countries has developed in a number of fields, and we wish to make still further progress in this respect. We do not see the fact that our security policies are differently orientated, as any, obstacle to good neighbour relations.

We wish, at the same time, to extend our dialogue and contacts with the smaller countries in Eastern Europe, in the hope that this will lead to concrete practical cooperation. This is an important element in

what could be termed Norway's "Ostpolitik".

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As I have already said, we have our closest cooperation, and by far our most numerous points of contact, with the countries in Western Europe and North America. About ninety percent of the goods we export goes to them, and Norwegian shipping is no less dependent on the same markets.

We are in Norway very seriously concerned about the international economic situation and the potentially dangerous level of unemployment. Admittedly, most modern societies today have systems which provide the unemployed with reasonable financial compensation. But what cannot be compensated for, is the grave social and political damage made when so many able and willing people, especially young people, are denied the opportunity to make a normal contribution to the community. Although many tasks remain undone, we seem unable to make use of these valuable resources. This situation is a major challenge to us all. If we fail, we will suffer economic losses. But we may also - and this is more important and more dangerous - be faced with a situation which affect the social and political stability of many countries, and thereby also Western peace and security.

These are some of the circumstances which prompted the Norwegian Government's approach last month to the

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris. We indicated coordinated measures which all member countries should take in order to reduce unemployment and to create new growth. No country can do this well enough on its own. But we can manage to turn developments in the right direction if, in coordinated action, we manifest a real determination to change our present policies. Measures would necessarily vary from country to country, but it is essential that the new political steps can be coordinated and taken at the same time.

Clearly the United States, a main driving force in the world economy, is capable of playing and must play a key role if the necessary progress is to be achieved and mass unemployment is to be reduced. The size of the United States means that it must play a major part also in the efforts to bring about an economic upturn.

One of the numerous causes of the global economic crisis is the measures adopted by many countries to restrict imports. The purpose is to improve the domestic employment situation. But experience shows that such trade barriers usually do more harm to others than good to oneself. For the western world as a whole, therefore, the results are serious. One dangerous feature of this situation is that such measures give rise to uncertainty to potential exporters, and so lead to reduced world investments and aggravate the crisis.

This problem is related to the part played by - what I would term - egocentric pressure groups in democratic societies. They often see their main function as promoting the interests of a single group, with little regard for the harm that may be inflicted on others. It is a special temptation for such pressure groups to try to persuade governments to disregard the harmful effects on other countries of measures in their own countries. And politicians can win votes by supporting such national selfishness. But I think it is true to say that we shall not overcome the world crisis and mass unemployment unless we resist national egoism, because there are no adequate solutions without improved international economic cooperation.

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These issues will certainly also figure prominently at the session of the Nordic Council in Oslo next week. This assembly of parliamentarians and Government Ministers constitutes the official superstructure for cooperation between the five Nordic countries. This cooperation today extends into practically all fields of life. In an international context the forms of cooperation between the Nordic countries are quite unique. There is probably no other group of countries in the world that has reached a similar degree of community. The Norwegian Government is strongly in favour of the further development of Nordic cooperation in matters of real and practical significance.

Although the Nordic countries have chosen different security arrangements, a Nordic balance has been created which has contributed to peace and security both in the Nordic area and in Europe more generally.

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Equally, and I suppose this really goes without saying, there is no contradiction between close European cooperation and the further development of equally close relations with the United States. The one acts as a supplement to the other. Let us moreover make our point of departure absolutely clear: In the foreseeable future, Western Europe will be dependent on the American security guarantee. On the other hand, the United States too, is presumably dependent on a balance of power between East and West and which can only be preserved by cooperation between Western Europe and North Amerika.

This dependence - indeed this interdependence - does not mean that the United States and Western Europe always agree. There have been several examples in recent years of important differences between Western European and American policies. The question of the Siberian gas pipeline is one example, although this disagreement has now been settled and replaced by a common wish to cooperate on trade relations with the Soviet Union. Besides it is nothing new that our views differ. The reasons may also vary. One reason is that the countries of Western Europe are by now more able and willing to assert their own interests, also in relation to the

United States. The development of cooperation between the EC countries has probably served to accelerate the emergence of a more marked Western European identity.

Differences of opinion across the Atlantic will be a challenge to Norwegian foreign policy. It is in our interest to work for the resolving of disagreements. I do not believe that Norway will ever in the foreseeable future be in a situation where we shall be obliged to choose between the United States and Europe. And we shall certainly do our utmost to prevent any such question from arising. As I have already said, our entire security policy is founded on a guarantee from and a firmly rooted friendship with the United States. Our relation to the United States is the very backbone of Norwegian foreign policy. An Atlantic policy is and will always remain fundamental to our European orientation. We wish to develop our relations with Europe, but at the same time we wish to extend our cooperation with the United States.