

STATSMINISTERENS TALE FOR USA'S VISEPRESIDENT OG FRU BUSH  
PÅ AKERSHUS SLOTT ONSDAG 29.JUNI 1983

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Mr. Vice-President, Mrs. Bush,  
your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and privilege for me, on behalf of the Norwegian Government, to welcome the Vice-President of the United States and Mrs. Bush to this dinner in their honour, in a historic setting, which underlines that a visit of the American vice-president is a historic event.

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To me personally it is a particular pleasure to be able to reciprocate the warm and genuine hospitality which my wife and I felt so strongly when we visited Washington in February this year. The conversations I had with President Reagan, with you yourself, Mr. Vice-President, and with members of the US Government were extremely useful, and I am happy that we can continue this exchange of views during your visit here in Oslo.

The relations between Norway and North America have long traditions. We claim that a Norseman, Leiv Erikson, was the first European to set foot on American soil. Today, 983 years later, relations across the Atlantic are more important than ever. Our peoples are linked by a

multitude of close political, economic and cultural ties, and we share the same basic values of freedom and democracy. Together we belong to the Atlantic community of nations.

Allied co-operation on the basis of the North Atlantic Treaty has successfully safeguarded the security of the Western world for more than three decades. This security is based on a combination of military strength and political solidarity. The credibility of allied defence continues to depend on a US military presence in Europe and a credible American nuclear deterrent. At the same time a free Europe and the European contribution to the common defence are of great importance to the security of the United States.

In keeping with its two basic objectives: Defence and detente, the Alliance is actively engaged in a series of arms control negotiations.

The talks in Geneva on intermediate range nuclear weapons are of particular significance. Never before have all the member countries of the Alliance been so directly involved in a negotiating process with regard to nuclear weapons. In these talks the US are acting at the request of, and on behalf of the Alliance. The negotiating strategy is a result of close and continuing consultations in the Alliance. It is important to keep both these facts in mind. All leaders who have participated in the formulation of this strategy, should also feel a responsibility to support the Geneva negotiators, and thus add strength and credibility to the efforts of the Alliance.

In our view, the Alliance has shown great and constructive flexibility in Geneva. First, the Alliance proposed that there should be no intermediate range nuclear weapons on either side in Europe. This remains the ideal outcome of the negotiations. Secondly, an interim solution was later introduced. If we are to succeed in our efforts to bring down the very large number of Soviet missiles, the Alliance must combine such flexibility with firmness and unity.

It is equally important that the governments of Western Europe can secure the support of their own people. It is more than natural that widespread uneasiness about nuclear arms is now felt by large

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numbers of people on both sides of the Atlantic. We must therefore stress that the goal of the Alliance is to reduce the nuclear threat. This can best be achieved by a balance of forces at the lowest possible level.

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Mr. Vice-President,

As our common Western security and defence are dependent on the Alliance, so Western co-operation is equally important to ensure that our societies are not seriously weakened from the inside by social and political unrest.



The high unemployment in the OECD region is dangerous and unacceptable. I am optimistic, however, that there is a growing recognition that economic growth can only be restored, and unemployment reduced, through effective and coordinated international measures. The OECD and Williamsburg meetings in May were both important steps in the right direction. Here again the United States' policy is of particular importance to all others, because the US is a main force in the world economy.

At the same time, in our joint efforts for recovery, we should not become so obsessed with our own problems that we neglect our responsibilities towards the poorer countries in the World. Therefore, to put the world economy back on the rails, we must get to grips,

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simultaneously, with the acute difficulties of developing countries.

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In 1814, when the Norwegian Constitution was written, its founding fathers embodied several of the main principles from the American Declaration of Independence. These principles and the common values we share are two main factors explaining the close relationship which our countries enjoy. A third factor is the strong personal and family ties that exist across the Atlantic.

The emigrants who left Norway for America sought and created a new existence in the New World with greater opportunities. But the vital links between those who left

and those who remained were never broken. Most families in Norway have relatives in the United States and very many are in personal and regular contact. Such ties adds to the strength of our relations.

Our co-operation is based on a community of real interests. But it is also based on feelings; strong feelings of kinship and friendship. Your visit, Mr. Vice-President and Mrs. Bush, will strengthen these ties between our nations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I ask you to raise your glasses and join me in a toast to Vice-president George Bush and Mrs. Bush, and to the American-Norwegian friendship.