

STATSMINISTERENS TALE UNDER LUNSJEN PÅ ST. OLAF COLLEGE

15. FEBRUAR 1983

Dr. Foss, distinguished members of St. Olaf College,
ladies and gentlemen

It is a great pleasure for me and my wife to visit this historical college with so many links to the Norwegian immigration and heritage.

I want to pay tribute to St. Olaf College as an institution of learning and culture of high class, and I highly appreciate to have received the honorary law degree today, from this college.

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St. Olaf College is not only well known in Norway but enjoys a high standing and reputation in our academic circles.

It is of great importance for the academic exchange and for the cooperation between Norway and The United States that this college continues to prosper and expand.

I am pleased, therefore, to learn that the professorsh which the Norwegian Government endowed to St. Olaf College for a 5 year period on the occasion of its centennial celebration in 1974, has led to a strenghtening of the program of Norwegian studies.

For the International Summer School of the University of Oslo, St. Olaf College is a cornerstone on this side

of the Atlantic. The efforts undertaken by St. Olaf College are of great importance for the programs of the Summer school and its efforts to attract students from many countries to study together each summer in Oslo.

St. Olaf College does indeed deserve sincere gratitude for its energetic work to keep in direct contact with Norway, both in the academic and in the cultural fields, sharing willingly and generously its cultural wealth with us by frequent visits of interalia, its choir, orchestra and band.

The Norwegian-American Historical Association with its headquarters at St. Olaf College deserves a special mention. I would like to underline the importance of their work in maintaining the old records and bringing

out books and articles with details of the cultural heritage. I have been told that this activity has resulted in over 50 books during the last fifty years, and this is impressive. It is widely known that the academic quality of their work is so high that the ethnic and archive publications of the Norwegian American Historical Association are models for similar organizations in USA.

I would like to thank all of you who have contributed to make this visit to St. Olaf such a memorable occasion for my wife and myself, with the dignified ceremony and the friendly atmosphere. I thank you specially for the beautiful gift I have received and that will remind me also in the future about the visit

Finally, on behalf of both of us, let me wish all the best for St. Olaf College in its future work, both as an academic institution and as an important link between the peoples of Norway and the USA.