

Statsminister Kåre Willoch

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kl. 1830.

The Prime Minister's Greetings to the EDU-Party Leaders
Conference at a Reception held by the Government at
Akershus Castle, June 29th 1984.

It is a great privilege - and an equally great
pleasure - to bid most heartily welcome to this reception
the distinguished participants in the ongoing Conference
of the European Democrat Union and the International
Democrat Union, as well as our other guests.

(on behalf of....)

On behalf of the Norwegian Government, I feel honoured to have this opportunity to greet so many leading politicians and friends from so many countries.

I would like to thank you all for having accepted our invitation to Akershus Castle. We are particularly happy for this occasion since the present Party Leaders Conference is the first ever to be held in Norway.

I find it especially pleasant to be able to receive you tonight at Akershus Castle, representing as it does the oldest integral defense fortification of Norway, whose oldest parts date back to around the year 1300.

(This castle has been ...)

3

This castle has been attacked again and again, it has been under siege and severely damaged. But it has never in the course of its long history been forced to surrender as a consequence of direct attack. Norwegians have always cherished this fact with pride, and attach to it a symbolic value for our nation. Occupants did never get in before the castle had lost its military value.

At the same time, the history of Akershus Castle may, in a way serve as an example or a motto also for this audience for politicians from democratic parties: to withstand attacks and to go on even under hostile pressure; but never to give in to forces that try to grasp the power from outside.

(The discussions which we ..)

The discussions which we held during to-day's working sessions were in my view most interesting and extremely fruitful. Although our domestic situation and background may differ, we are dedicated to the same cause and we adhere to the same basic principles. Our deliberations also demonstrated that we hold similar views on a great number of international questions. This fact represents a reality; a reality which very much constitute a strong political force: The decisions and recommendations of our Party Leaders Conference, and its member parties, in the furtherance of our joint democratic ideals and ideas can not be ignored. They represent an important contribution to an active democratic policy for peace, security, justice and the well-being of all peoples.

(To-day's meetings are...)

To-day's meetings are adjourned and we have gathered here to relax and, hopefully, to have a nice time together. I do hope that you will find it pleasant to spend a part of the evening on these historic grounds.

May I then propose a toast to the future of the European Democrat Union, and the International Democrat Union, with sincere wishes for the best of luck also to each and all of the member parties. I would like to address this toast to our chairman, Dr. Alois Mock.