

STATSMINISTER NORDLIS BORDTALE VED MIDDAGEN FOR DEN
KINESISKE VISESTATSMINISTER GENG BIAO, AKERSHUS SLOTT,
21. MAI 1979

Mr. Vice Premier, Madame,
Dear Chinese and Norwegian friends,

It is with great pleasure that I, on behalf of the Norwegian Government and the Norwegian people, welcome you, Mr. Vice Premier, and your delegation to Norway and to this dinner tonight in your honour.

My people has followed the achievements of the Chinese people since liberation with keen interest. The great improvements in the daily life of the masses, through their own hard work, is considered by my people as admirable. The reorganization of this vast and populous country since liberation after the wars and other calamities that plagued China and its people must have been an almost overwhelming task. We wish you continued success and good luck in the new phase of further development which you have started.

I am proud to state that Norway was one of the very first countries to recognize the People's Republic of China. Our bilateral relations have always been good, and in steady development, especially since the establishment of full diplomatic relations early in the nineteen fifties. Not at any time or in any particular matter has there been any disagreement or friction in our bilateral relations in all these years.

Our relations have developed and improved even if there is a vast distance between our two countries, and even if we have different political, social and economic systems.

We must consider the vast geographical distance between us as a challenge, not as a hindrance, to a

further deepening of our personal, political, economic and cultural relations.

As a small country Norway tries to contribute to the solution of the grave problems of the world through international cooperation, not the least by strengthening the United Nations. The most important tasks facing the world community are the two following:

- The arms race must be stopped.
- The poor masses of the world must be given a fair share of the total wealth, which to-day is distributed so unevenly and unjustly among the peoples.

All nations, big and small, irrespective of political or economic systems have a duty to cooperate towards these goals.

I feel convinced that during your stay here, you will get many impressions of the friendly feelings towards China prevailing in Norway. Your present visit, Mr. Vice Premier, will influence and further cement the friendship and cooperation between our two countries, to the mutual benefit of our peoples.

I have the honour to propose a toast:

- to the steady growth of the friendly relations between Norway and China,
- to the happiness and well-being of the Chinese people,
- to the health of Prime Minister Hua Guofeng and
- to your good health, Mr. Vice Premier and
Madame Zhao Lanxiang.