

NORWAY SPEECH  
AUGUST 16, 1996

I AM GREATLY HONORED TO RECEIVE THIS DECORATION FROM KING HARALD. JOAN AND I AND OUR FAMILY ARE GRATEFUL TO ALL OF YOU FOR BEING WITH US FOR THIS SPECIAL OCCASION. YOU HAVE BEEN MORE THAN FRIENDS OF OURS; YOU HAVE BEEN WONDERFUL ADVISORS AND COUNSELORS. WHILE I ACCEPT THIS HONOR FOR MYSELF, JOAN DESERVES HER SHARE OF THE CREDIT. SOMEWHERE IN HER BACKGROUND THERE MUST BE A NORWEGIAN! TED, ELEANOR AND WILLIAM AND PAM ALSO SHARE IN THIS HONOR. THEY HAVE BEEN SUCH WONDERFUL SOURCES OF STRENGTH FOR US.

I ESPECIALLY WISH TO THANK CONSUL GENERAL ANFIN ULLERN OUR OFFICIAL HOST FOR TONIGHT AND THE PERSON WHO PUT IT ALL TOGETHER. I KNOW THAT WE ARE HONORED BY THE PRESENCE TONIGHT OF OUR NEW NORWEGIAN AMBASSADOR, TOM VRAALSEN. HE WILL FIND THAT WE HAVE JUST ABOUT AS MANY NORWEGIANS IN MINNESOTA AS IN NORWAY. BY COMING TO MINNESOTA, HE IS GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START.

MY NORWEGIAN ROOTS HAVE BEEN SPECIAL TO ME ALL OF MY LIFE. MY VALUES: MY BELIEF IN WORK, IN PUBLIC DUTY, IN HONESTY, IN THE RESPECT FOR LEARNING, IN THE FAMILY, IN SOCIAL JUSTICE, IN THE CAUSE OF HUMAN LIBERTY, AND MY SENSE OF HUMOR, IF IT EXISTS -- ARE ROOTED IN THE VALUES MY PARENTS SOUGHT TO INSTILL IN THE MONDALES IN OUR FORMATIVE YEARS. MY FATHER, WHO SPOKE FLUENT NORWEGIAN, DID NOT TEACH US THE LANGUAGE, FOR HE WANTED US TO BE AMERICANS, BUT HE CONSISTENTLY SOUGHT TO INSTILL IN US THE VALUES SO BASIC TO HIS BACKGROUND AND TO HIS LIFETIME OF RURAL MINISTRY.

THE ATTRACTION OF NORWEGIANS TO AMERICA, AND THE RICH TIES THAT HOLD US TOGETHER TODAY -- IS NO MYSTERY. NORWAY AND THE UNITED STATES ARE JOINED TOGETHER SO COMPLETELY IN OUTLOOK AND VALUES AS TO BE INSEPARABLE.

THE LONGER I LIVE, THE MORE I VALUE THE IMPORTANCE OF THOSE VALUES AND THE MORE I SEE THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING THEM AND LIVING BY THOSE CRUCIAL RULES OF LIFE. THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY, OF RELIGION AND EDUCATION AS THE TRANSMISSION BELTS OF OUR CULTURE, TAKE ON MORE MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE.

WE CANNOT FORGET THE ENORMOUS CONTRIBUTION MADE BY GOOD EDUCATION. I AM PLEASED THAT WE HAVE THE LEADERSHIP OF MANY OF OUR REGION'S BEST INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION -- AUGSBURG, AUGUSTANA, CONCORDIA, LUTHER, AND ST. OLAF -- HERE TONIGHT. I HAVE TRULY ENJOYED WORKING WITH YOU ON THE ENORMOUSLY SUCCESSFUL NOBEL PEACE PRIZE CONFERENCE. I HAVE WATCHED ITS CONTINUING PROGRESS FROM AFAR. IT IS JUST ONE EXAMPLE OF WHAT YOUR COLLEGES MEAN TO THOSE THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS ATTENDING THEM. THIS IS NOT THE PLACE FOR A COMMERCIAL, BUT I HOPE YOU ARE LOOKING AT THE NEED TO EDUCATE YOUR STUDENTS ABOUT THE GREATLY INCREASED SIGNIFICANCE OF JAPAN AND ASIA TO US AND TO THE WORLD.

WE ALSO APPRECIATE THE WONDERFUL WORK OF THE VESTERHEIM MUSEUM, THE NORWEGIAN AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, THE SONS OF NORWAY, THE NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, AND THE NORWEGIAN LUTHERAN MEMORIAL CHURCH (MINEKIRKEN).

MY EXPERIENCE AS AN AMBASSADOR, MY FIRST, HAS FURTHER STRENGTHENED MY APPRECIATION OF OUR COMMITMENT TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND HIS RESPONSIBILITY TO TEACH AND SERVE THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE AND HUMAN LIBERTY. OUR RELIGIOUS VALUES OF HONESTY AND RESPONSIBILITY HAVE HELPED SHAPE THIS REMARKABLE NATION OF OURS INTO THE WORLD'S PREEMINENT SOURCE OF STABILITY AND PEACE. VIEWED FROM JAPAN, ONE SEES MORE CLEARLY THE AWESOME ROLE OF AMERICA AS ONE OF THE WORLDS ESSENTIAL SOURCES OF PRINCIPLED PEACE, STABILITY, HUMAN RIGHTS, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, DEVELOPMENTAL SUPPORT, AND THE SOURCE OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOR SO BASIC TO OUR RELIGION. WE ARE NOT PERFECT, BUT WE ARE MORE SINNED AGAINST THAN SINNING. IT IS THE WORLDS GOOD FORTUNE THAT AMERICA STANDS ALONE AS THE WORLDS ONLY SUPERPOWER. IT IS ALL THE MORE NECESSARY THAT WE WIELD THIS AWESOME POWER FOR THE GOOD OF HUMAN KIND. I OFTEN MARVEL AT HOW WE ARE WILLING TO RISK COMMERCIAL AND GEOPOLITICAL COSTS, AND EVEN THE LIVES OF OUR YOUNG, IN THE PURSUIT OF HUMAN RIGHTS, ARMS CONTROL, AND OTHER BROAD PURPOSES. MAY WE NEVER LOSE THAT INSTINCT FOR DECENCY THAT REMAINS OUR SOURCE OF MORAL AUTHORITY IN THE WORLD. WHEN THE TANKS ROLLED ACROSS THE BODIES OF CHINA'S YOUNG ON TIANAMEN SQUARE, WE COULD NOT STOP THE TYRANTS HAND, BUT IT WAS THE STATUE

OF LIBERTY THAT SYMBOLIZED THE CAUSE OF CHINA'S YOUNG. WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT.

WE WILL NEVER ACHIEVE THE PERFECT WORLD, BUT WE MUST NEVER STOP TRYING TO DO SO. WE MUST ALSO NEVER STOP HAVING A GOOD TIME WHILE WE ARE AT IT. THE WORLD HATES SCOLDS AND THE SELF-IMPORTANT AND SO DO WE. HUBERT HUMPHREY, I BELIEVE SPEAKING FOR HIS NORWEGIAN GRANDFATHER, ALWAYS TALKED OF THE POLITICS OF JOY, OF OPTIMISM. HE POINTED OUT THAT AMERICA IS THE ONLY NATION THAT OFFICIALLY DECLARED THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS AS A NATIONAL GOAL. FOR AMERICANS, HE SAID, LIFE WAS NOT TO BE SIMPLY ENDURED, WE WERE EXPECTED TO ENJOY IT. NORWEGIAN HUMOR IS SOMETIMES MOSTLY FUNNY BECAUSE THE PERSON WHO TELLS IT SOMEHOW THINKS ITS FUNNY.

FOR SOME UNACCOUNTABLE REASON, I OFTEN REMEMBER A STORY APPEARING IN THE N. Y TIMES SOME YEARS AGO ABOUT AN INCIDENT IN A NORWEGIAN ARMY OUTPOST IN A REMOTE POST IN NORTHERN FINNMARK JUST ACROSS THE BORDER FROM A SOVIET MILITARY OUTPOST. ONE MORNING AT 6:00 A.M., IN FULL VIEW OF THE RUSSIANS, NORWEGIAN TROOPS HAULED THEIR COOK OUTSIDE IN FRONT OF A FIRING SQUAD. HE WAS SHOT, WITH BLANKS, AND FELL TO THE GROUND. THE SOVIET TROOPS IMMEDIATELY CALLED FOR AN EMERGENCY CONFERENCE. IN IT THEY CRITICIZED THE NORWEGIANS FOR HOLDING THEIR EXECUTIONS IN PUBLIC VIEW. THE NORWEGIANS ASSURED THEM THAT THEY WOULD SHOOT THE NEXT COOK IN PRIVATE!

THAT'S IS ANOTHER REASON THAT I SO CHERISH YOUR FRIENDSHIP. WHILE OUR JOKES HAVE NOT ALWAYS BEEN AS FUNNY AS WE THINK, WE KEEPING CRACKING THEM NEVERTHELESS! THANKS FOR THIS WONDERFUL EVENING AND THANKS FOR KEEPING US LAUGHING.



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