

BOWDOIN COLLEGE
Commencement 1987

WILLIAM R. COTTER, teacher, lawyer, public servant, son of Harvard, and champion of learning, we honor you today not only for your accomplishments as president of a sister college in Maine, but for a long and exemplary career devoted to what Bowdoin's first president called "the common good." Your nine-year presidency of the African-American Institute testifies eloquently to your dedication to furthering human understanding across the barriers of culture and race. When you became the 18th president of Colby College in 1979, you continued this quest, by establishing the Ralph J. Bunche Scholarship Program to bring minority students to Colby. Your record of service in Washington and in Nigeria sets an example for your students of how a career dedicated to the life of the mind can also encompass the life of politics and action. You have shared with us at Bowdoin the heartaches and joys of defending the cause of the small liberal arts college, in a world that seems to grow ever larger, more specialized, and less free. We salute the courage and farsightedness you have brought to this task, and in honoring you today we also salute with friendly greetings your students and your colleagues at Colby whom you serve so well. *Honoris causa*, DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS.