

Speech delivered by the President
of Finland in connection with his
official visit to the Netherlands
October 25, 1972

Your Majesty,
Your Royal Highness,
Mr. Prime Minister.

I thank you, Mr. Prime Minister, for the kind words you addressed to my country and to me personally /on behalf of the Netherlands' Government. It gives me great pleasure /to hear you speaking about Finland, /representing /as I do /a country that has traditionally very good relations with the Netherlands.

The economic and cultural exchanges between Finland and the Netherlands have a long history dating back to the 17th century.

We in Finland highly esteem the valuable moral support your country gave us in our legal struggle for independence at the turn of this century and that your country was among the first to recognize the independent Finland.

In January 1918, when the representative of the Finnish Government approached the Government of the Netherlands asking for recognition of her newly gained independence, reference was made by him to the illustrious democratic traditions of the Netherlands, its prominent cultural position, and the important role of the Netherlands in the development of international law.

Today, almost 55 years later, when for the first time a Head of State of Finland visits your country, we renew our appreciation of the principles of democracy and law to which your country for centuries has been faithful. We value these principles which are in line with the centuries-long traditions of our own Nordic democracy.

As you mentioned in your speech, Mr. Prime Minister, your policy is not inward-looking and your object is to make an important contribution to the consolidation of international understanding. We have noted with interest your efforts to strengthen, through international co-operation

within the United Nations, the power of justice and reason in international relations. You have in your policy also sought to accelerate economic and social growth, in order that all peoples of the world may benefit equally from development. The similarity of the basic views held by Finland and the Netherlands emerges with particular clarity in UN policy, our common object being to support all efforts to strengthen the United Nations.

At the same time as I once again thank you for the warm reception we have been given, I wish to express my satisfaction that I have had this opportunity through the most interesting programme to get to know this country which has so greatly contributed to international life.

Mr. Prime Minister,

Permit me to propose a toast to the continued development of friendly relations between the Netherlands and Finland.