

**The original documents are located in Box 8, folder “5/14/75 - Toast for Prime Minister of the Netherlands” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

MR. PRIME MINISTER, MR. FOREIGN MINISTERS,

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS:

I AM HONORED TO WELCOME YOU TO THE WHITE HOUSE THIS  
EVENING ON YOUR FIRST VISIT TO WASHINGTON AS PRIME MINISTER OF  
THE NETHERLANDS.

OUR CAREERS HAVE MUCH IN COMMON, MR. PRIME MINISTER.

WE BOTH SPENT MANY YEARS IN THE POPULAR BRANCHES OF OUR RESPECTIVE

LEGISLATURES. WE BOTH SERVED AS OUR PARTIES' LEADERS ON THE

FLOORS OF THOSE HOUSES. AND NOW WE MEET HERE TONIGHT AS THE

LEADERS OF OUR RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS.

OUR PEOPLE ALSO SHARE A COMMON HERITAGE. THE

NETHERLANDS AND THE UNITED STATES ARE LINKED BY BONDS OF HISTORY,

CULTURE AND FRIENDSHIP WHICH GO BACK EVEN FURTHER THAN THE FOUNDING

OF THE UNITED STATES TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

LONG BEFORE THEN, THE ANCESTORS OF YOUR COUNTRYMEN

ESTABLISHED AN AMERICAN SETTLEMENT WHICH, HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR

THE QUIRKS OF HISTORY, MIGHT STILL BE CALLED NEW AMSTERDAM.

APPROPRIATELY ENOUGH, BOTH AMSTERDAM AND NEW YORK  
ARE CELEBRATING THEIR BIRTHDAYS THIS YEAR. AMSTERDAM, AT  
SEVEN HUNDRED, IS TWICE AS OLD AS NEW YORK, BUT BOTH CITIES  
STILL RADIATE THE SAME SPIRIT OF VITALITY, EXCITEMENT AND  
SOPHISTICATION.

THE TRADITIONAL FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN OUR PEOPLES HAS  
BEEN MANIFESTED IN OTHER WAYS. AS WE BEGIN CELEBRATING THE  
TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, I SHOULD  
NOTE THAT THE NETHERLANDS WAS THE FIRST COUNTRY TO ACKNOWLEDGE  
THE SOVEREIGNTY OF OUR REPUBLIC.

SO YOU MIGHT SAY THAT OUR GOVERNMENTS, AND OUR PEOPLE, HAVE  
BEEN BOTH FRIENDS AND RELATIONS FROM THE VERY START.

YOU ARE THE LEADER OF A COUNTRY, MR. PRIME MINISTER,  
WHOSE PEOPLE ARE THE HEIRS TO A RICH AND NOBLE HERITAGE.



OVER THE CENTURIES, THE DUTCH HAVE DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES IN  
ART, LITERATURE, SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION, ECONOMICS AND  
POLITICS. WE IN THE UNITED STATES ARE FORTUNATE TO HAVE  
BENEFITTED FROM THE MANY CONTRIBUTIONS OF YOUR TALENTED COUNTRYMEN.

IMMIGRANTS FROM THE NETHERLANDS CARRIED WITH THEM MORE THAN JUST  
A SENSE OF THRIFT AND A LOVE OF TULIPS: THEY BROUGHT TO THEIR NEW  
HOMELAND A TOLERANCE OF RELIGION, A FAITH IN JUSTICE, A LOVE OF  
FREEDOM AND A BELIEF IN MAN'S GOODNESS -- QUALITIES WHICH HAVE  
IMMEASURABLY ENRICHED THE LIFE OF AMERICA EVER SINCE.

I KNOW. I HAVE WITNESSED IT FIRST HAND. NOWHERE

HAS THE DUTCH CONTRIBUTION BEEN MORE VIBRANT AND REMARKABLE

THAN IN THE WESTERN PART OF MY OWN STATE OF MICHIGAN, THE AREA

SETTLED BY THOUSANDS OF DUTCH IMMIGRANTS IN THE LAST CENTURY.

TO THIS DAY, MY HOME TOWN OF GRAND RAPIDS BEARS THE DISTINCTIVE

IMPRINT OF THOSE GENERATIONS OF BRAVE, HARDWORKING SETTLERS.

MR. PRIME MINISTER, I HAVE SPOKEN OF THE WARM  
TRADITIONAL TIES OF FRIENDSHIP, TRUST AND MUTUAL RESPECT WHICH  
LINK OUR PEOPLES. NOW I WOULD LIKE TO TURN TO THE PRESENT --  
AND THE FUTURE.

TODAY, ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CAUSES WE SHARE IS THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE. A GENERATION AGO, NATO PROVIDED THE ESSENTIAL STRUCTURE OF SECURITY THAT ENABLED WESTERN EUROPE TO REBUILD, LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR ITS PRESENT PEACE AND PROSPERITY.

TODAY, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE, AS NATO PARTNERS,  
KEEP THAT COOPERATION ALIVE TO PRESERVE WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED  
SO THAT WE CAN FACE THE FUTURE SECURE, FREE AND UNAFRAID.  
THROUGH THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, WE CAN CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN OUR  
COMMON DEFENSE WHILE SEEKING A FURTHER LESSENING OF TENSIONS  
BETWEEN EAST AND WEST.

AND, WE CAN WORK TO BUILD THE MORE PEACEFUL, STABLE AND PROSPEROUS INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WHICH ALL NATIONS SO URGENTLY DESIRE. IT IS IN THIS SPIRIT AND WITH THESE GOALS THAT YOU AND I WILL MEET AGAIN AT THE NATO SUMMIT LATER THIS MONTH, AND I VERY MUCH LOOK FORWARD TO THAT MEETING.

MR. PRIME MINISTER, I ALSO LOOK FORWARD TO  
STRENGTHENING THE TRADITION OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION BETWEEN  
OUR COUNTRIES IN THE COMING YEARS. IN THAT SPIRIT, I PROPOSE  
A TOAST TO YOUR HEALTH, MR. PRIME MINISTER, TO THE HEALTH OF  
HER MAJESTY, QUEEN JULIANA, AND TO THE LASTING FRIENDSHIP  
BETWEEN OUR PEOPLES.

END OF TEXT