



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JOHN A. VOLPE AT A DINNER GIVEN BY THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS PAAVO AITIO, IN HELSINKI, FINLAND ON JUNE 11, 1969

Minister Aitio and Mrs. Aitio, may I first of all express my appreciation for your generous remarks and your warm Finnish hospitality and, on behalf of all of your guests, our sincere thanks for this delightful dinner in these beautiful surroundings. Finnish hospitality is legendary, and this evening confirms all I have ever heard from those fortunate enough to have had the pleasure of a visit to Finland.

It is a particular pleasure for an American to visit this magnificent country. Our two countries are linked by long years of friendship and by the family ties existing between the thousands of Finns who have migrated to the United States and the people of Finland. Our relations are friendly and frank and are based on a common vision of the dignity of the individual and the enduring value of a free society. We both seek a world at peace in which past inequities are corrected and free and independent nations are enabled to realize their potential in a responsible and cooperative international society.

This morning I had the honor to be received by my counterpart in the Finnish government, Minister Aitio, by Foreign Minister Karjalainen, and then I had a most pleasant and productive talk with President Kekkonen. I brought to those gentlemen and I bring to you now warm greetings from President Nixon. Following my meetings with the two ministers and President Kekkonen I am delighted to confirm the impression I had before coming to Finland that there are no outstanding problems between our two countries and that there exists both in our official and our private relations an atmosphere of mutual cordiality.

I am looking forward later on this afternoon to the talks which are scheduled with your civil aviation officers. As the world continues to shrink and as more and more people are able to afford to travel long distances by air, we will continue to develop aviation routes to and from our various countries. In the United States we welcome such developments as the new Finnair route to New York as an important step in increasing contacts between Finland and America. We look forward to further developments in this field and we will be most interested to hear about Finland's plans for the future in air transport.