



# Ræða flutt í kveðjuhófi Mr. and Mrs Butrick the Minister of the United States, ódagsett.

Bjarni Benediktsson – Stjórnmal – Ræður – Mr & Mrs Butrick – Ráðherra Bandaríkjanna – Bandaríkin –  
Kveðjuhóf

## Tekið af vef Borgarskjalasafnsins

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Ladies and gentlemen.

We are gathered here tonight to take leave of our distinguished friends, the Minister of the United States and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Butrick.

Mr. Butrick has only been here for fifteen months and Mrs. Butrick for a still shorter period, or only one year, and they came from a very different part of the world, even more different than the United States themselves, because as you know they had for a long time been living in the Far East before they came to Iceland.

You might therefore think it would have been difficult for them in this short time to adapt themselves to our perhaps rather cold conditions.

If so, we have not noticed it. Mrs. Butrick has always received us in her house with that warmth and hospitality which is natural to her wherever she goes, and Mr. Butrick is so efficient a worker that no conditions neither cold nor warm will hinder him.

Those fifteen months Mr. Butrick has stayed among us have indeed been memorable times for Iceland. In those months we have had to work on many small questions from day to day, but we have also taken great decisions and some of them will influence the history of Iceland and even perhaps affect the happenings of the world for a long time.

When I think about my relations with Mr. Butrick, I remember the work we did on the implementation of the Keflavik-Airfield

agreement, where we had endless negotiations, but succeeded in finding solutions to all our problems as far as they could be found at that time.

I think about the signing of the Economic Cooperation Agreement with the United States and the work which had been done in preparation to that, especially in connection with the reservations regarding the special position of Iceland, where Mr. Butrick assisted us as he could.

I remember the work Mr. Butrick has done here as representative of E.C.A. I shudder when I remember all the questions he asked and poor Þórhallur Ásgeirsson and Davíð Ólafsson had to answer, I am afraid not always to his full satisfaction. But at the same time I remember the constant help Mr. Butrick has given us in

those matters, how eager he was last year to further the sale of our frozen fillets to Germany, how he has advised us on many occasions in dealings with E.C.A. - chiefly on utilizing their resources as fully as possible. And now I think he wants as much as any Icелander to overcome the resistance of the O.E.E.C. in Paris to the fertilizer-plant plan.

All this is of importance, but still more important is our participation in the North-Atlantic Treaty where Mr. Butrick initiated the negotiations and helped them on.

The period during which Mr. Butrick has been minister to Iceland has indeed been so full of exciting events that those of my colleagues who most love adventure and excitement have absolutely declined to serve any longer in the Government after ~~the departure~~

the departure of Mr. Butrick and therefore demand that we all resign on the day he intends to take off on, the 10th of August.

But to speak in earnest I must say that I have often thought it must be a little difficult to be the representative of the strongest power on the earth to the weakest.

According to law both are sovereign states and formally equal and there is no reason to hide the fact that our smallness and the fact that we have only recently acquired our sovereignty makes us especially susceptible to any slight or showing of superiority.

I do not know if Mr. Butrick has ever thought he was in a difficult position in this respect but if so we have never noticed it.

He always approached any subject with complete frankness and open mind, being ready to discuss and argue and take a no if it was necessary from the Icelandic point of view. In short, he has never let me get the feeling that he wanted to use his position as the representative of the great power against me as the representative of the weak one. As I said, this might have been difficult for some but I think it has not been so for Mr. Butrick, because he could not behave in any other way.

On behalf of Iceland I would indeed have wished that Mr. and Mrs. Butrick stayed here longer and I tell them that we sincerely regret that they are leaving, and without criticizing I must say it is singularly unfortunate that

our good friends the Byrns, their chief assistants, whom everybody who know them likes so much, are leaving about the same time. But it is not for us to decide the coming and going of foreign diplomats, but to work with them as they come.

But I hope I can say when Mr. Butrick now is leaving that a personal friend of mine is leaving and I am sure I can say that a friend of Iceland is going away.

Let us drink to the health of Mr. and Mrs. Butrick.