

## Speech by Jens Otto Krag (Brussels, 22 January 1972)

**Caption:** On 22 January 1972, Danish Prime Minister Jens Otto Krag signs the Treaty of Accession to the European Economic Community (EEC) and makes three wishes for the future of the European Communities.

**Source:** Bulletin of the European Communities. Dir. of publ. Commission of the European Communities. February 1972, n° 2. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. "Speech by Jens Otto Krag (Brussels, 22 January 1972)", p. 30-32.

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**Publication date:** 13/09/2013

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"More than ten years have passed since I, in October 1961, as Foreign Minister on behalf of the Danish Government, presented Denmark's application for membership of the European Communities. We saw then the applications of Ireland, Norway, the United Kingdom and Denmark as a natural and logical consequence of the cooperation which the countries of Western Europe had established in so many fields after the war. We still hold that view. We had, admittedly, not expected that it would take so long to reach the end of the road. But, we have not been waiting in silence. Hardly any question has been discussed so much, not only in Denmark but also in the other countries of Western Europe. At every opening of the Danish Parliament, in all major parliamentary debates in Denmark, in all Ministerial meetings of EFTA since its start, in the Nordic Council, in the Council of Europe, at visits to the European capitals one of the principal subjects has been how the economic split-up of Western Europe could be overcome.

I am referring to these past events because they explain the satisfaction we feel in the present situation where, at long last, we are about to sign the Treaty of Accession.

I find it appropriate, therefore, to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped bring about this situation. I think, above all, of those who, by mutual concessions and flexibility, brought about the political conditions for the opening of negotiations and for their successful completion. But I think also of those who, especially in the last few months, have been working round the clock to bring before us the text of the agreements we are signing today.

Not so very many years ago it would have sounded like something out of a fairy-tale or wishful thinking if we had been told that European countries which had been warring each other for centuries, would be able to sign a treaty like the one before us.

Let me pronounce three wishes for the future of the European Communities.

My first wish is that the new Member countries will add a positive element to the development of the Communities and thereby strengthen their vitality, efficiency and dynamism. I am well aware that this implies that we too must learn to understand and respect the interests of other Member countries and in a proper democratic way solve the problems of the future in a manner satisfactory to all parties concerned and so also to the Communities.

The second wish is that the Communities will pursue their internal policies in a progressive spirit of social consciousness. We have learned how to achieve economic growth. But we still have to learn how to administer it in a way that will not only bring more material wealth to us all but also correct social imbalances for the benefit of the least privileged. At the same time the problems of preservation and improvement of the human environment as a whole in the industrial society become ever more acute. We can solve these problems by common action. Each country itself will hardly be able to.

In conclusion, the third wish-which I may express in what we expect will become a new official language of the European Communities-is that the external policies of the Communities will be open and outward-looking. I am thinking first of the other EFTA countries, including, not least the other Nordic countries, Sweden, Iceland and Finland. These countries have taken part in European cooperation since the last war. Without arrangements with them our cooperation would not be complete.

I am thinking also of growing trade and understanding with the countries of Eastern Europe in the spirit of negotiations and détente.

Nor should we forget the importance of close cooperation with the United States and Canada. Both in the fields of trade, monetary affairs and security, is the destiny of Western Europe closely bound up with that of North America. It will not be our interest to loosen these ties.

Last but not least I think of the developing countries, the poor world outside Europe and North America. An

enlarged European Community will acquire an economic and commercial strength which imposes on the Communities a special responsibility for the solution of the problems of the third world. It will be one of the most urgent tasks of the Community to live up to this responsibility.

It is with the confidence that the European Communities will fulfil these wishes that I sign my name to the Treaty of Accession today and will recommend it for approval by the Danish Parliament and the Danish people. It is the hope of the Danish Government and of the majority of the Danish Parliament, that this historic decision will contribute to secure the peace of Europe, further our economic development and thereby create the foundation for new social progress also for the poorest countries of Europe. In this context and in full freedom European culture and scientific progress will have their best possibilities".