

Order of the Day of the Commander-in-Chief

N:o 38.

After hard fighting lasting more than a hundred days, Finland has concluded peace. United and ready for all sacrifices, our people took up arms to protect what they treasured more than life: honour, liberty and Western civilization. Now we have had to cede parts of our beloved Fatherland to superior forces; our villages and cities have been burnt down and devastated but with undismayed courage, heads erect, we are still standing, protected by our Army, worn out in many battles, but not defeated inspite of the enormously superior forces of the enemy.

Volunteers, you who have hastened over land and sea to our help, leaving home and country, ready to give your lives in the Finnish snows, to you in the name of the Army I express my sincere thanks. Your proud hearts have brought you to our shores as our brothers-in-arms against the masses of the East. Not all of you could take part in the battle, but I thank you all for your noble thought.

I thank you, Swedes! For centuries on many battlefields we have together shared the glory of victories, but also the bitterness of defeat worthy of the name of Swedes; thousands of you have fought at our side. That your wish to help us has sprung straight from the hearts of all your compatriots, is proved by the generous support in many forms, which we have received, sometimes even perhaps at the cost of the giver's own security.

I greet you, Norwegians, who hastened from the land of high fells to fight for the liberty of the North.

I greet you, Danes, who, inspired by the same spirit, have defied frost and snow to join the ranks of your Northern brothers.

You, our kinsmen from the shores of the Danube, you also heard the distant echo of our bugles, and after the lapse of a thousand years the Magyar's sabre and his Finnish brother's sword have once more been drawn for a common cause.

I greet you, Belgians and Frenchmen, and you, sons of Great Britain, who despite the threat at your own door were anxious to come to our aid.

I express my thanks also to the sons of other nations who joined our colours, ready to take the field. From my heart I thank the Finns from the New World and our kinsmen from East Karelia.

In these days, when more than ever the freedom of the weak is threatened by aggressive force, when the heavy boots of destruction trample down the labour of generations gone-by, when the very existence of small nations is in deadly peril, you all have proved that there are still men who believe in high ideals and have faith in the eternal values of mankind.

May the brotherhood in arms which we have forged help to strengthen the ties that unite our peoples and draw them still closer to each other. Our feeling of gratitude will never fade.

MANNERHEIM.