

Trouw

A hearty welcome

to you, soldiers of the Allied Armies.

Five years ago foreign troops overran our country. They came as usurpers and oppressors. We hated to see them walk through our streets and live in our houses.

Now again foreign troops march along our canals and enter our homes. This time they have come as our friends, as our

liberators!

And how welcome they are! All through these long, dark years we have waited for you. We knew that one day you would come and give us back the freedom, we have lacked so sorely.

Now you have bravely fought your way to us and the GRAND-DAY OF OUR LIBERATION has come. We only want to say

thank you

with all our heart. We hope you will have a good time in our country and enjoy the real Dutch hospitality.

Of course you may count upon our help, whenever you want it! God bless you all!

FREE!

We are free.

What we have prayed for, what we have fought for, what we have hoped for, what we have despaired of, but what through all darkness and misery we have always believed in has become a reality.

We are free!

The German has gone.

The ruler of yesterday has become what is more fitted for him, what is better for him: the vanquished of to-day.

Tension has gone.

Fear has gone.

Terror has gone.

Injustice recedes.

Freedom, that to-day for us is in the very first place: relief.

The leaden burden of five years of occupation, five years of robbery, five years of breaking down of culture, five years of innocent blood spilt, five years of embittered, nerve racking fighting has been taken away from us.

Freedom, that to-day is, that all this has gone, that it does not go on any more as it did yesterday and the day before yesterday.

Freedom, that to-day is not a heavily laden conception, not a political problem that we have to solve, not a task that is put on our shoulders.

Freedom to-day is, that we are human beings again, ordinary human beings, who may be themselves, no longer restrained by what, for five years, squeezed us into a straight jacket, made us take fright and urged us into the way of bloody resistance.

Freedom, that is that the Netherlands are the Netherlands again and no longer "the occupied Dutch territories".

Freedom, that is that our brave Queen has again entered into the actual exercise of the prerogatives she is entitled to.

All that is freedom, that is the boon of to-day.

That is what, from the bottom of our heart, we thank Almighty God for and how can we do this in a better and purer way than in the words of the sixty sixth psalm?

That is what, further, we thank our allies for. In the very first place England that did not falter, when in the autumn of 1940 everything seemed lost, and beside her also the United States and Russia.

Free we are to-day and gratitude fills our heart.

The joy of freedom cannot be a whirl of feasting. Beside the joy of freedom there is mourning in our heart.

These two can go together. Therefore we will not suppress that mourning, not to-day either. Freedom, our joy, has been dearly bought.

Thus we remember in gratitude all those who fell, who became victims of the war.

And most especially all those friends and comrades, known and unknown, who in the fight for freedom consciously gave their lives.

By our eyes are passing the men and women facing the firing squads, the dead from the concentration camps and prisons, all the reprisal murders in town and country.

The Netherlands of the future again have a soil steeped in the blood of martyrs.

Freedom obliges.

Freedom, to-day it is a gift, to-day it may be a gift. But to-morrow it is a task, a duty.

And it will soon be to-morrow. It really is already to-day.

What then?

With our freedom we stand in a naked land.

Not much is left of the old Netherlands.

Not much more than the foundations. In a material as well as in an immaterial respect.

And now we have liberty. And that liberty says: You have your hand and your head and your heart.

Use those, above all things use them all three.

Make something of it. Make something beautiful of it. Old things have passed by. Also the old things of before 1940.

Make something better of it now. Draw the lesson from the past. We now face it critically. We have had to give it up and now have also distanced ourselves from it.

We see the good of it, the familiar, the homely.

But also the bad, the crooked, the sinful.

A new time awaits us. We are getting our hand in. New building is required.

New Netherlands will have to be shaped. Houses, factories, means of conveyance etc.

From our people, torn asunder, disjointed and bleeding, a new society, a better society than before, will have to be built up.

That is the task of freedom.

The building up will have to be solid and just. No ramshackly building.

The old native solidity must be coupled to a notion of justice purified by suffering and steeled in the fight.

Then we are making for a Dutch society, in which social justice rules.

That is the way of freedom.

That way of freedom will be difficult.

There will be many material impediments.

No money, no goods, no people in the right places.

That all can be overcome and comparatively easily.

The most difficult part of the way of freedom will be conquering ourselves, will be self-denial.

The way of freedom is the way of not

looking for one's own interest and one's own honour and not in the very first place maintaining one's own positions.

Look not every man on his own things, but on the things of others.

The way of freedom is the way of the Gospel.

Only if the Netherlands, if the Dutch with hand and head and heart give themselves over to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only renewer of life, and do what He asks of us in His Word and Law, the road of freedom is really opened up to the Netherlands.

God give to the Netherlands men and women, who so know the way of freedom and give them the mouth to point out that way in a language that is being understood in these times.

O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard:

Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins.

Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows,

Which my lips have uttered and my mouth has spoken, when I was in trouble.

Psalm 66 : 8—14.

To the Canadian troops entering Amsterdam

Hallo boys.

Now, this is Amsterdam.

We hope you will like it.

We are jolly glad you have come. These four days we have been looking out for you.

They told us we were free, but we didn't feel safe with the Germans all around us carrying their deadly weapons as before. Those weapons have wounded us so sorely. We have got to know the arbitrary and cruel way in which they are wielded.

But now you are here to secure our resumed liberty. You and your comrades have beaten our common enemy. We may rejoice and thank God who has blessed your arms. He gave it into your hearts to come over to us and liberate at the peril of your life an old brave people from the tyranny of its neighbours.

Now you have triumphantly entered our capital and we are proud to receive you in the Venice of the North. We want to tell you what your coming means to us. Therefore we will show you our city as the enemy has left it, battered and damaged, but still dear to us in its own quiet loveliness. We cannot refrain from leading you to the holy places, where our brothers and friends have been shot down by the ruthless enemy you and we have fought so obstinately. We will also show you our children, crying with hunger, and our women and men, who have been starving all through these long hard wintermonths.

Your American and British comrades have already brought relief in our dire need. They dropped the food we needed so sorely. It came down from heaven as the manna for the children of Israel in the desert.

Often we had seen and heard the great planes passing over our country, going to

fight the enemy. We did not fear, because we knew that they would not wilfully harm us. But with still greater joy we saw them this time skim our roofs, for we knew that they were the forerunners of coming victory bringing liberation.

Soldiers of the allied armies, we want you to know that you are welcome in our beloved Amsterdam, that you are welcome in our homes and at our table. We hope you will fraternize with our good old people of Amsterdam. The Germans have robbed us of many a thing but they could not deprive us of the old famous intimacy of our family-life. You, as our friends are invited to get acquainted with it.

Most of you are Canadians. Well, we want to thank you especially for the kind hospitality your country has shown to our Royal Princess and her three beloved daughters. One of them has been born on the soil of your country and we will never forget the friendship the Royal Family enjoyed amidst your people. We will point out on the map this far-away land to our children and grand-children, telling them the story of our sufferings and hardships, but also of our deliverance and gladness.

May the friendship between your people and ours last for many, many generations.

This paper during the occupation has, with other underground papers, kept the spirit of resistance against the German going.

It has especially fought against nazification, against the endeavours of the Germans to destroy our Christian culture by their pagan doctrine and satanic practices.

So as to give you an insight into how a great part of our people feels this freedom, which to-day you are bringing us, we offer you this edition of our paper, written in your native language.