

ONCE AGAIN DOWN THE ROADS OF DESPAIR

AN EXCLUSIVE STATEMENT TO LIFE READERS FROM QUEEN

WILHELMINA OF THE NETHERLANDS, NOW A REFUGEE IN LONDON

LONDON, MAY 25 (BY CABLE)



DUTCH QUEEN

At this immensely grave moment in the history of mankind, black silent night has settled on yet another corner of this earth. Over free Holland the lights have gone out, the wheels of industry and the plows of the field that worked only for the happiness of a peace-loving people have come

to a dead stop. The voices of freedom, charity, tolerance and religion have been stilled. Where only two weeks ago there was a free nation there is now the desolation and the stillness of death, broken only by the bitter weeping of those who have survived the extinction of their relatives and the brutal suppression of their rights and liberties.

It is because Holland's voice must not be allowed to remain strangled in these days of fearful trial for my people that I have taken the supreme decision to transfer the symbol of My Nation, as it is embodied in My Person and My Government, to London where it can continue to function as a living and a vital force. At this time of universal suffering I will not speak of the racking heart searchings which this decision has cost one who only little more than a year ago was stirred to her very depths by the generous devotion of a warm-hearted people

celebrating the jubilee of a queen and a woman who for 40 years has tried to serve her nation as she tried to serve it on that day of fateful decisions and will try to serve it to her last breath. I will speak only of the reasons that finally moved me to decide as I did.

There were cold and weighty reasons militating against the natural sentiment that prompted me and my family to stay and suffer what my unhappy people were called upon to suffer. Plans found on the invader on the first day of his wanton assault confirmed by the action of his air-borne troops soon made it clear that his first objective was to capture the royal family and the Government, thus to paralyze the country by depriving it of all leadership and legally constituted authority. When soon afterwards the likelihood had to be faced that the treacherous methods employed by the enemy would succeed in finally undermining the gallant resistance of the Dutch forces, decision could no longer be postponed. If the Royal authority were to stay and fall into enemy hands, the voice of Holland, the very symbol of Holland, would have vanished from the earth. There would but be a memory, perhaps quickly fading in these world-shaking times where yesterday's memory is today's oblivion.

Holland proper may have been lost for the time being but, when these crucial decisions had to be taken, one province in the south still showed hope of being able to hold out for some time. My Navy with its proud traditions remained intact, ready to

join battle wherever needed—and most important of all, an empire scattered over the surface of the globe and counting 65,000,000 inhabitants remained free, part and parcel of that nation of free men that will not and cannot perish from the earth. Was all this to be abandoned for the sake of a sentiment, however powerful? Was all this to be cast adrift on a wildly turbulent sea without leadership or authority? Duty, responsibility and farsighted statesmanship lay elsewhere. To keep the voice and the symbol of Holland alive, as an inspiration and a rallying point for those of our Army, our Fleet and our countless empire subjects—nay, Dutch men and women all over the world who will give their all for the resurrection of the dearly beloved motherland. To keep the banner aloft, unseen and yet ever present for those who have lost their voice but not their hope nor their vision. To speak for Holland to the world, not of the rightness of its cause which needs no advocacy in the eyes of honest men, nor of the unspeakable horrors, or the infamous tricks inflicted on its gallant army and its innocent population, but of the values, the ideals, the Christian civilization that Holland at the side of its allies is helping to defend against the onslaught of barbarism. To remain true to the motto of the House of Orange, of Holland, of all that immense part of the world that is fighting for what is infinitely more precious than life: *Je maintiendrai*. I shall maintain.

WILHELMINA



Caught at home before they could reach mobilization points, Belgian men joined the stampede to Paris. Here with suitcases, they are on their way to get into uniforms and go back to fight. Refugees filled the improvised sifting stations un-

der the echoing glass roof of the Gare du Nord and in the dank lower levels of the Gare de l'Est, while the dumb, tragic wall of relatives waited outside. Police and secret-service men drifted through the crowd looking for German

spies. They caught 17 one day, 20 another in one station. U. S. Ambassador Bullitt estimated that this vast tide of potential famine and disease could not be stopped with less than \$50,000,000, pleaded for U. S. Red Cross ships.