

POLYGOON - HAARLEM
HOLLAND

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FLOODS (III) 228 metres

One look at the map of the South West of Holland shows what part of it was flooded and destroyed by the water. The black parts of the map give the impression of a national disaster.

From the first day on rescue- and relief-work started and gradually increased.

The gravity of the disaster brought H.R.H. Prince Bernhard back to the Netherlands from his stay in the United States.

Immediately after his return he flew over the flooded areas where helicopters were busy working to take people into safety who had stayed there sometimes for two or even three days on small parts of the land which were not drowned.

Somewhere in the middle of the country lies a ferry-boat as if it was put down there by a huge hand, without any purpose.

Many little towns and villages in these days got a sad fame in our country and in the world.

This is Oude Tonge on the isle of Overflakkee where 300 people were drowned.

In the vicinity of the village of Oosterland of this same island, nearly everything was destroyed. This village lost 40 people.

The greater part of Stavenisse on the isle of Tholen is fully destroyed. As far as one can overlook now, here also 300 people lost their lives. We have no words to describe the drama that has stricken this area.

(CHURCH) In Zierikzee, on the isle of Duiveland, the ground around the Great Church stayed dry. The cattle which was saved from the flood is assembled here and awaits its evacuation.

On a little airstrip which is marked by white sheets helicopters land regularly to bring food and medical equipment and to evacuate the people of this little town which is surrounded by the water.

On the West point of the isle of Goeree, the little village of Stellingendam was for a part taken from the earth. The water stands high in the streets. From all sides ships from different kinds hastened themselves to this little town to take part in the relief and evacuation work and airplanes dropped food and sandbags.

Women and children and the old ones were evacuated. The Dutch Navy assists at the collection of furniture, but they don't find very much. One can hardly imagine the need and the sorrow of the population. 27 people lost their lives in Stellingendam.

(HELICOPTER) On many places in this drowned country people have been isolated for days on the roofs and ceilings of distant farms. Helicopters with American, English, Belgian and Dutch pilots brought very many of them into safety.

From the polders on the isle of Goeree Overflakkee they were flown to a little airstrip which was improvised in the vicinity of the town of Middelharnis. As great roaring wasps they flew to and fro with their precious cargo.

There was a ground organization, also improvised, which helped the people and assisted them in accompanying them to the boats with which they were to leave their island.

By the airlift in which 25 helicopters were involved, on one day sometimes more than 400 people were evacuated from the flooded areas. H.R.H. Prince Bernhard acquainted himself with the work of the helicopter crews and he talked with the foreign pilots.

Accompanied by the burgomaster of Middelharnis H.R.H. went to the village to speak to the displaced people.

Later he was present at the embarkation of the people who were for the greater part transported to the evacuation-centre of Rotterdam. From there they were brought to the province of Utrecht, where they were visited by H.M. Queen Juliana. H.M. was very interested especially in the babies, these little ones who are not conscious of the great disaster which stroke their people and their country.

(DUCKS) In that country the battle of the water front still goes on. Amphibious cars of the American army in Germany came to the aid of the Dutch, French, Belgian, English and other rescue crews, in this drowned country from where people who had stayed to the last moment, are now evacuated.

(AFTER MAN WITH BICYCLE) On many parts in this district of the country people (refugees) have to leave now. They leave behind their farms and their house, destroyed, and their ground which was so dear to them; all of which is now mastered by the water. They have to evacuate because they can't live any more in their country, in which they can't find a living and where they still are exposed to the threat of new floods which can freely come into the country by the breaches in the dikes.

(EMBARKING IN DUCKS) Somewhere in our country these people will find a temporary home. The Netherlands shall take them with love.

But their thoughts will stay with the ground at which they worked, the villages in which they lived and with the dead which they had to leave behind, now already more than a 1300.

The people of the Netherlands of which these men and women are part, all of us we shall have to help them, so that they can go back to their country as soon as possible. The country which still lies

drowned but that will arise again in the sense of the words in the weapon of Zealand: LUCTOR ET EMERGO.