



THOSE ARE HOLLAND Liberation tulips two-year-old Billy Harbers is sniffing, commemorating the liberation of Holland which took place 25 years ago this week mainly accomplished by Canadian

## Voskamps remember liberation of Holland by Canadian troops

Appropriately, tulips of the Holland Liberation variety sold by the Acton Liberation Committee are blooming.

Allied troops, most of them Canadians, reached Holland and led by tanks, liberated the Dutch after four years of occupation, 25 years ago this week.

Canadians of Dutch extraction everywhere remember the dates. In Acton and district, many have grim and happy stories to tell of the days before and after liberation.

The Free Press asked Mr. and Mrs. Dick Voskamp, two former Netherlanders, to relate some of their experiences during the occupation and the liberation. The Voskamps live at R. R. 2, Acton were Dick owns and operates a service station on Highway 7. They came to Canada 17 years ago full of gratitude for the chance they had to start over in a new country.

Dick was 14 when the western part of Holland where he lived was liberated by Canadian troops in trucks and there wasn't much fighting in that sector. But he remembers the days prior to the liberation when his family like the others had to scrounge for food.

Mrs. Voskamp, nine when the war ended, has vivid memories of the occupation troops retreating in the north and the grim food shortage when thousands of Dutch died for lack of food.

The Reichskommissar for Holland cut off food supplies to main Dutch cities in retaliation for a railroad strike staged by the Dutch underground. Rations were cut to one small loaf of bread per week for each person.

You never quite forget the occupation, the Voskamps said, especially the days when their parents had to forage for food while thousands starved.

"I can remember finding sandwiches on the road and eating them without hesitation," Dick said, "and my father finding a bag of grain lost by a farmer. It was like gold and when the owner came back to look for his wheat my father returned it on the condition the farmer sell him part. He traded his bicycle and my mother's wedding band for part of that grain."

Mrs. Voskamp has similar memories of her mother leaving home three times a week with saddlebags on her bicycle to get milk and food from farmers at 3 a.m. She remembers her mother getting a 100 lb. bag of grain and then grinding it up in the coffee mill to make a concoction something like porridge for the family to eat.

Both families' ingenuity kept them alive through the grim period of rationing. Then just when it seemed the Dutch were coming to the end of their rope, the Allies sent 253 aircraft of the RAF bomber command over Holland not with bombs but with rations for half a million people. This was arranged in a deal with the Germans following pleas from Queen Wilhelmina to save her starving people.

The Germans agreed to allow the food drops providing the Canadian advance was stayed to give the occupation troops a chance to leave. This was six days before the final surrender of Holland to the Canadians who lost 11,336 men liberating the north of Europe.

"I can remember my Dad getting chocolates and biscuits from the aircraft drop," said Dick, and the Germans gradually disappearing.

Mrs. Voskamp said there was much fighting in Friesland, where she lived and remembers her relations

troops, Dutch Canadians and the home folk in the Netherlands are celebrating this week in what may be one of the last observances marking special events of the last war.—(Staff Photo)

hiding in a manure pile while the fighting was going on. The occupation troops tried to dynamite the raadhuis, the equivalent of our town hall, the university and the communications centre.

A 12-year old boy, son of an underground leader, took the dynamite from the communications centre before it could go off in a remarkable display of courage. But the university burned for two days after the explosion.

She recalls trying to smuggle milk off a train and the help she received from a sympathetic German soldier. The occupation troops were under orders to smash containers and dump the liquid out if civilians were caught with it. The ground was wet with milk at the station. She saw the soldier, grabbed his hand, spoke a few words of German and was escorted safely through the station gate.

Many of the Germans were fed up with the war, too, at this time and were kind to the population, the Voskamps said. Only the fanatics wanted to keep on fighting.

When liberation finally came the Dutch people could hardly believe it.

After being stalled by the agreement with the Germans for almost a week and allied troops being as close as Arnhem for months, when the big day arrived the street scenes were unbelievable.

Mrs. Voskamp remembers the tanks full of Canadian soldiers handing out chocolate bars to the children and soap, the one luxury the clean-living Dutch really missed. "For a Dutchman to be without soap was one of the worst curses of the war," said Mrs. Voskamp.

The Canadian troops struck a bond with the Dutch that is still strong after 25 years. The Dutch remember both here and in Holland where liberation week is being celebrated.

Soldiers of the First Canadian Army remember. There are many of them who returned to this district after the bloody battles in the Netherlands. Others didn't return, a sad memory for relatives.

The Voskamps love the wide open spaces and the initiative they can display in Canada.

"In a sense", Dick Voskamp declared, "there were two liberations for me—the one in 1945 and the one when I came to Canada."

His wife readily agrees. But they also remember that the war brought out a sense of sharing and closeness that few in today's affluent society know about, a kindred sharing of troubles that enabled many Dutch to survive the grim years of occupation.

### Nephew ordained Toronto ceremony

The Petric family was present Sunday at the ordination of Martin Dimnik, a nephew of Mrs. Petric, to the diaconate. His Excellency Cardinal Flahiff of Winnipeg, Manitoba, ordained 13 candidates.

Mr. Dimnik came from Lethbridge, Alberta, to Toronto to study, and is presently teaching history at St. Michael's College. He will be ordained a priest next year.

Attending the ceremony in St. Michael's seminary were Mr. and Mrs. Louis Petric, Joe, Maria, Paul and Stan of Acton.



MAYOR LES DUBY cut the ribbon, as dignitaries looked on at the official opening of the new Foodland Supermarket, last Wednesday. Standing with the mayor are l. to r. store owner John Edmunds, Foodland produce merchandising manager Ralph Griffin, Lumsden Brothers president William Lumsden and Lumsden Brothers vice-president and general manager Robert Muir. The official opening attracted a huge crowd of shoppers.—(Staff Photo).

## See muted growth . . .

(Continued from page 1)

the west, including Kitchener-Waterloo, includes the southern shore of Georgian Bay to the north and Peterborough in the east.

Zone 2 the "commutershed" which will include the towns of North Halton and the village of Rockwood, is the area from which it is possible to travel conveniently on a daily basis to work in metro Toronto.

Growth in Zone 2 will be encouraged in the vicinity of an urban axis which is expected to begin in Zone 1 with Richmond Hill and include Aurora, Newmarket, and to a small degree, Bradford; and communities to the west and east such as Acton, Milton, Georgetown, Bolton, Orangeville, Uxbridge, Port Perry and Stouffville.

Reasons for the policy as outlined by the provincial treasurer, the Hon. Chas. McNaughton, will be to take the pressure off Toronto and provide for decentralization policy, a rational use of land, to plan the area on an economic basis.

The government will place more emphasis on regional development councils and encourage participation by the various municipalities in them.

## Darcy says development concept to be used as plan reference

"The Province intends to use this concept as a set of reference points in considering official plan, official-plan amendments, proposals for subdividing land, and any other applications submitted for approval" Hon. W. Darcy McKeough, Minister of Municipal Affairs told municipal representatives Tuesday.

He emphasized provincial departments and agencies such as O.W.R.C., Ontario Hydro, Department of Highways, Ontario Housing Corporation and Ontario Development Corporation would have to recognize the development policies for the region and adjust their plans and programs to conform.

The Minister called for full local community involvement through the municipal system and the Regional Development Councils.

He suggested the final outcome would be a hierarchy of plans with policies for the Toronto-Centred Region being much more general in its terms than those of the plans for the regional municipalities. "Thus each regional municipality will perform the function of refining the broad generalities of the larger plan in working out the official plan for the regional municipality".

A similar relationship will exist between the official plans of the regional municipalities and those of the local municipalities, the Minister suggested.

The Minister emphasized that what is being proposed would become a reality over a number of years which forced a determination of priorities for implementing various phases. "The regional municipalities as they come into being should be able to play an important part in establishing priorities for various sections."

Mr. McKeough termed the plan as "a planning framework to guide growth and change in

this region for many years into the future". He pointed out the Government plans to make arrangements to present the concept at various points within the region to increase public understanding of what is being proposed, to stimulate discussion, to hear and receive comments.

"The result of all these discussions will permit the Province to review and refine this Development Concept, and as soon as possible express it as a more specific Government policy. In the meantime we intend to use the Concept as a basis for provincial decision-making."

In conclusion the Minister emphasized the most important elements in the announcement "That is our regional development plans are aimed at enhancing the quality of life for people in this region".

Mr. McKeough observed in his presentation that "where the plan proposes that certain parts of the region be retained in a predominantly rural state as in a position of slow to moderate growth there are serious problems with must be faced as well — problems not only of a physical nature but social, economic and I imagine political, too." North Halton is included in the area proposed for slow growth.

Husband: "Every time I look at that hat I have to laugh".  
Wife: "Fine, I'll leave it around when the bill comes in".

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