

**STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY SENATOR JEAN AMY LE MAISTRE
ON 9th MAY 2005**

I was born towards the end of the War so I have no personal memories of those five difficult years but I do remember many of the stories told by my parents and their generation about the challenges and the difficulties they endured.

Our liberation from that Occupation remains the most significant event in the recent history of the Island certainly of the past century. For those who went through that period it was clearly a cathartic experience. It is therefore of great importance that we the members of this Assembly together with the entire Island community should remember those who endured the suffering and deprivation of five long years of isolation, of doing without adequate medicines or medical facilities, food, clothing and above all, all social contact with the outside world. All aspects of life we now take very much for granted. Above all they were without the one thing that we should value above everything else that is personal freedom. We must also remember those who served in the armed forces who brought us our peace and freedom, those who suffered through evacuation, deportation and in particular those who lost their lives and those who lost loved ones as a result of that War.

Today is indeed a day of remembrance, but it is also a day of celebration. It is Jersey's special day. One that I suspect many also take for granted, but which we all enjoy without necessarily thinking about the benefit that freedom given to this Island for the past 60 years. It is very important that everyone living in Jersey irrespective of their origins should recognise the genesis of this freedom. They should feel included in our celebrations and in turn proud of their contribution to our prosperity and the opportunities that freedom brings to them. It is particularly important for us to recognise the remarkable efforts of everyone in the Island during the post War years. The rebuilding of the core industries of agriculture and tourism was rapid, followed by important reforms of the Assembly in 1948 and the advent of our Social Security system in 1951. This Island community had to work extremely hard to re-establish itself, to lay the foundations for the many benefits and the prosperity we now enjoy.

Indisputably the focus of that generation brought about by the catharsis I mentioned earlier, laid the foundations for what we enjoy today and I salute them.

Liberation and celebration are the two words that we should hold in our hearts and minds throughout today adding to them the peace and opportunity that came from that day, 9th May 1945. We have a wonderful programme of celebrations that lasts throughout this year and for the first time our celebrations are supported by more sponsors than public money. To those generous sponsors I give our heartfelt thanks. Their partnership with government typifies what is good about our Island and we are truly grateful.

I invite the members of this Assembly and the entire population of the Island to join in the celebrations in true Jersey spirit, rekindling that feeling of warmth, of friendship and of jubilation that swept through the Island 60 years ago today.