

Connétable J.B. Germain of St. Martin:

This Assembly has been specially convened to commemorate this day when 61 years ago on 9th May 1945 the inhabitants of Jersey were liberated from the German occupying forces. After so long it is almost impossible for those like me, even though I was born at the beginning of the war, to fully appreciate the joy and the sense of relief that those Islanders who endured the suffering and deprivation of those 5 long years of isolation from the rest of the world – of being without medicines and varieties of food we now all take for granted. 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 those 5 long years. Above all they were without the one thing that we should value above everything else – 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 or deportation and in particular those who gave their lives and those who lost loved ones as a result of that war. Our duty today is to ensure that Liberation Day continues to be commemorated as the most special day in our rich and varied history. To ensure that we never take for granted the freedom we now enjoy and that future generations understand and value the importance of Liberation Day in giving them the privileged lifestyle that we are fortunate to be able to enjoy in this beautiful, safe and prosperous Island. I would like to finish with a short poem -

With all the displays that I have seen
I've tried to imagine how it would have been
In those hard days during the war
Finding enough to eat was a chore
Mums tried very hard, meals to produce
Not much variety but plenty of stews.
Lord when I am tempted to turn up my nose
At things I dislike in food or in clothes
Pray help me remember hard times some endured
And ever be grateful for all I enjoy.

We remember different things that happened now and then
And we pray dear Lord that in our lifetime we will never see
The awful things that war brings as we've seen on T.V.
Lord help this world to live in peace and help us all today
To be more loving and more giving in our work and in our play.

Lord thank you for the peace we now enjoy – but not forget
The bravery of all those who died – our peace to get.