

STATES OF JERSEY

OFFICIAL REPORT

FRIDAY, 9th MAY 2025

COMMUNICATIONS BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER.....	2
1.1 Welcome to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor	2
PERSONAL STATEMENT	2
2. Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St. Martin, will make a statement on the occasion of the 80th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Island.....	2
2.1 Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St. Martin:	2
ADJOURNMENT.....	3

[10:30]

The Roll was called and the Dean led the Assembly in Prayer.

COMMUNICATIONS BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER

The Bailiff:

1.1 Welcome to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor

There is a single purpose of this special meeting of the States Assembly to celebrate the 80th anniversary of Liberation and, in accordance with our tradition, I call upon the Connétable of St. Martin to address the Assembly. [Approbation]

PERSONAL STATEMENT

2. Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St. Martin, will make a statement on the occasion of the 80th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Island

2.1 Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St. Martin:

Your Excellency, Monsieur Le Bailli, Chief Minister, Honoured Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen. I am deeply honoured to make the Liberation 80 speech on behalf of The States Assembly. I am of the generation whose parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles experienced life constrained by an alien and occupying force. A life where liberty, freedom and democracy were not tolerated. Growing up I was regularly informed by stories and anecdotes of the Occupation. Like all Islanders of these generations, it instilled a fundamental commitment to uphold these values – democracy, freedom, liberty and empathy for your neighbour, for your community. They are testimonies of what I hope will be a world unrecognisable to us. It is vital that we preserve them, for those who come after us can know the suffering their forebears endured under Occupation. Some were fortunate to leave the Island before the Occupation. My father's cousin Terence Troy, (later to become Brigadier Terry Troy CBE) left Jersey with the blessing of his family on the last boat, and when it docked in Guernsey on the way to Weymouth, he witnessed the German air raid on St. Peter Port. In 1940, having made it safely to England, he enlisted in the Army and was commissioned in the 15th Punjab Regiment of the Indian Army. Both of my parents lived through the Second World War. My mother was born and brought up in England and aged 12 in 1941, alongside her younger sister, Kate, was evacuated to the countryside in Warwickshire. Her older sister, Freda, became a Land Girl. My father Richard (Dick) was born and brought up in Jersey. He and his parents and six siblings, like all Islanders, endured a harrowing Occupation. In 1940, my father was the third eldest child in a large and happy family. By Liberation Day, he was the eldest. His two older siblings, my father's beloved brother and sister, Benny and Connie, died from tuberculosis and malnutrition. Benny was just 19 when he died in 1942 and Connie only 18 years old when she died in July 1943. One of my father's younger sisters, Kathleen, spent much of the Occupation in Overdale Hospital having lost lung due to TB, but thankfully she survived. In 1944 my grandfather Benjamin Shenton (known as Ben) was arrested by the Germans for the possession of a radio and imprisoned. Had it been earlier in the Occupation he would surely have been deported as so many had already been. My father told us how, as a boy, he would go to the abattoir — where Liberty Wharf now stands — to drink pig's blood, just to get the nutrients he needed to survive. By 1944, Jersey was starving. And then came the SS Vega — carrying Red Cross parcels of food and aid, sent from Canada, New Zealand, and other nations. Had it not been for that lifeline, my family — and many others — might not be here today. We owe those who sent help a debt we can never repay but must always remember. And we today we remember those in countries around the world who today are suffering from starvation and the lack of medical attention and basic supplies. A call for peace, and the remembrance that with humanity a better world is forever possible. Perhaps that's why my parents later chose to emigrate to Canada, travelling across the country until they reached Vancouver, where my sister and I were born. It is with great pride that

I can say that I am Jersey, British and Canadian, and I am thankful to have been born in a country that wears its tolerance and its diversity on its sleeve. I am proud it stands up to an increasingly hostile United States that now seeks to endanger it. I am proud, as many of us in Jersey are to be a child whose origins lie across multiple lands. Today we celebrate the ever-growing diversity of Jersey, with Islanders coming from England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, France, Portugal, Poland, Romania, Kenya, Kazakhstan, Angola, and so many more, all to make Jersey a better place to live; to paraphrasing our anthem, bind us as one evermore. We have welcomed refugees from Ukraine and continue to stand with them. We must continue to help those seeking refuge from invasion and persecution. The Occupation showed us what happens when humanity fails. Our best tribute to the past is to live up to the lessons it taught us. In 1989, my husband, Peregrine and I travelled to Russia during the years of Glasnost. My father suddenly spoke a few words and a couple of phrases of broken Russian. We had never had any idea that he knew any. It transpired that he had learnt some Russian from the Slave Labourers whom his family had helped. Many times, I asked my father over the years to write down his experiences, but he never felt able to, it upset him too much. I remember him telling me — that when Liberation finally came, they didn't rush into town. They stayed at home. They were too worn down, too weary. The joy came, of course — but first, there was quiet relief. I hope I speak for the whole Assembly when I say how pleased we are His Excellency Mr Miguel Berger, the German Ambassador, is here on this special anniversary. His presence reflects both the courage of remembrance and the value of reconciliation. My father, who had suffered so much, took our family to West Germany on one of our first holidays – which spoke not only of his character but how we must collectively move forward. And yet, across the globe, the values we thought would guide us to a more peaceful, inclusive and equal future are falling away. As we see on an almost daily basis, fascism is on the rise in countries who once so proudly fought against it. Even the White House seeks inspiration from it. Fascism's global disciples seek to minimise and deny and ignore the atrocities of the Second World War, the brutal inhumanity and nightmare of the Holocaust. The hard-fought rights of women are under threat from those very forces, seeking to restrict the right for a woman to be free from violence, to be educated, and even the fundamental right to choose. As Simone de Beauvoir once wrote that *"a freedom which is interested only in denying freedom must be denied"*. For our world to survive, these monstrous ideals of oppression and extermination must be defeated, we must make it safe for everyone to live as they are. This is why we must always learn from the past and we must not take history for granted. We must acknowledge the atrocities and ensure they never return. One journey into hell must surely be enough. The future may have its uncertainties, but may I remind those gathered here today of the quiet power of this small Island. From the ancient to the contemporary, from our medieval poet Wace's first mention of King Arthur's Round Table to a Jerseyman as Superman, from literature to conservation, Jersey's reach is global. Let us not forget the progressive power of the very name of Jersey. Any child who dreams of sporting prowess, no matter where they are in the world, knows the name of our Island. A jersey is not just a piece of clothing. To wear a Jersey is to represent your team, your nation, your identity with pride. Jersey is a word tied to hope, to belonging, so if we are to be a haven for anything, let it be that. Let this island forever be known for its democracy and its inclusion. Its freedom and community. If it makes us an exception, then so be it. Although some of our years are but footnotes in our memory, there are days that become the essence of who we are. For Jersey, our ancient home, these five years of occupation must be remembered as a testament to why we resist the curse of oppression and the fundamental evils of fascism. Where others may forget, let these five years echo in our eternity, because we must never return. [Approbation]

The Bailiff:

Thank you Madame Connétable. That concludes the formal business for this sitting of the Assembly and the Assembly accordingly stands adjourned until its next formal sitting. [Approbation]

ADJOURNMENT

[10:45]